

Vermont's Changing Capital

Objectives:

1. Students will use the Giant Vermont floor map to understand where Vermont's capital has been located over time, why it has changed, and how it might have impacted Vermont's citizens.
2. Students will read from *The Vermont Geography Book* and compose a writing piece that draws on key details from the informational text and their experience on the map.

Grade Level: 3-8

Materials:

- 15 Vermont state capitals cards
- 15 card holders
- Arrow markers
- Copies of the reading from *The Vermont Geography Book*



Directions for using the map:

1. Students should sit along the southern border of Vermont.
2. Arrange the Vermont state capitals cards in chronological order.
3. Have students take turns placing one marker on the map at a time starting with Bennington (1778).
4. Students should find the town and read the date on the card, and place it on the map using the card holders.
5. As each new town is added, use an arrow marker to show the change from one town to the next (see image below).



6. After the first three towns* have been placed, ask the students to make some observations of what they have seen: What has happened to Vermont's capital over time? Why do you think it changed the way it did?

*Note: The town of Charlestown, NH is located east of the current state border between Rockingham and Springfield.

7. Continue placing capital cards, one at a time, until you have used most of the cards. Again, ask the students to make some observations of what they have seen:

- What has happened to Vermont's capital over time?
- Why do you think it changed the way it did?
- How would it affect the people of Vermont at that time?

8. Complete the activity and again ask students for observations of how and why Vermont's capital changed. Have students identify the trends they witnessed (a general movement north over time). Help them identify when this trend was not followed (Burlington, 1802). Students should now be able to make some inferences as to how Vermont's population changed over time. Finally ask students why Montpelier was chosen as a permanent capital for Vermont.

Assessment: Connecting the map to nonfiction text

1. Have students read the short article titled “Montpelier: Vermont's Capital” from *The Vermont Geography Book*. (Approximate Lexile Reading Level: 850)
2. When the students have completed their reading, have them respond to the prompt using details from the text and their experience using the Giant Traveling Map of Vermont.