

Where Do Vermonters Live?

Objectives:

1. Students will calculate the percentage of the state's population that resides in each Vermont county, and the population density of each county.
2. Students will identify the physical features of Vermont's landscape that encourage or discourage large populations.

Grade Level: 4-8

Materials:

14 copies of the Vermont population data sheets
Calculators from classroom
Snap cubes
Colored chips

Directions:

1. Discuss the physical features, such as mountains or rivers, which encourage or discourage human settlement.
2. Assign a county to each student or pair of students. Hand out one copy of the Vermont population data sheet per county.
3. Hand out the calculators, and review the steps to determine the percentage of the state's population that resides in each county. Answers should be rounded to a whole number, and entered on the data sheet.
4. Explain to students that they will construct a cube tower of their county's data using snap cubes, with each block representing one percent of the state's population.
5. Then, have students calculate the population density of their county and enter it on their data sheet. Have them use colored chips to represent the population density, with one colored chip representing three persons per square mile.
6. Have students share their results with the class.
7. Discuss the physical factors that would influence the population numbers for each county. For example: Chittenden County has a milder climate than the mountainous areas because of its proximity to Lake Champlain and its lower elevation. Grand Isle will have a smaller total population because of its relative size. Essex County has a shorter growing season and harsher winters.

