

# Navigate and Notice

## *A Launchpad to Geographic Inquiry*



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At the Leventhal Map & Education Center, we teach with maps—not just to locate places but to reveal patterns in history, shape civic understanding, and spark conversations about the place and time we live in. We use all kinds of maps to help students explore these ideas and more. The questions below reflect a sequence we use to guide those explorations.

**Start with close looking, then follow the sequence, choosing questions to build deeper understanding.**

### Close Looking

Begin by giving students time to look at the map—whether on screen or on paper. Then ask: **What do you notice first?**

Encourage students to share observations and back them up with details they see or make connections to what they already know.

### What?

*The subject of the map*

Use these questions to help students name and describe what the map shows.

- **What is the focus of the map?**
- **What is at the center of the map?**

### Where?

*The place of the map*

Help students connect the map to a broader context.

- **Where and how would you use this map?**
- **Who made the map? Who is the map made for?**
- **What do we know about this place/time/event based on this map?**
- **Based on the map, what would this place be like to visit?**

### How?

*The visual language of the map*

Guide students to think about how design shapes meaning.

- **What stands out? What makes it stand out?**
- **How do you know what to look at?**
- **How does the creator of the map capture your attention?**

### Now what?

Encourage critical thinking and next steps with these concluding questions.

- **What is left out? What would you add?**
- **What additional information do we need? Where would we go to get that information?**
- **What questions would you ask the person who made the map?**

## Compare, compare, compare

This is where deeper thinking happens. Try pairing two maps side by side—or a map with a document, image, or data visualization—to notice contrasts and patterns. You can find thousands of visual resources in our digital collections.

## Keep exploring!

We have more maps, questions, and strategies to help you and your students dig deeper. Explore our educator resources and professional learning opportunities online or reach out to us.



[leventhalmap.org/education](https://leventhalmap.org/education)



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