

## Unit 5, Lesson 18: How Delaware Got Its Borders

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### Lesson Overview

This lesson features a Reader's Theater in which students learn why Delaware's boundaries are as they are. The lesson aims to develop students' chronological thinking skills relating to causation and change over time.

### Delaware Standard(s)

- History Standard 1, 4-5 [Chronology]: Students will study historical events and persons within a given time frame in order to create a chronology and identify related cause-effect factors.
- History Standard 2b, 4-5 [Analysis]: Students will examine historical materials relating to a particular region, society, or theme; chronologically arrange them; and analyze change over time.
- History Standard 4, 4-5 [Content]: Students will develop an understanding of selected themes in United States history, including...important people in American [and Delaware] history.

### Essential Questions

- How and why did the shape of Delaware Change Over Time?

### Enduring Understandings

Students will understand that the shape of Delaware changed over an extended period of time as a result of a boundary dispute between William Penn, proprietor of Pennsylvania, and Lord Baltimore, proprietor of Maryland. Two surveyors named Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon (Mason-Dixon) were brought over from England to map Delaware's boundaries which now define the state's "Strange Shape."

### Resources

- [Google Slides](#)
- [Resource 1: Floor Map Plan #1 - Guide to Laying Out the Floor Map](#)
- [Resource 2: 1796 Map of Delaware](#)
- [Resource 3: 1740 Map of Delaware](#)
- [Resource 4: Reader's Theater](#)
- [Resource 5: World Map Showing Lines of Latitude and Longitude](#)
- [Resource 6: Floor Map Plan #2](#)
- [Resource 7: Floor Map Plan #3](#)
- [Resource 8: Floor Map Plan #4](#)
- [Resource 9: Current Map of Delaware](#)
- [Resource 10: Checks for Understanding](#)
- [Resource 11: Mason Dixon Boundary Markers](#)

### Procedures

#### Pre-Planning Recommended

1. Secure a role of something like painter's tape or yarn that can be easily adjusted then removed when the lesson is over.
2. Access a copy of a world map - [Resource 5: World Map Showing Lines of Latitude and](#)

[Longitude](#) (also on slide 8)

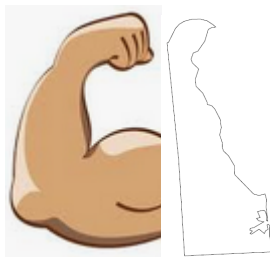
3. Assign the following roles to students. Recommended - the teacher assume the role of narrator:
  - a. Narrator
  - b. Lord Baltimore
  - c. King Charles I
  - d. William Penn
  - e. Dutch
  - f. Swedes
  - g. Finns
  - h. Duke of York
  - i. Marylanders
  - j. Spokesman for the Committee of Trade and Plantation
  - k. King Charles II
  - l. Charles Mason Jeremiah Dixon
  - m. Tapers - they will lay the tape or yarn down on the floor map as boundaries change
  - n. Pointer - points to areas of the floor map at designated points in the reader's theater

Probably best to create name cards for the various characters to help students keep track of who is playing which roles.
4. Give those assigned the various roles copies of the reader's theater at least a day prior to the lesson so that they can preview and practice their roles.
5. If possible, have a parent helper or colleague perform the duties of the Taper and Pointer as this will likely improve the flow of the reader's theater.
6. Day of the Lesson: use tape or yarn to lay out the boundaries of the floor map in a manner comparable to that shown on [Resource 1 - Floor Map Plan #1](#)

1. **Warm-Up:** Project a copy of [Resource 2 - 1796 Map of Delaware](#) to the class. Begin a discussion concerning the unique shape of the state. Note the natural border of the Delaware Bay.
  - a. Ask students: Why is the northern part of the state rounded like part of a circle and the rest shaped in straight lines?
  - b. Instruct the students to find Cape Henlopen on this map. (It is located along the eastern border of Delaware near Lewes.) Inform the students that they will need to remember that location.
2. **Map Comparisons:** Pass out [Resource 3 - 1740 Map of Delaware](#) of Delaware and its surrounding area. Give the students several minutes to study the map.
  - a. Ask students to find Cape Henlopen on this map. Ask: Where is it located? Is it located in the same area as the first map showed i.e., the 1796 map? Project the 1796 map again. (On the 1740 map it is incorrectly located at the bottom of the state.)
  - b. Why do you think it is located in two different positions?
3. **Introduce the Lesson:** Explain that today's lesson will show why Delaware has its peculiar shape and why different maps of the same area may not be the same. Using [Resource 1 - Floor Map Plan #1](#) as a guide, create the Delmarva Peninsula and the surrounding area on the floor with masking tape or some other temporary marker such as yarn. The map should be large enough

that numerous students will be able to move around within the map area. This map is also provided on slide 6.

- a. The floor map should also include:
  - i. Three lines of latitude that are included on the Resource 1. You may want to color code these lines to make them stand out.
  - ii. Do not include the lines or the arc that actually make up the shape of Delaware. These lines will be added during the play.
  - iii. Place a tape square where the dot on map #1 is located. This represents the town of New Castle. Note: There are four example floor maps to help with this lesson. The cues for adding taped lines are within the play itself. An overall map with important locations is included also.
4. **Reader's Theater:** Distribute copies of [Resource 4 - Reader's Theater](#) so that the actors have their roles. All characters will begin in an area on the floor or ground designated as Europe except the narrator. The narrator should be positioned close to the latitude lines in western Maryland. Movement instructions are italicized and shaded in a light yellow color. Conduct the Reader's Theater.
  - a. **Note** - During the Reader's Theater there is a "scene" during which the "Pointer" in the script is asked to point to a world map. See [Resource 5 - World Map](#) and be prepared to project it. (available on slide 8)
5. **Present Modern Map of Delaware:** at the conclusion of the Reader's Theater, project a copy of [Resource 9](#) and walk students on a visual tour of Delaware, noting the shape of the state, key geographic locations, and their locations relative to other places and bodies of water.
6. **Developing Mental Maps:** invite all of the students to stand up and make a big muscle with their right hand and arm. Have them show their arms, hands, muscles to a partner. Tell them that if they are ever asked to draw the shape of Delaware, remember what you just saw (see illustrations below).



- a. Without the benefit of any aids other than their arms and memory, have students take out a piece of paper and draw their mental maps of Delaware.
7. **Checks for Understanding:** distribute copies of [Resource 10](#) and have students complete the checks for understanding.