

## “Where on the Erie Canal?” Green Screen Competition

This inquiry-based research project asks students to select a location on the Erie Canal and give clues in order for other students to guess where they are. Students work in pairs or small groups to:

- Choose a location on the Erie Canal within 50 miles east or west of Rochester.
- Share the location with their teacher (to avoid duplicates).
- Create multiple clues, tricky enough that they do not immediately give away the location, but not so hard or obscure that peers won't be able to figure it out.
- Incorporate information from primary source documents.
- Create a narrator and write a script from that character's perspective.
- Choose a background that doesn't automatically give away the location.
- Perform the script in front of the background using a video editing app that contains a Green Screen feature (e.g. WeVideo).
  - Students can visit the ImagineYOU digital learning lab at the Central Library of Rochester & Monroe County for help with this step:  
<https://roccitylibrary.org/services/teens/imagineyou/>
- Share a video link and the Location Guess Form with the other students involved in the competition so they can view the videos and submit their guesses about the locations being described.

**Lesson Duration:** 3.5 hours across 2-3 days (approximate)

**Enduring Understanding:** Primary source documents and location features, both natural and human-made, help us identify locations.

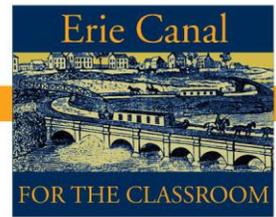
**Concepts:** geography, technology, time, systems, sources

**New York State Social Studies Standards Addressed:**

4.1a Physical and thematic maps can be used to explore New York State's diverse geography.

4.1b New York State can be represented using a political map that shows cities, capitals, and boundaries.

4.6b In order to connect the Great Lakes with the Atlantic Ocean, the Erie Canal was built. Existing towns expanded and new towns grew along the canal. New York City became the busiest port in the country.



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### New York State Social Studies Practices Addressed:

#### A. Gathering, Interpreting, and Using Evidence

2. Recognize, use, and analyze different forms of evidence used to make meaning in social studies (including sources such as art and photographs, artifacts, oral histories, maps, and graphs).
3. Identify and explain creation and/or authorship, purpose, and format for evidence; where appropriate, identify point of view.
6. Create an understanding of the past by using primary and secondary sources.

#### D. Geographic Reasoning

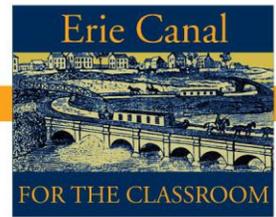
1. Use location terms and geographic representations (maps and models) to describe where places are in relation to each other, to describe connections between places, and to evaluate the benefits of particular places for purposeful activities.
2. Distinguish human activities and human-made features from “environments” (natural events or physical features—land, air, and water—that are not directly made by humans).
3. Identify how environments affect human activities and how human activities affect physical environments.
5. Describe how human activities alter places and regions.

### Teacher Questions:

1. What are some interesting and/or recognizable locations on the Erie Canal that are near Rochester, NY?
2. What natural and/or human-made features exist that help people to identify a location?
3. What is important about a location either long ago or today?
4. How can we find accurate information from primary sources to support our understanding?
5. How does a location relate to the Erie Canal?

### Materials List:

1. Resources students have used thus far in the unit relating to location (atlases, maps, Erie Canal images, Google Earth, the Erie Canal topic section of the Rochester Public Library’s *Rochester Voices* website: <http://www.rochestervoices.org/topics/erie-canal/>, etc.)
2. Teacher’s Master Location Chart, to track projects and avoid duplicates (provided)
3. Directions and Recording Sheet (provided)
4. Paper and pencil or technology device for word processing

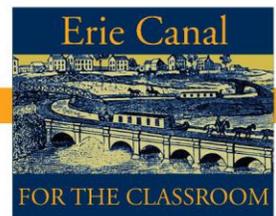


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5. Space for students to write their scripts and practice away from other students
6. Green screen and stand
7. Device and app for recording videos and changing backgrounds (e.g. WeVideo)
8. Second device or cue cards for students to read scripts from
9. Any props or costumes students want to use for the video production
10. Means for class- or school-wide sharing of video links
11. Location Guess Form (provided); teacher can recreate as a Google Form, etc.

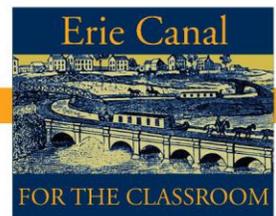
### Procedure:

Teacher Questions	Procedure	Materials
1. What are some interesting and/or recognizable locations on the Erie Canal that are near Rochester, NY?	<p><b>10 minutes:</b> Decide how students will be matched up: either in pairs or small groups of 3 or 4. Allow students time to look at resources they have used thus far in the unit (atlases, maps, Erie Canal images, Google Earth, etc.) to determine what location they would like to research. Students <b>MUST</b> report their location to the teacher, who keeps a secret list of locations in order to avoid duplicates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources students have used thus far in the unit relating to location (atlases, maps, Erie Canal images, Google Earth, the Erie Canal topic section of the Rochester Public Library’s <i>Rochester Voices</i> website: <a href="http://www.rochestervoices.org/topics/erie-canal/">http://www.rochestervoices.org/topics/erie-canal/</a>, etc.)</li> <li>• Teacher’s Master Location Chart, to track projects and avoid duplicates (provided)</li> </ul>
2. What natural and/or human-made features exist that help people to identify a location? 3. What is important about a location either long ago or today? 4. How can we find accurate information from primary sources to support our understanding?	<p><b>120 minutes across 2-3 days:</b> Students research their location to determine important natural and human-made features, geography, history, landmarks, fun facts, etc. that make the location unique. Once they determine this information, they will need to record it on their Directions and Recording Sheet. This document requires students to cite their sources.</p> <p>TEACHER NOTE: If students are unfamiliar with citing sources, this may be a good time to review or introduce this skill.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources students have used thus far in the unit relating to location (atlases, maps, Erie Canal images, Google Earth, the Erie Canal topic section of the Rochester Public Library’s <i>Rochester Voices</i> website: <a href="http://www.rochestervoices.org/topics/erie-canal/">http://www.rochestervoices.org/topics/erie-canal/</a>, etc.)</li> <li>• Directions and Recording Sheet (provided)</li> </ul>



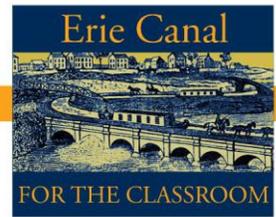
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<p>2. What natural and/or human-made features exist that help people to identify a location?</p> <p>3. What is important about a location either long ago or today?</p> <p>4. How can we find accurate information from primary sources to support our understanding?</p> <p>5. How does a location relate to the Erie Canal?</p>	<p><b>45 minutes:</b> Students write a script from the new information gathered through research and recorded on their Directions and Recording Sheet. The script should be written in clue form from the point-of-view of characters that the students select. Some ideas might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourist</li> <li>• Student</li> <li>• Scientist</li> <li>• Teacher</li> <li>• Historian</li> <li>• Local Business Owner</li> <li>• Boater</li> <li>• Reporter</li> <li>• OTHER</li> </ul> <p>Once students choose their characters, remind them to stay in those roles for the entire script.</p> <p>TEACHER NOTE: If students type their scripts, they can use a large font and read off the scripts while being recorded instead of having to memorize their lines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed Directions and Recording Sheet</li> <li>• Paper and pencil or technology device for word processing</li> <li>• Space for students to write their scripts and practice away from other students</li> </ul>
	<p><b>5-10 minutes per group:</b> In a quiet spot and in front of a green screen, record students performing their scripts using an app like WeVideo.</p> <p>TEACHER NOTE: To avoid students having to memorize their lines, you may choose to have them read their scripts from cue cards or a technology device while a classmate or adult assistant scrolls through for them.</p> <p>Once the video is recorded, students can replace the green screen with their selected background of an Erie Canal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green screen and stand</li> <li>• Device and app for recording videos and changing backgrounds (e.g. WeVideo)</li> <li>• Second device or cue cards for students to read scripts from (with a helper classmate or adult)</li> <li>• Any props or costumes students want to use for the video production</li> </ul>



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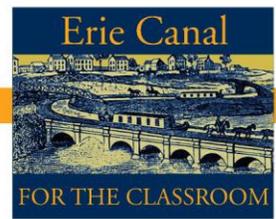
	<p>location image or even a silent video clip.</p> <p>TEACHER NOTE: Be sure students do not choose an image or video of the location that will reveal it too easily. They may even choose a generic image or video of the Erie Canal.</p> <p>TEACHER NOTE: You may want to gain support from an instructional technology teacher for this step.</p>	
	<p>NEXT STEPS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upload student videos to a place they can be shared, such as Google Drive, SharePoint, WeVideo, Vimeo, etc.</li> <li>• Number the videos so students can identify them (Video 1, Video 2, etc.)</li> <li>• Make the video links available to all the students/classes who are participating in the contest</li> <li>• Distribute blank copies of the Location Guess Form to all the students/classes who are participating in the contest</li> <li>• Give the students time to watch all the videos and make their location guesses; students can submit their guesses as individuals, pairs/groups, or an entire class, depending on the scope of the competition</li> </ul> <p>TEACHER NOTE: You can run the contest in different ways. For example, you may choose to share the videos all at once and give students time over the course of a week to view them and make their guesses, identifying the correct locations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Means for class- or school-wide sharing of video links</li> <li>• Location Guess Form (provided); teacher can recreate as a Google Form, etc.</li> </ul>



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at the end of the week. Alternatively, you may choose to share and collect guesses for a few videos at a time (daily, etc.) and announce the correct locations as you go.

You also might choose to recognize top guessers/contest winners daily, and/or announce the overall contest winners at the end. You can use Google Sheets or Excel to keep track of correct guesses.

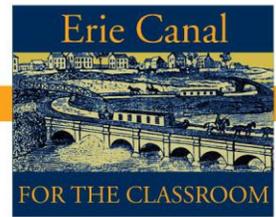


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**Teacher's Master Location Chart**

Video #	Student Name	Location Name	Point of View	Notes
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				





# “Where on the Erie Canal?” Green Screen Competition

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Directions and Recording Sheet

Student directions: You will be recording a green screen video for your class or school with clues about a location on the Erie Canal within 50 miles to the east or west of Rochester, NY! Other students in your class or in the school will then have to guess where on the Erie Canal you are broadcasting from. Be knowledgeable, be an inquirer, and be creative! Be sure to:

- Choose a place on the Erie Canal, within 50 miles east or west of Rochester, New York
- Share the location with your teacher (to avoid duplicates)
- Create multiple clues, tricky enough that they do not immediately give away the location, but not so hard that your peers won't be able to figure it out!
- Incorporate information from primary source documents
- Create a narrator and write a script from that character's perspective
- Choose a background that doesn't automatically give away your location
- Perform it! (You **MAY** use costumes or props!)

**Your Location (shhhh...keep it secret, share only with your teacher!):**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Your Character(s) (Point-of-View):**

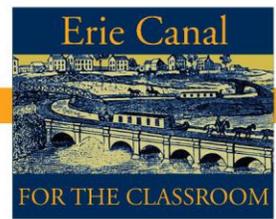
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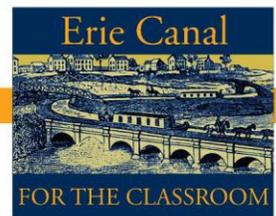




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Ideas for Information	Fact	Resources
<p><b>Geography</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What features exist at this location?</li> <li>• What is the land like?</li> <li>• Is there other water nearby?</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Landmarks and History</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What might draw people to this location?</li> <li>• Historically, what happened here? What year did it happen?</li> </ul>		
<p><b>People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any notable or famous people that live or have lived in this place?</li> <li>• Did anyone stay here while traveling through?</li> <li>• Did anyone perform here or complete other business while at this location?</li> </ul>		





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Ideas for Information	Fact	Resources
<p><b>Work and Entertainment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do people do at this location?</li> <li>• What did people used to do here?</li> <li>• Why might others visit this place?</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Other “Fun Facts”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is this location known for something special, such as:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A celebration?</li> <li>• An interesting historical event?</li> <li>• Something serious?</li> <li>• Something silly?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		



