

Using an Animated Geographic Information System
to Improve the Quality of Secondary Education
of History in America

Abstract

This study was done to determine if an animated GIS can help enhance the educational experience for American history students in our public schools. The purpose was to show that GIS could help alleviate three problems facing our society today. Those problems are that geographic education is lacking, traditional teaching methods neglect visual learners, and the average child today has a short attention span. A project was created with ArcMap and ArcGIS Tracking Analyst designed to present a history lesson on the American Revolution to an eighth grade history class. The presentation was given along with pre- and post-tests to determine if the presentation helped them understand the information better. A control group class was given an alternate PowerPoint presentation to compare results. The data showed no difference, but there were many issues with the presentations. More research on the subject is needed. A questionnaire was also given, and many positive conclusions regarding the value of GIS as a teaching tool can be derived from these questionnaires. The majority opinion is that GIS could be a valuable teaching tool used in American history classrooms. The significance of this study is that the aforementioned problems are hindering the education of our society and GIS could be the answer.