

TOPO BINGO

By Leslie C. Gordon, Geologist/Education Coordinator
U.S. Geological Survey, Western Region, Menlo Park, CA

What can you do with a large assortment of mismatched USGS topographic maps of various faraway places? – Play **Topo Bingo**

Grade level: 3rd – Adult

Materials needed:

Class set of different USGS topographic maps (no two alike)
Tokens or place markers (pennies, lima beans, buttons, 1-inch colored paper squares, etc)
Game pieces cut up and put into a bag, bowl, or hat – see below
Legend or list of map symbols (optional)

Objective:

This exercise is intended to familiarize students with topographic maps, the symbols used on them, and some basic topographic features. It can be used as an entertaining introduction to topographic maps or as an assessment tool to see how well students know maps. The techniques discussed below can be used to adapt the game from beginning to advanced levels.

Procedure:

It is assumed that both the teacher and the students are familiar with the basic procedures, rules, and objectives of the traditional Bingo game. Instead of using Bingo cards, each student uses a topo map. Instead of the leader calling out things like “I-28” or “B-5,” in **Topo Bingo** the teacher, using the game pieces, calls out map symbols and topographic features. On the map, it will obviously be difficult to cover five squares lined up in a row, so the student only needs to cover any five items on the map. When the required number of items on a student’s map is covered, the student shouts, “Topo!” (not “Bingo”).

Make color printouts of the game pieces. Cut apart all the pieces along the solid lines and you may choose to fold each piece along the dotted line depending on whether or not you want to show the symbol for each land feature. Throw the game pieces into a hat (or bag, or bowl). Adjust the level of the game by choosing which pieces to put in the hat. Game pieces that say “church,” “school,” or “railroad” are simple, and all levels of students should be able to find them on a map. “Depression contours” and “steep cliffs,” which require knowledge of topographic map reading, are for the intermediate or advanced student. Game pieces such as “sand dunes” require knowledge of the landform itself and what it looks like on a topographic map. The level of your students should dictate which of the game pieces to start with in the hat. You may choose to hide or show the symbol on the game pieces to students by folding them.

Distribute to each student a map, a half dozen tokens or place markers, and a map legend or key (optional – see note below on whether or not to use a legend). You can download

and print in color the maps provided by the Learning Web or use topographic maps that you already have.

Shake or mix up the bag of game pieces and draw one. Read it to your students. If they find that feature on their maps, they should use a token and cover the feature or symbol. The level of difficulty can be adjusted by allowing or not allowing the students to use a legend when searching on their maps for the feature or symbol that the teacher has just called.

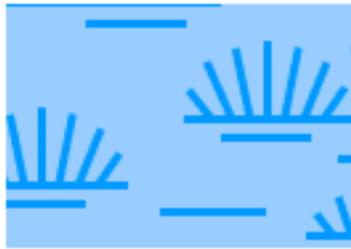
Continue drawing game pieces out of the bag and calling them. Do not return the game pieces to the bag as they are called. Leave them out to avoid duplication and to verify student winners. When a student covers five items (or as many as the teacher decides), he or she shouts "Topo!" and gets a prize (teacher's discretion). Play can continue to allow several student winners.

Further information and materials sources:

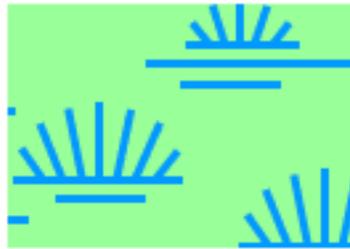
The U.S. Geological Survey publishes several general interest pamphlets on topographic maps and how to read them. The pamphlets, State map indexes, and a list of map symbols are available free of charge from USGS Map and Book Sales, P.O. Box 25286, Denver, CO 80225. Topographic maps may be purchased from the same address.

For more information, telephone: 1-800-USA-MAPS. Before purchasing new maps, teachers should contact the geology or geography departments of local colleges and universities to inquire about discarded or surplus maps that could be used for this activity.

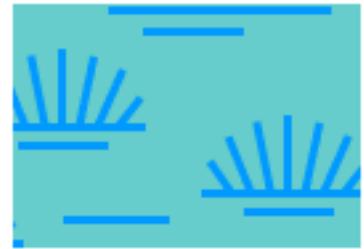
TOGO BINGO GAME PIECES. Cut along lines and fold along dash lines.



Submerged
Marsh or
Swamp



Wooded
Marsh or
Swamp



Submerged
Wooded Marsh
or Swamp



Elevation
Below
Sea Level



Elevation
200 Feet or
More Above
Sea Level



Elevation
500 Feet or
More Above
Sea Level



Elevation
2000 Feet or
More Above
Sea Level



Elevation
5000 Feet or
More Above
Sea Level



Depression
Contours

TOGO BINGO GAME PIECES. Cut along lines and fold along dash lines.



Primary
Highway



Secondary
Highway



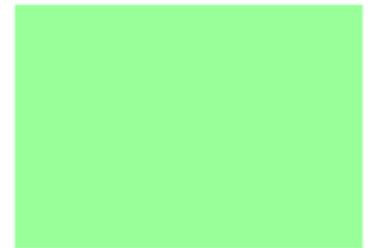
Dual
Highway



Trail



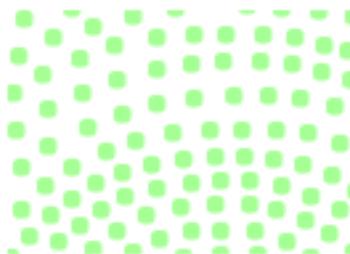
Single Railroad
Tracks; Station



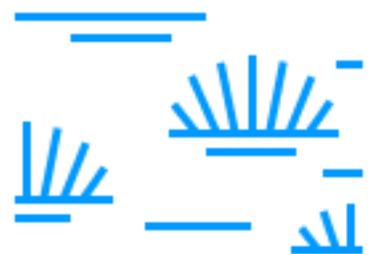
Woods



Orchard

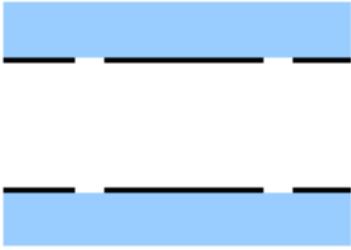


Scrub Land

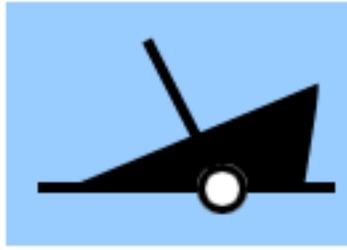


Marsh
or Swamp

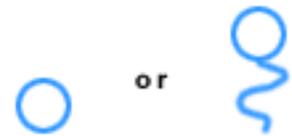
TOGO BINGO GAME PIECES. Cut along lines and fold along dash lines.



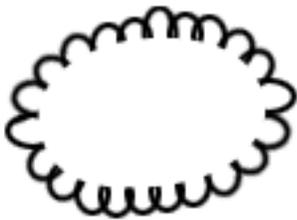
Shipping
Channel



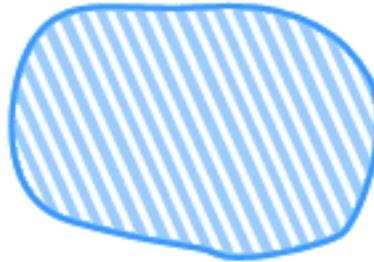
Shipwreck



Well



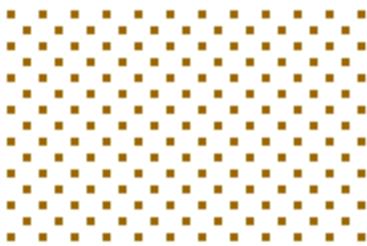
Coral Reef



Intermittent
Lake



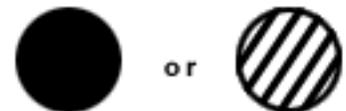
County or
Equivalent
Boundary



Sand Dunes



Perennial River



Tanks

TOGO BINGO GAME PIECES. Cut along lines and fold along dash lines.



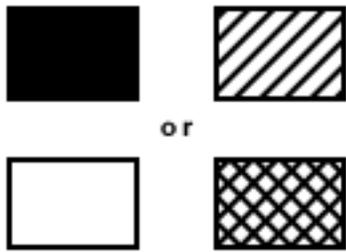
Parks,
Reservations,
or Monuments
Boundary



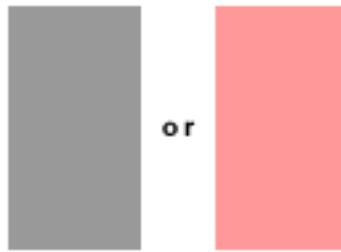
Church



School



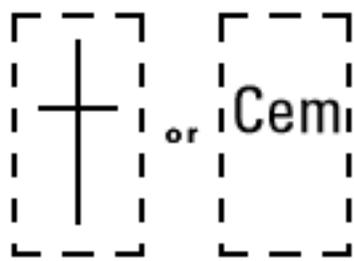
Buildings



Built-up
Area



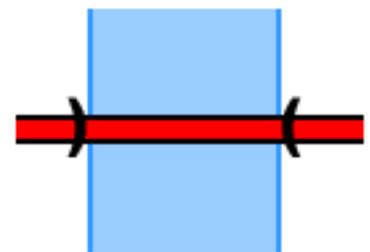
Small Park
Boundary



Cemetery



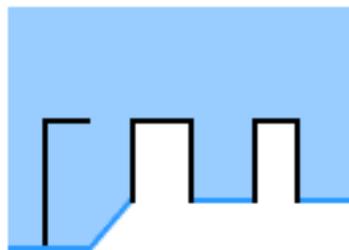
Campground



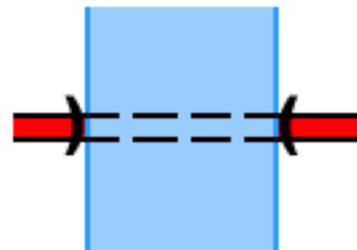
Bridge



Covered
Reservoir



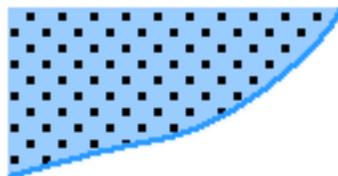
Pier or Jetty



Tunnel



Glacier



Foreshore
Flat



Rock Bare
or Awash



Cliffs

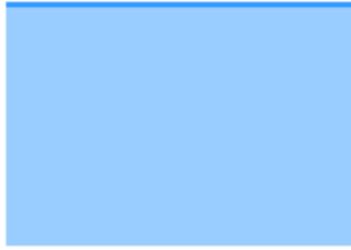


Mountain

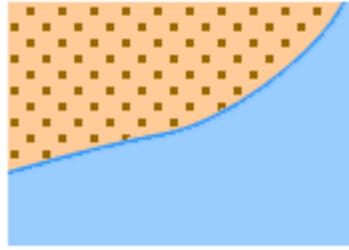


Crater

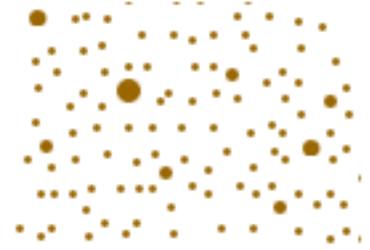
TOGO BINGO GAME PIECES. Cut along lines and fold along dash lines.



Ocean



Sandy Beach



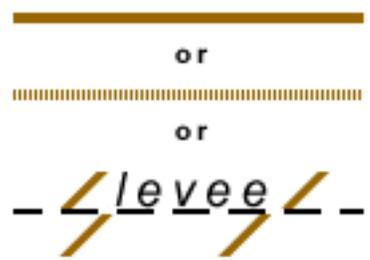
Gravel Beach
or
Glacial Moraine



Perennial Lake



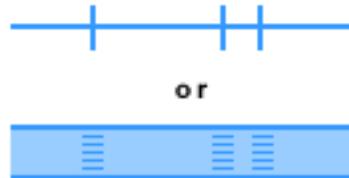
Stream



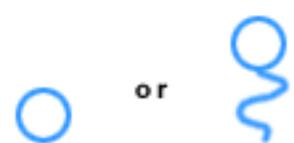
Levee



Canal



Waterfalls



Spring