

# Information Literacy Passport: Earth

**P**ack your bags—or at least grab your pencils! With *Junior Scholastic's* 2009-2010 World Affairs Atlas and Almanac, your students will embark on a journey around the world. Use the lesson plan below and the related reproducible (available at [scholastic.com/js](http://scholastic.com/js)) to explore the almanac tables on pp. 20-29. As students complete an almanac-based activity for each continent, they will fine-tune their geography, teamwork, and information-literacy skills. This lesson was written for *JS* by Karen Kellaheer, a substitute teacher in Warren County, New Jersey, and former Scholastic editor.



Karen Kellaheer

PHOTO COURTESY OF KAREN KELLAHEER

## OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- learn the purpose and content of an almanac.
- access information in an almanac efficiently and effectively.
- present information in a variety of formats, including lists, paragraphs, diagrams, and graphs.

## PREPARE

Go to [scholastic.com/js](http://scholastic.com/js) and print out the “Passport: Earth” reproducible for the October 19 & 26 issue. Make a copy for each student. If possible, display the page on an interactive whiteboard (or projector). Have graph paper available.

## TEACH

**1.** Write the words *almanac* and *atlas* on the board. Point out that each type of these reference materials (whether online or in print) can give us information about a place. Review:

- An *atlas* is a collection of maps. It gives information about location, direction, land features, and more.

- An *almanac* is a collection of facts and statistics, often given in table format. It is designed to provide information at a glance.

**2.** Explain that atlases and almanacs need to be updated often, because borders, governments, populations, and other data change. This issue of *JS* includes a hot-off-the-presses world atlas and almanac that can be used all year. This lesson will help students become familiar with the almanac section, pp. 20-29.

**3.** Direct students’ attention to the sample-entry infographic at the top of pp. 20-21. It explains the statistics in an almanac entry. Have students read aloud the callouts, and discuss what each category of information tells us about a country.

**4.** Pose questions to ensure that students understand how to use this issue’s almanac section. For example, you might ask:

- What is the life expectancy in Cuba? (76 for males, 80 for females)
- Which country in North America

has an urban population of 77 percent? (Mexico)

- What kind of government does Peru have? (presidential-legislative democracy)

Take a moment to show how to calculate population density (population divided by area), and to explain that this statistic determines how “crowded” a place feels.

**5.** Divide students into pairs for the “Passport: Earth” activity, then distribute the repro. Review the directions, emphasizing that students need to complete only one task (mini-activity) for each continent/region on the repro. Note that pairs should circle or check the task they choose for each continent. They will use the “Passport: Earth” page as their cover.

**6.** Allow one or two class periods for pairs to complete the passport tasks. When all pairs have finished, review the responses.

## ASSESS

Assign each task a value of 5 points, for a total of 30 possible points per team.