Map Literacy

# GREATER **STATES**

Grades K-2

## Skills and Objectives:

- Students will learn how to use a map key.
- Students will work with mathematical values.
- Students will understand and work with the concept of comparison.

### Suggested Groupings:

Whole class, partners

### Getting Started:

**1.** To begin, place the We Count! map on the floor or wall in your classroom, and direct your students' attention to it. Show them where the map key is. Be sure they understand what the colors in the key represent.

- Have a volunteer find your home state on the map. Then find a state that has more people, or one that has fewer people. Ask: **What color is the state? What does that color mean?**

**2.** To help your students differentiate between population size and physical size, ask the class to help you model two states:

- Divide the class into two unequal groups, representing two different-sized populations.
- Create "state" boundaries around each group with yarn or a chalk line so that the less populous "state" is bigger.
- Have students identify which state is bigger in size and which has more people.
- Conclusion: Students should be able to see that big states don't necessarily have more people.

**3.** Be sure that students understand how to use the map key to identify the colors that represent states with the most people, fewer people, and the fewest number of people.

### Using the Activity Worksheets:

- Photocopy the Lesson 1 Activity Worksheets (pages 4 and 5) for your class.
- Distribute the Lesson 1 Activity Worksheets and point out the map keys on both. Introduce and guide students through the coloring activities.

### Wrapping Up:

- Relate to students that California has the largest state population, while Wyoming is the least populous.
- Students can get more map key practice using the We Count! map. Ask students to name a state with more people than their home state; with fewer people; with roughly the same amount.

### Chalkboard Definitions

**map key:** a place that tells what the symbols and colors on a map mean.

**population:** the total number of people who live in a place.

### Extension Activities:

**1.** Use the We Count! map for a game of "Map Madness!" Make a space on the classroom floor for the map and divide students into teams or pairs. Make flash cards with instructions for students based on the map key. (For example: "Put your left hand on one of the states with the most people," or "Put your right foot on one of the states with fewer people.") Each student's turn will last until they are unable to twist enough to follow a card's instructions. The results are funny, pretzel-like poses and lots of learning fun!

**2.** If students can work with large numbers, copy the Total State Population Chart (inside back cover) and have them use these totals to do the activity on this page. Or, use the updated state population counts found on the official U.S. Census Bureau Web site. (See page 2, "Using the Web site," for tips on navigating this site.)

### Answers:

**Page 4:**
California has the most people.
**Page 5:**
Wyoming has the fewest people.

Name: _____

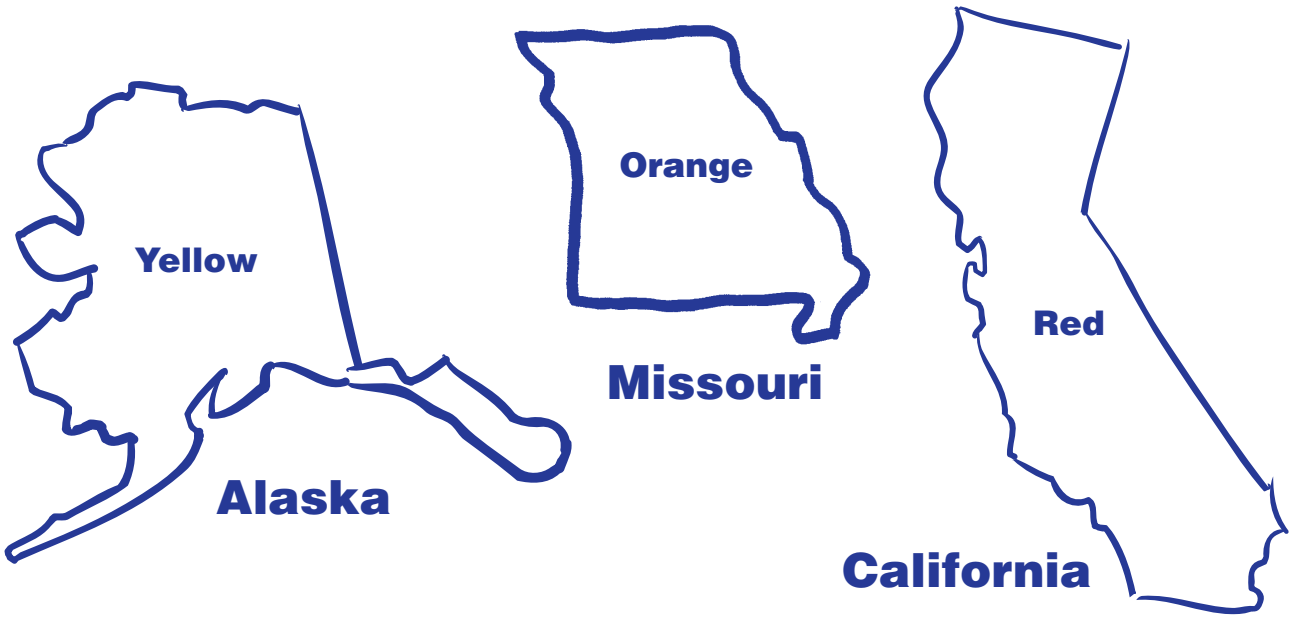
# Greater **States**

Map keys help you read maps. Look at the We Count! map. What do the colors mean? The map key tells you.

Look at the map key below. Read the color each box should be. Then color in the boxes.

| MAP KEY | |
|---|---|
| **Red** | States with the **most** people |
| **Orange** | States with **fewer** people |
| **Yellow** | States with the **fewest** people |

Look at the three states below. Read the color each state should be. Color in the states. **Which has the most people?** The map key tells you. Circle the state with the most people.



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Name: _____

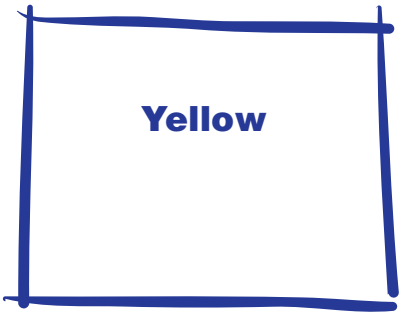
# Greater **States** (continued)

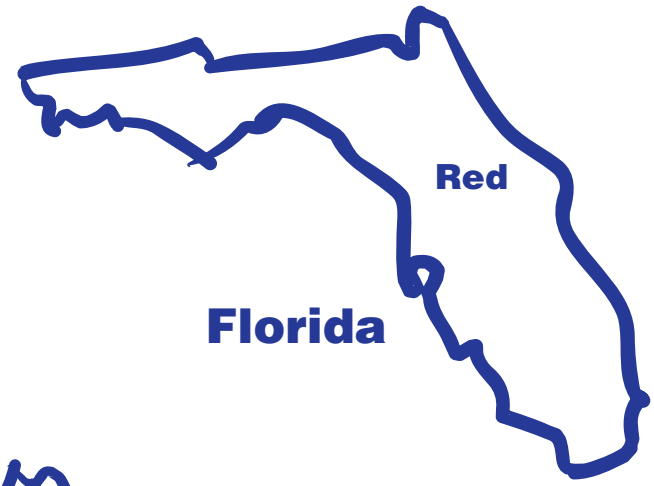
Now color in the map key boxes again.

| MAP KEY | |
|---|---|
| **Red** | States with the **most** people |
| **Orange** | States with **fewer** people |
| **Yellow** | States with the **fewest** people |

Here are some more states. Color them in. **Which state has the fewest people?** The map key tells you. Circle the state with the fewest people.

**Wyoming**




**Virginia**