Map Clue Sort

Find out what each map is meant to show.

SS24.7.1b "Use physical, political, and special-purpose maps to identify the distribution of people, location of places, and classification of physical features."

NAME _____ DATE _____

PHYSICAL MAP

A physical map focuses on natural features, such as mountains and oceans. It may also show how high or deep an area is.

Kilimanjaro's summit is labeled with its elevation.

POLITICAL MAP

A political map focuses on places and boundaries set by people, such as the borders of countries or states.

Spain and Portugal are split by a bold border.

1 SORT

8 items

For each numbered clue, circle PHYSICAL or POLITICAL, then choose two items and explain how you knew which type each one describes.

1.	Height bands reveal the Andes Mountains.	PHYSICAL POLITICAL
2.	Blue tones show the Pacific Ocean's depths.	PHYSICAL POLITICAL
3.	Lines outline the states within Brazil.	PHYSICAL POLITICAL
4.	Relief shading shows the Nile Valley's low land.	PHYSICAL POLITICAL
5.	Borders separate Canada's provinces.	PHYSICAL POLITICAL
6.	A line marks where India ends and Nepal begins.	PHYSICAL POLITICAL
7.	Contour lines reveal the Rocky Mountains' slopes.	PHYSICAL POLITICAL
8.	A symbol marks the highest point of the Alps.	PHYSICAL POLITICAL

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new map clue for each type, using places not named above.

PHYSICAL _____

POLITICAL _____

CHALLENGE

You need to find the border between Chile and Argentina and compare the land heights near it. In two sentences, name both map types you would use and explain why.

ANSWER KEY

Map Clue Sort

GRADE 7 · SS24.7.1b

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Height bands reveal the Andes Mountains.	**PHYSICAL**	Height bands show the elevation of a natural feature.
2	Blue tones show the Pacific Ocean's depths.	**PHYSICAL**	Ocean depth is a physical characteristic.
3	Lines outline the states within Brazil.	**POLITICAL**	State boundaries are set by people.
4	Relief shading shows the Nile Valley's low land.	**PHYSICAL**	Relief shading shows the height of the land.
5	Borders separate Canada's provinces.	**POLITICAL**	Provincial borders are political boundaries.
6	A line marks where India ends and Nepal begins.	**POLITICAL**	The line marks a border between countries.
7	Contour lines reveal the Rocky Mountains' slopes.	**PHYSICAL**	Contour lines show changes in land height.
8	A symbol marks the highest point of the Alps.	**PHYSICAL**	The highest point is part of a natural landform.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **PHYSICAL**: Height shading shows the Ethiopian Highlands.
- **POLITICAL**: A bold line divides Kenya from Tanzania.

Challenge: I would use a political map to find the border between Chile and Argentina. I would use a physical map to compare the land heights near the border.

For Part 2, accept explanations that connect natural features or elevation to physical maps, or boundaries set by people to political maps. Each clue focuses on one map type, even though real maps may include more than one kind of information.