

Carto Contest Association

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Keywords: cartography, map contest, students

Abstract:

Concours Carto is an association born in France in 2010 which aims to organize cartography competitions for students from 10 to 20 years old. Its ambition is to promote the practice of cartography and the teaching of its language in schools.

This association was founded by History-Geography teachers and is growing year after year. In 2022-2023, more than 5500 students from nearly 150 schools are registered for our competitions. They come from all continents, relying in particular on the network of French high schools abroad. Our participants come from metropolitan France and overseas, of course, but also from Europe (Spain, United Kingdom, Poland, etc.), America (United States, Panama, Canada), Africa (Congo, Morocco), Asia (Kuwait, Thailand, etc.) or Oceania (Australia).

Our competitions, whether they are aimed at students or the general public, are different in nature even if they have common characteristics: learn to make a sketch of a territory with an organized legend to demonstrate or explain geographical phenomena.

Students learn to find their way around the globe within the different territories they map. They also learn, by drawing it, geographical vocabulary: GLOBALIZATION, TERRITORIAL INEQUALITIES, LAND-USE PLANNING or SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT by studying populations, economical activities, transport networks and their location. It is therefore an excellent way to master geographical knowledge.

Obviously, cartographic knowledge is at the heart of the work submitted to the pupils who learn to handle the cartographic language. They learn to transform geographical information into a drawing and to convey a message through a map and an organized legend.

Finally, it is a learning process of citizenship that is at stake. Learning to work with others by having a task to accomplish and by setting goals at work. To better know one's territory and that of others by mapping it. To be enlightened and learn how to explain the major issues of contemporary geography. To become citizens of the world !

The objective of all of our competitions is therefore to make geography through cartography one of its privileged tools.

Two of these contests allow students to construct sketches based on information they search for and organize.

The Carto 4ème (third year in secondary school) Competition (CC4) is intended for 13-14 year old students who will work all year with other classes. The students produce sketches of territories in the world and compete with students from other classes by trying to do the best work possible. They also have to grade and comment on each other's work. A first round is organized for all students who must produce a sketch and a second round takes place in the second part of the year with the best students of the first round to determine the winning students. [FIGURE 1]

The Carto Imaginaire Contest (CCI) is a contest for students aged 9-11 years old in primary school and 11-13 years old in secondary school. The subject proposed is always related to a geographical issue (LIVE most often) and in a determined geographical space (Underground world, Ocean, Forest, ...) but in a more or less near future to reflect on imagined territories. [FIGURE 2]

In 2023, the students work on LIVE IN A HOT DESERT IN 2123.

The following contests allow students to turn text into a sketch with an organized caption. It is an activity that allows them to move from cartographic language to thinking about the geographic space being studied.

The Carto d'Actualité (CCA) competition for 14–16-year-old students is based on the mapping of a press article from the newspaper *Le Monde* with which we work. Every year we choose an article that deals with a recent news item (migrations, animal trafficking, global warming, tourism, ...) and that the students have to map individually and independently. [FIGURE 3]

For 2023 we have chosen an article about the island of Socotra in Yemen where the inhabitants live between the fear of civil war and an exceptional natural setting.

The Carto Presse Prépa (CCPP) competition allows students aged 18-20 to work on press articles but in a limited time of 6 hours and in groups of 2 or 3. All year long they participate in training sessions before a final test which takes place at the beginning of June. They must produce the most legible sketch possible with a perfectly organized key taking up the issues raised by the journalist on the territory studied.

The Carto 2nde (1st year in High school) competition for 15–16-year-old students works in the same way, but this time the students work on a specially written text to be mapped. All year long they make sketches which are used to determine the winners. There is a first round with 3 sketches to be done in a limited time of 2 hours and then a 2nd round with the best pairs who make two new maps. The subjects are based on the geography program studied in class. [FIGURE 4]

The Carto Geoimage Contest (CCG) is the latest of our contests and is aimed at students aged 16-18. Our students have to make a sketch from a satellite image accompanied by an explanatory sheet. This new contest, realized in partnership with the National Center for Space Studies (CNES) in Toulouse, allows students to learn how to read satellite images and to transcribe this information in the form of an organized key and a sketch. As the texts are written by geographers, the students also learn to use a very high level of geographic language and concepts.

Finally, there is a last contest, the Carto des Passionnés (CCP) which is aimed at the general public: teachers, students, map enthusiasts can register and participate. The medium used is a little different because for the last two years we have chosen to ask the participants to realize their sketch from a television report. The particularity of this contest is that it is the students, those of the Carto 4ème Contest, who evaluate and classify the sketches!

The association *Concours Carto* works with many partners from the university, publishing and journalism to develop the teaching of geography and promote the practice of cartography for our students. The maps are regularly featured in books, magazines or even radio programs, which makes the students who produced them very proud! These competitions are also an opportunity for our young students to learn more about cartography-related careers.