



Marilyn Johnson

Free children's program addresses geographical illiteracy

Story by Marilyn Johnson • Jan 12

More than 85% of people in the United States, including children, cannot tell you where California, Pennsylvania, Idaho, and Mississippi are on a map. A National Geographic/Roper Poll found that half the 18-24-year-old Americans surveyed could not locate New York on a map of the United States, and nearly 6 in 10 could not locate Ohio.

Geographic literacy is an important educational tool, but understanding geography can be much more than learning about the location of cities, states, or countries. It helps with understanding people in general, knowing different environments, cultures, and landscapes and how they all connect to shape our world. People, especially children, can become more responsible global citizens, better protectors of the planet, and improve their welfare when they understand the world around them.

The Adventures of Mo is a free and engaging online and in-person program that promotes US geography and history to help kids better understand their surroundings, both near and far. *Mo* can inspire children, and adults, by encouraging them to learn more about each state and our country and increase their awareness about their own communities through its interactive participation options.

The *Adventures of Mo* includes:



- A FREE eBook (*The Adventures of Mo*) that takes kids on adventures to every US state through the eyes of Mo, an American Eskimo dog. The book comprises of 50 chapters, one per state.
- A blog post about every state that contains interesting historical and geographic information.
- Individual state trivia questions to add interaction to the learning; a unique #TriviaTuesday question is posted on *Mo's* social channels weekly.
- School, group, or Zoom presentations by the author are available to any school or organization in the United States.
- A Youtube series called "[Videos for kids, by kids](#)". In these video vignettes, children inform their peers about their home state or other states they have visited.

The Adventures of Mo was created by freelance journalist and writer Carol Patton who began the series as a tribute to her family dog, an American Eskimo named Mozart, who passed away from cancer.

"Although I grew up in Michigan, I had no idea it was the only place in the world with a [floating post office](#)," Patton explains. (Located on the Detroit River, the J.W. Westcott II is the only boat in the world that delivers mail to crewmembers stationed on ships throughout the river.)

She adds, "I am hoping adults and kids will be surprised at what they discover about each state, including their home state, through my eBook or program. By learning more about US geography and history, people can better understand our nation's diverse cultures and respect and appreciate our differences."

While the program is free, online donations are accepted. Likewise, Patton seeks to partner with a sponsor interested in helping children learn about US geography, history, and cardinal directions.

To learn more about *The Adventures of Mo* or how you can participate in the program, visit: <https://adventuresofmo.com>.