

Lesson 6

READ THIS STORY #1, Basic

Geography Bees

When a survey was conducted several years ago, it was discovered that many Americans couldn't find their own country on a blank world map. In response to this news, the National Geographic Society began sponsoring state and national contests called "Geography Bees" to stimulate interest in learning about the world.

Paul became interested in geography when he heard news reports about our troops being sent to Somalia. He asked his father where Somalia was. Paul's father couldn't show Paul where it was on a map because Paul was blind. When he told Paul that Somalia was in Africa, Paul asked where Africa was located.

After that, Paul remained curious about the world. He listened to radio broadcasts, put together geographic puzzles, and read Braille books to gather information. When he was fourteen, Paul entered his state's Geography Bee and became Arizona's state champion.

Then he journeyed to Washington, DC, to take part in the national finals. The questions were extremely difficult, but because Paul could successfully rank Libya, Zambia, and Gabon by size, and he identified the Arabian Sea as the home of a species of endangered turtles, he became a semifinalist.

Although Paul did not win the national contest, his accomplishments are inspiring.