

Grade 7

GEOGRAPHY

Geography is a diverse field of study that describes and examines spatial patterns of physical and human phenomena across Earth’s surface and the processes that created them. Geography provides a spatial perspective that enables students to answer questions about the world around them, including why things are located where they are. In this one-semester geography course, students increase their knowledge about the physical and human nature of the world and about relationships between people and their environments. Interwoven throughout the course are the three interrelated components of geography. These components include Earth as a physical object, a physical environment, and a place in which humans live; geographic skills; and spatial and ecological perspectives. Students also study geography in the context of economics, civics and politics, history, and culture. Content standards follow a thematic approach based on the essential elements of the National Geographic Research and Exploration’s *National Geography Standards*, which includes the world in spatial terms, places and regions, physical systems, human systems, environment and society, and uses of geography.

The classroom instructional environment should provide students with numerous opportunities to participate in learning activities that incorporate a variety of formats and learning tools, including role-playing, debate, and hands-on activities as well as the use of maps, globes, satellite images, and skills to interpret graphic organizers, text, charts, and graphs. Students should have multiple opportunities for listening, reading, and writing activities as well as group and individual projects. Culminating projects ensure that students apply geographic knowledge and skills to understand local, national, and international issues.

Students will:

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1. Describe the world in spatial terms using maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies.

- Explaining the use of map essentials, including type, projections, scale, legend, distance, direction, grid, and symbols
 Examples: type—reference, thematic, planimetric, topographic, globes and map projections, aerial photographs, satellite images
 direction—lines of latitude and longitude, cardinal and intermediate directions
 distance—fractional, graphic, and verbal scales
- Identifying geospatial technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective
 Examples: Google Earth, Global Positioning System (GPS), geographic information system

(GIS), satellite remote sensing, aerial photography

- Utilizing maps to explain relationships and environments among people and places, including trade patterns, governmental alliances, and immigration patterns
- Applying mental maps to answer geographic questions, including how experiences and cultures influence perceptions and decisions
- Categorizing the geographic organization of people, places, and environments using spatial models

Examples: urban land-use patterns, distribution and linkages of cities, migration patterns, population density patterns, spread of culture traits, spread of contagious diseases through a population

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2. Determine how regions are used to describe the organization of Earth's surface.

- Identifying physical and human features used as criteria for mapping formal, functional, and perceptual regions
Examples: physical features—landforms, climates, water bodies, resources human features—language, religion, culture, economy, government
- Interpreting processes and reasons for regional change, including land use, urban growth, population, natural disasters, and trade
- Analyzing interactions among regions to show transnational relationships, including the flow of commodities and Internet connectivity
Examples: winter produce to Alabama from Chile and California, poultry from Alabama to other countries
- Comparing how culture and experience influence individual perceptions of places and regions
Example: cultural influences—language, religion, ethnicity, iconography, symbology, stereotypes
- Explaining globalization and its impact on people in all regions of the world
Examples: quality and sustainability of life, international cooperation

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3. Compare geographic patterns in the environment that result from processes within the atmosphere, biosphere, lithosphere, and hydrosphere of Earth's physical systems.

- Comparing Earth-Sun relationships regarding seasons, fall hurricanes, monsoon rainfall, and tornadoes
- Explaining processes that shape the physical environment, including long-range effects of extreme weather phenomena
 Examples: processes—plate tectonics, glaciers, ocean and atmospheric circulation, El Niño long-range effects—erosion on agriculture, typhoons on coastal ecosystems
- Describing characteristics and physical processes that influence the spatial distribution of ecosystems and biomes on Earth's surface
- Comparing how ecosystems vary from place to place and over time
 Examples: place to place—difference in soil, climate, and topography over time—alteration or destruction of natural habitats due to effects of floods and forest fires, reduction of species diversity due to loss of natural habitats, reduction of wetlands due to replacement by farms, reduction of forest and farmland due to replacement by housing developments, reduction of previously cleared land due to reforestation efforts

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4. Evaluate spatial patterns and the demographic structure of population on Earth's surface in terms of density, dispersion, growth and mortality rates, natural increase, and doubling time.

Examples: human—increase or decrease in population, land-use change in tropical forests
 natural processes—hurricanes, tsunamis, tornadoes, floods

- Predicting reasons and consequences of migration, including push and pull factors
 Examples: push factors —politics, war, famine
 pull factors—potential jobs, family

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5. Explain how cultural features, traits, and diffusion help define regions, including religious structures, agricultural patterns, ethnic enclaves, ethnic restaurants, and the spread of Islam.

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6. Illustrate how primary, secondary, and tertiary economic activities have specific functions and spatial patterns.

Examples: primary—forestry, agriculture, mining
 secondary—manufacturing furniture, grinding coffee beans, assembling automobiles
 tertiary—selling furniture, selling coffee latte, selling automobiles

- Comparing one location over another for production of goods and services

Examples: fast food restaurants in highly accessible locations, medical offices near hospitals, legal offices near courthouses, industries near major transportation routes

- Analyzing the impact of economic interdependence and globalization on places and their populations

Examples: seed corn produced in Iowa and planted in South America; silicon chips manufactured in California and installed in a computer made in China that is purchased in Australia

- Explaining why countries enter into global trade agreements, including the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA), the European Union (EU), the Mercado Común del Sur (MERCOSUR), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

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7. Classify spatial patterns of settlement in different regions of the world, including types and sizes of settlement patterns.

Examples: types—linear, clustered, grid
 sizes—large urban, small urban, and rural areas

- Explaining human activities that resulted in the development of settlements at particular locations due to trade, political importance, or natural resources

Examples: Timbuktu near caravan routes; Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, and Birmingham, Alabama, as manufacturing centers near coal and iron ore deposits; Singapore near a major ocean transportation corridor

- Describing settlement patterns in association with the location of resources
 Examples: fall line settlements near waterfalls used as a source of energy for mills, European industrial settlements near coal seams, spatial arrangement of towns and cities in North American Corn Belt settlements
- Describing ways in which urban areas interact and influence surrounding regions
 Examples: daily commuters from nearby regions; communication centers that service nearby and distant locations through television, radio, newspapers, and the Internet; regional specialization in services or production

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8. Determine political, military, cultural, and economic forces that contribute to cooperation and conflict among people.

- Identifying political boundaries based on physical and human systems
 Examples: physical systems—rivers as boundaries between counties human systems—streets as boundaries between local government units
- Identifying effects of cooperation among countries in controlling territories
 Examples: Great Lakes environmental management by United States and Canada, United Nations (UN) Heritage sites and host countries, Antarctic Treaty on scientific research
- Describing the eruption of territorial conflicts over borders, resources, land use, and ethnic and nationalistic identity
 Examples: India and Pakistan conflict over Jammu and Kashmir, the West Bank, the Sudan, Somalia piracy, ocean fishing and mineral rights, local land-use disputes

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9. Explain how human actions modify the physical environment within and between places, including how human induced changes affect the environment.

Examples: within places—construction of dams and downstream water availability for human consumption, agriculture, and aquatic ecosystems between places—urban heat islands and global climate change, desertification and land degradation, pollution and ozone depletion

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10. Explain how human systems develop in response to physical environmental conditions.

Example: farming practices in different regions, including slash-and-burn agriculture, terrace farming, and center-pivot irrigation

- Identifying types, locations, and characteristics of natural hazards, including earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, and mudslides
- Differentiating ways people prepare for and respond to natural hazards, including building storm shelters, conducting fire and tornado drills, and establishing building codes for construction

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11. Explain the cultural concept of natural resources and changes in spatial distribution, quantity, and quality through time and by location.

- Evaluating various cultural viewpoints regarding the use or value of natural resources
Examples: salt and gold as valued commodities, petroleum product use and the invention of the internal combustion engine
- Identifying issues regarding depletion of nonrenewable resources and the sustainability of renewable resources
Examples: ocean shelf and Arctic exploration for petroleum, hybrid engines in cars, wind-powered generators, solar collection panels

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12. Explain geographic contexts that influenced historical events.

Examples: physical features—fall line, Cumberland Gap, Westward Expansion in the United States, weather conditions at Valley Forge and the outcome of the American Revolution, role of ocean currents and winds during exploration by Christopher Columbus environmental issues—boundary disputes, ownership of ocean resources, revitalization of downtown areas