

T H E W O R L D I N S P A T I A L T E R M S



1

- Personal directions (e.g., left/right, up/down, front/back)
- Location in the home or classroom
- The globe as a model of Earth
- Maps as representations of local and distant places
- Location and names of places in school and the neighborhood
- Relative location (e.g., near/far, above/below)
- Location of continents and oceans

- The globe as a model of Earth (hemispheres, poles, equator)
- Map elements (title, scale, symbols, legend, grid, cardinal and intermediate directions)
- Spatial elements of point, line, and area
- Relative and absolute locations
- Location and distribution of physical and human features
- Local and state maps and atlases
- Major cities of the state

- Location of major human and physical features on Earth
- Physical/political maps of the state and the U.S.
- Latitude, longitude, and the global grid
- Time zones
- Mental maps
- Spatial graphics (e.g., air photos, satellite images, various map types and atlases)
- Major countries of the world
- Major cities of the state, U.S., and the world

- Distribution of major human and physical features at country and global scales
- Map types (e.g., topographic, navigational, thematic)
- Locational technology (GPS and GIS)
- Expanding mental maps
- Map projections (e.g., size, shape, distance, and direction)

- Map, globe, and atlas use (e.g., observing and analyzing relationships)
- Expanding locational technology (including remote sensing, GPS, and GIS)
- Map projections for specific applications
- Location/allocation situations (e.g., the best location for a fast food outlet and the extent of its market area, the best location for a hospital and the area it serves)
- Mental maps and spatial relationships

P L A C E S A N D R E G I O N S



2

- Concept of physical features (e.g., mountains, plains, hills, oceans, islands)
- Concept of human features (e.g., cities, buildings, farms, roads, railroads)
- Description of places past and present

- Concept of formal (uniform) regions
- Physical and human characteristics of neighborhood and community
- Similarities and differences of local places and regions with other places and regions
- Changes in places and regions over time

- Physical and human characteristics of places and regions within the state and the U.S.
- Changes in places and regions over time
- Perceptions of places and regions
- Regions defined by multiple criteria

- Physical and human characteristics of places and regions in the U.S. and the world
- Factors that influence people's perceptions of places and regions
- Changes in places and regions over time
- How culture affects places and regions (e.g., cultural landscapes)
- Concepts of formal, functional, and perceptual regions
- World political regions
- World cultural regions

- Physical and human processes shape places and regions
- The importance of places and regions to individual and social identity
- Changes in places and regions over time
- Interdependence of places and regions
- Political and historical characteristics of regions
- Critical issues and problems of places and regions
- Regional analysis of geographic issues and questions

P H Y S I C A L S Y S T E M S



3

- Weather
- Seasons

- Basic components of Earth's physical systems (e.g., landforms, water, climate and weather, erosion and deposition)
- Concept of an ecosystem (interdependence of plants and animals)
- Earth-Sun relationships (day/night, length of day)
- Introduction to the hydrologic cycle

- Physical processes shape Earth's features and patterns (e.g., weathering, erosion, deposition, plate tectonics)
- Concept of an ecosystem at different scales
- Earth-Sun relationships (e.g., rotation: day/night, revolution: seasons, energy balance, tides)
- Climate types
- Hydrologic cycle (precipitation, evaporation, condensation)
- Extreme natural events (e.g., floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes)

- Physical processes shape patterns in the physical environment
- Biomes (major ecological communities such as tropical rain forest, desert, grassland)
- Global patterns of wind and water
- River systems of the U.S. and the world
- Types of precipitation (orographic, cyclonic, convective)
- Implications of the hydrologic cycle (hydrogeology, surface water, drought, floods, watersheds)
- Causes and patterns of extreme natural events (e.g., floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes)

- Components of Earth's physical system (atmosphere, lithosphere, biosphere, and hydrosphere)
- Plate tectonics/continental drift
- World patterns of extreme events
- Global ocean and atmospheric systems
- World climate regions
- World patterns of biodiversity
- Inter-annual climate variation—El Niño Southern Oscillation

H U M A N S Y S T E M S



4

- Culture of the local community and other communities (e.g., food, clothing, housing, holidays, sports, games)
- Land use in the local community (farms, parks, factories, houses, stores)
- Places where people work
- Transportation networks in daily life

- Patterns of cultural traits (e.g., language, religion, family structure)
- Patterns of land use and economic activity in the community (e.g., agricultural, industrial, commercial, residential, educational, recreational)
- Political units and hierarchies (e.g., differences between community, city, county, state, country)
- Transportation (people and goods) and communication networks
- Population distribution
- Human settlement patterns (e.g., rural, urban, suburban)
- Changes in culture (e.g., spread of ideas, people, goods)

- Patterns and processes of migration past and present (push/pull and diffusion)
- Population characteristics of the state and the U.S. (e.g., density, distribution, growth rates)
- Human settlement patterns and land use
- Cultural regions (e.g., religion, language, ethnicity)
- Types of economic activity (primary, secondary, tertiary)
- Development of transportation and communication networks
- Intrastate and interstate commerce

- Population density, distribution, and growth rates
- Demographic transition of a country
- Human migration patterns (forced/voluntary)
- Types and patterns of human settlement (from villages to megacities)
- Internal structure of cities
- Cities as providers of goods and services
- Processes of cultural diffusion
- Patterns of culture in the U.S. and the world (e.g., religion, language, ethnicity, economy)
- Regional development in the U.S. and the world
- Transportation and communications networks in the U.S. and the world
- Types and patterns of economic activity (primary, secondary, tertiary, quaternary)
- Global economic interdependence (trade, commerce, and communication)
- Territorial dispute and conflict

- Population characteristics by world regions, country, and regions within countries
- Demographic transition
- Impact of human migration
- Changes in human settlement patterns over time (from villages to megacities)
- Internal structures of cities in developed and developing countries
- Convergence and divergence of cultures
- Economic development by world regions, country, and regions within countries
- Global economic interdependence (e.g., regional specialization, trade, transnationalism, multinationals)
- Patterns of global power and influence (e.g., NATO, United Nations, European Union)
- Cooperation and conflict in the division and control of Earth's surface

E N V I R O N M E N T A N D S O C I E T Y



5

- Introduction to resources (e.g., food from farms, wood from trees, minerals from the ground, fish from the sea)
- Impact of weather on everyday life
- Environmental issues (e.g., litter and recycling)

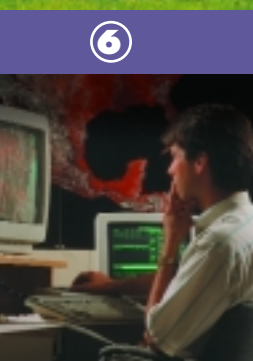
- Physical environments influence human activities (e.g., availability of water, climate, fertility of soils)
- Human activities change Earth (e.g., agriculture, transportation, industry)
- Earth's natural resources (e.g., minerals, air, water, land)
- Environmental issues (e.g., solid waste, water quality)

- Human modification of the physical environment (e.g., construction of dams, strip mining, draining wetlands)
- Human adaptation to the physical environment (e.g., use of air conditioning, irrigation, agricultural activities)
- Renewable (land, forests, water) and non-renewable (minerals, fossil fuels) resources
- Impact of extreme natural events (earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, mudslides) on the human and physical environment
- Environmental issues (e.g., water supply, air quality, solid waste)

- Effects of human modification of the physical environment (e.g., global warming, deforestation, desertification, urbanization)
- Impact of natural and technological hazards/disasters on the human and physical environment
- Perceptions of and reactions to extreme natural events
- Limits and opportunities of the physical environment for human activities
- World patterns of resource distribution and utilization
- Changes in the importance of energy resources
- Watershed management
- Environmental issues (e.g., air pollution, water pollution, and solid waste, including hazardous and toxic materials)

- Global effects of human modification of the physical environment
- Global effects on the human environment by changes in the physical environment
- Impacts of major natural hazards/disasters on humans
- Impacts of technological hazards/disasters on the physical environment
- World patterns of resource distribution and utilization
- Use and sustainability of resources
- Environmental issues (e.g., global warming, loss of biodiversity, deforestation, ozone layer, air pollution, water pollution, acid precipitation, disposal of solid waste)

U S E S O F G E O G R A P H Y



6

- Description of places in past times
- Environmental problems in the present and future

- Physical and human characteristics of places change over time
- Spatial dimensions of geographical problems

- Influences of physical and human features on historical events
- Interaction of physical and human systems and influence on current and future conditions

- Effects of physical and human geographic factors on major historic events
- Role of multiple points of view in contemporary geographic policies and issues

- Influence of geographical features on the evolution of significant historic events and movements
- Local, regional, and world policies and problems with spatial dimensions