

**K-12TH
GRADES**

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The Ultimate
GEOGRAPHY
&
TIMELINE GUIDE

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MAPS

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WITH TIMELINE FIGURES BY LIBBY WIGGERS

INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY

Geography comes from the Greek word, *geographia*, meaning to write about or describe the earth.

The study of geography is the study of places and the complex relationships between people and their environments. There are many aspects of geography. Two broad subdivisions are physical geography and human geography. Physical geography includes natural features, along with climate, geologic, and other processes that help shape our world. Human geography includes things like transportation, population, and how humans have impacted their environment.

Maps

Geographers must pull together information from many other fields of study without losing sight of the big picture: the interconnection of people, places, and things. Maps are one way geographers can share information.

- **Cartography:** the science and the art of making maps.
- **Cartographer:** a map maker.

As a science, cartography must be as accurate as possible. As an art, it requires careful use of color and design to communicate information clearly. In the 20th century, technology revolutionized cartography. Aerial photography, satellite imaging, and computers all brought cartography to new standards of accuracy.

Types of Maps

- **Topographic Map:** curving contour lines connect points that are at the same elevation.
- **Physical Map:** shows the elevation of a place by using a color code.
- **Political Map:** shows actual territorial boundaries in existence (i.e., a political map of the United States would show the boundary of each state).
- **Climate Map:** shows the climate of a place by using a color code.
- **Vegetation Map:** shows the vegetation regions by using a color code.
- **Precipitation Map:** shows either annual or average monthly precipitation.
- **Population Map:** shows population by using a color code.
- **Street Map:** shows roads, important buildings, and places in detail.
- **Time Zone:** shows time zones by using both a grid and a color code.
- **Historical Maps:** maps that draw boundaries based on earlier time periods.
- **3D Landform Maps:** maps on which you can physically feel different geographic features.

These are just a few kinds of maps. Maps also show things such as land use, resources, types of population (i.e., Asian, Indian, etc.), income, unemployment, life expectancy, cancer rates, and much more.

INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY

Geographical Terms You Need to Know

Western Hemisphere: The region of the earth between the 160° east meridian and the 20° west meridian. Commonly defined as North and South America.

Eastern Hemisphere: The region of the earth between the 20° west meridian and the 160° east meridian. Commonly defined as Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and New Zealand.

Northern Hemisphere: Everything above the equator.

Southern Hemisphere: Everything below the equator.

Latitude: The distance north or south of the equator.

Longitude: The distance east or west of the Prime Meridian.

Prime Meridian: The line of 0° longitude; the starting point for measuring distance east and west around the globe. It runs through Greenwich, England.

Tropic of Cancer: The line of latitude about 23° north of the equator.

Tropic of Capricorn: The line of latitude about 23° south of the equator.

Tropics: The term used to describe the region that falls between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. The tropics are generally warm year round, with monthly temperatures averaging 77°-82°F.

Subtropics: The zones between 23° and about 40° north and south of the equator.

Equator: An imaginary line around the middle of the earth.

*Add new terms below as you learn them:

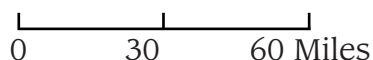
INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY

Map Terms You Need to Know

Symbols: Simple drawings that show what things are. For example, a thin blue line may be the symbol for a river.

Key or Legend: Maps use either a key or a legend to explain what the symbols are. Look for the key or legend when beginning to decode a map. Sometimes it's called a key, meaning it helps unlock the secrets of the map, and sometimes it's called a legend because it helps to tell the story of the map.

Scale: Tells the actual size of what's on the map. For example: 1:2,000 means that every one unit on the map stands for 2,000 actual units. Another way scale might be shown is by drawing it like this:



Four inches on a map may represent four feet, four miles, or even 40,000 miles! It's important to look at the scale when reading a map. It should be found within the key or legend.

Compass Rose: A circular and often ornate design used on maps to indicate the points of the compass.

Grid: Network of horizontal and vertical lines drawn over a map to help find places.

Coordinates: Tells us exactly where something on the grid is located. For example, in the game Battleship, you know where to look when your opponent says "F6."

*Add new terms below as you learn them:

GOOD STUFF TO KNOW BY HEART!

Seven Continents

In order from largest to smallest in land size:

1. Asia
2. Africa
3. North America
4. South America
5. Antarctica
6. Europe
7. Australia

Four Major Oceans

In order from largest to smallest in area:

1. Pacific Ocean
2. Atlantic Ocean
3. Indian Ocean
4. Arctic Ocean

Extremes

Smallest Continent: Australia
Largest Continent: Asia
Largest Lake: Caspian Sea, Asia
Largest Desert: Sahara, Africa
Highest Waterfall: Angel Falls, Venezuela
Largest Island: Greenland
Longest River: Nile, Africa
Largest Ocean: Pacific
Highest Mountain: Mount Everest

(Himalayan Mountain Range, China/Nepal)

Largest Surface Lakes

Listed in order of area from largest to smallest. Can you find them quickly on a map?

1. Caspian Sea, Asia
2. Lake Superior, Canada/U.S.A.
3. Lake Victoria, Africa
4. Lake Huron, Canada/U.S.A.
5. Lake Michigan, U.S.A.
6. Lake Tanganyika, Africa
7. Baikal, Russia

(Note: out of the eight highest mountains, seven are in the Himalayas!
Only the second highest, "K2," isn't. It's in the Karakoram Range in China/India.)

Water Facts

Amount of the earth's surface covered by water: 71%
World's largest ocean: Pacific Ocean
Ocean that separates Europe from America: Atlantic Ocean
Warmest ocean: Indian Ocean
Smallest and coldest ocean: Arctic Ocean
World's largest lake: Caspian Sea
Europe's most important waterway: Rhine River

GOOD STUFF TO KNOW BY HEART!

Largest Deserts

How quickly can you find these on a world map?

1. Sahara Desert
2. Australian Deserts
3. Arabian Desert
4. Gobi Desert, central Asia
5. Kalahari Desert, southern Africa

Largest Islands

How quickly can you find these on a world map?

1. Greenland
2. New Guinea
3. Borneo
4. Madagascar
5. Baffin Island
6. Sumatra Island
7. Honshu

World's Longest Rivers

How quickly can you find these on a map?

1. Nile, Africa
2. Amazon, South America
3. Yangtze, Asia
4. Mississippi-Missouri, North America
5. Huang (Yellow), Asia

Rivers with Greatest Volume of Water

1. Amazon, South America
2. Congo, Africa

Although the Nile is slightly longer, the Amazon surpasses it in every other category.

Smallest Independent Countries in the World

Can you find them quickly on a map?

1. Vatican City
2. Monaco
3. Nauru
4. Tuvalu
5. San Marino

Largest Countries in the World

Can you find them quickly on a map?

1. Russia
2. Canada
3. China
4. USA
5. Brazil

GOOD STUFF TO KNOW BY HEART!

States and Capitals

Montgomery, Alabama	Baton Rouge, Louisiana	Columbus, Ohio
Juneau, Alaska	Augusta, Maine	Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Phoenix, Arizona	Annapolis, Maryland	Salem, Oregon
Little Rock, Arkansas	Boston, Massachusetts	Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
Sacramento, California	Lansing, Michigan	Providence, Rhode Island
Denver, Colorado	Saint Paul, Minnesota	Columbia, South Carolina
Hartford, Connecticut	Jackson, Mississippi	Pierre, South Dakota
Dover, Delaware	Jefferson City, Missouri	Nashville, Tennessee
Tallahassee, Florida	Helena, Montana	Austin, Texas
Atlanta, Georgia	Lincoln, Nebraska	Salt Lake City, Utah
Honolulu, Hawaii	Carson City, Nevada	Montpelier, Vermont
Boise, Idaho	Concord, New Hampshire	Richmond, Virginia
Springfield, Illinois	Trenton, New Jersey	Olympia, Washington
Indianapolis, Indiana	Santa Fe, New Mexico	Charleston, West Virginia
Des Moines, Iowa	Albany, New York	Madison, Wisconsin
Topeka, Kansas	Raleigh, North Carolina	Cheyenne, Wyoming
Frankfort, Kentucky	Bismarck, North Dakota	

Know Your Earth!

Distance around the equator:	24,901 miles
Distance to the center of the earth:	3,959 miles
Average distance: earth to sun:	93,000,000 miles
Average distance: earth to moon:	238,900 miles
Coldest recorded temperature:	Antarctica (-128.6° F)
Hottest recorded temperature:	Furnace Creek Ranch, CA (134.1°F)
Highest average rainfall:	Mt. Waialeale, Hawaii
Driest place on earth:	Atacama Desert, Chile