Grade 12 World Geography: A Human Perspective (40S)

A Course for Independent Study

Field Validation Version
GRADE 12 WORLD GEOGRAPHY: A HUMAN PERSPECTIVE (40S)

A Course for Independent Study

Field Validation Version
Grade 12 world geography: a human perspective (40S): a course for independent study—Field validation version

This resource is available in print and electronic formats. Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN: 978-0-7711-6172-8 (print)

1. Geography—Study and teaching (Secondary).
2. Geography—Study and teaching (Secondary)—Manitoba.
3. Human geography—Study and teaching (Secondary).
5. Distance education—Manitoba.
6. Correspondence schools and courses—Manitoba.

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Any websites referenced in this resource are subject to change.

Available in alternate formats upon request.
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# Acknowledgements

Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following individuals in the development of *Grade 12 World Geography: A Human Perspective (40S): A Course for Independent Study, Field Validation Version*.

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<td>Diana Mae Boychuk</td>
<td>Independent Consultant</td>
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Introduction

What is “a human perspective” with regard to world geography? The short answer is that it is the study of the relationship between people and their physical surroundings. The long answer is that it is an in-depth study of humankind’s relationship (past and present) with Earth and how human activities (past and present) impact Earth and the challenges now faced in dealing with the aftermath of those activities.

Since the 1960s, the world has been seen as interconnected. What happens in one area of the world impacts other areas. Population, resources, food, industrialization, and urbanization are issues with which each country must cope. At the forefront of those challenges is the environment, and how we can protect the environment while still solving the world’s problems: the increasing world population, the declining world resources, maintaining an adequate world food supply, and the side effects of world urbanization and industrialization trends.

As a student enrolled in a distance learning course, you have taken on a dual role—that of a student and a teacher. As a student, you are responsible for mastering the lessons and completing the learning activities and assignments. As a teacher, you are responsible for checking your work carefully, noting areas in which you need to improve, and motivating yourself to succeed.

What Will You Learn in This Course?

This course outlines the challenges facing the world today. Module 1 begins with an overview of world geography. Modules 2 to 5 each explore a specific aspect of world geography from a human perspective and how that aspect is connected on a global level. Module 2 looks at world population, Module 3 puts the spotlight on world food supply, Module 4 studies world resources, and Module 5 focuses on industrialization and urbanization. In Module 6, the underlying theme of world interdependence that runs through each module is brought to the forefront to show the “big picture.”

The course reviews the major world challenges and demonstrates how those challenges are connected, not only globally in a physical sense, but also to each other, and how they are all connected to, and have an impact on, the environment. It is all about connections.
How Is This Course Organized?

The *Grade 12 World Geography: A Human Perspective* course consists of the following six modules:

- Module 1: World Geography Overview
- Module 2: World Population: Characteristics, Distribution, and Growth
- Module 3: World Food Supply: Production and Distribution
- Module 5: World Industrialization and Urbanization
- Module 6: World Interdependence

Each module in this course consists of several lessons, which contain the following components:

- **Lesson Focus**: The Lesson Focus at the beginning of each lesson identifies one or more specific goals that are addressed in the lesson. The goals identify the knowledge and skills you should have achieved by the end of the lesson.

- **Introduction**: Each lesson begins with an explanation of what you will be learning in that lesson.

- **Lesson**: The main body of the lesson is made up of the content that you need to learn. It contains explanations, diagrams, and maps.

- **Learning Activities**: Most lessons include one or more learning activities that will help you learn about the lesson topics and prepare you for the assignments, the midterm examination, and the final examination. Once you complete a learning activity, check your responses against those provided in the Learning Activity Answer Key found at the end of each applicable module. You will not submit the completed learning activities to your tutor/marker.

- **Assignments**: Assignments are found throughout each module within this course. At the end of each module, you will mail or electronically submit all your completed assignments from that module to your tutor/marker for assessment. All assignments combined will be worth a total of 50 percent of your final mark in this course.

- **Glossary Terms**: This list identifies the important words that are used in the lesson. The glossary terms are highlighted in bold within the text. They are defined in the Glossary at the end of the course.

- **Summary**: Each lesson ends with a brief review of what you just learned.
This course also includes the following sections:

- **Glossary**: The Glossary at the end of the course provides definitions for an alphabetical list of the terms identified in **bold** throughout the course. You can use the Glossary to review terms used in the course.

- **Appendices**: At the end of the course, you will find five appendices, which contain maps, a sample census, and instructions on how to cite references.

- **References**: At the end of the course, you will also find a list of references used to develop this course.

**What Resources Will You Need for This Course?**

You do not need a textbook for this course, but it would be beneficial if you had **access to a current atlas**. All the content is provided directly within the course. There are some lessons where website links are offered as sources of information or for supplementary reference and reading; however, if you do not have access to the Internet, you can still complete the course. You will need a notebook to answer questions for the learning activities where insufficient space has been provided for the answers. You will also require access to an email account so that you can communicate with your tutor/marker. A valid email account is required for your Blackboard Learn profile. The website address for Blackboard Learn is <https://bblearn.merlin.mb.ca/>.

**Note**: This course contains a number of images that are best viewed in colour. Colour versions of these images in PDF format are available on Blackboard Learn at <https://bblearn.merlin.ca/>. Students are issued a username and password at the time of registration. If Internet access is unavailable, a CD with these images is available upon request from the Distance Learning Unit.

**Optional Resources**

It would be helpful if you had access to the following resources:

- **Photocopier/scanner**: With access to a photocopier/scanner, you could make a copy of your assignments before submitting them so that if your tutor/marker wants to discuss an assignment with you over the phone, each of you will have a copy. It would also allow you to continue studying or to complete further lessons while your original work is with the tutor/marker. Photocopying or scanning your assignments will also ensure that you keep a copy in case the originals are lost.

- **Resource people**: Access to local resource people, such as teachers, school counsellors, and librarians, would help you complete the course.
- **A computer with word processing software:** Access to word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word) and presentation and slide software (e.g., Microsoft PowerPoint) would help you complete some assignments.

- **A computer with Internet access:** Some lessons suggest website links as sources of information or for supplementary reference and reading. If you do not have Internet access, you will still be able to complete the course, but you will need to find different ways of accessing information.

**Internet Safety**

If you choose to use the Internet to do research, be safe. The Internet is a valuable source of information and should be used responsibly. Talk to your parents/guardians about Internet safety, and use the following guidelines when going online:

- Choose a user name that does not tell your name, gender, age, or other personal details.
- Never give anyone private information.
- Do not answer emails from strangers.
- If someone asks you to keep your relationship with him or her a secret, stop talking to the person and immediately tell your parent/guardian.
- Do not email or post pictures or files to anyone.

The above is **not** a complete list because no list can possibly cover all dangerous situations. Use your common sense and be careful.

**Who Can Help You with This Course?**

Taking an independent study course is different from taking a course in a classroom. Instead of relying on the teacher to tell you to complete a learning activity or an assignment, you must tell yourself to be responsible for your learning and for meeting deadlines. There are, however, two people who can help you be successful in your course: your tutor/marker and your learning partner.

**Your Tutor/Marker**

Tutor/markers are experienced educators who tutor independent students and mark assignments and examinations. When you are having difficulty with something in this course, be sure to contact your tutor/marker, who is there to help you. Your tutor/marker’s name and contact information were sent to you with this course. You can also obtain this information in the Who Is My Tutor/Marker section of the distance learning website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/dl/iso/index.html>.
Your Learning Partner

A learning partner is someone **you choose** who will help you learn. It may be someone who knows something about geography, but it doesn’t have to be. A learning partner could be someone else who is taking this course, a teacher, a parent or guardian, a sibling, a friend, or anybody else who can help you. Most importantly, a learning partner should be someone with whom you feel comfortable, and who will support you as you work through this course.

Your learning partner can help you keep on schedule with your course work, read the course with you, check your work, look at and respond to your learning activities, or help you make sense of assignments. You may even study for your examinations with your learning partner. If you and your learning partner are taking the same course, however, your assignment work should not be identical.

---

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism IS a big deal with serious consequences, so it’s important that you understand what it is and how to avoid it.

**What is plagiarism?**

In brief, plagiarism is taking someone’s ideas or words and presenting them as if they are your own.

**How can you avoid plagiarism?**

- Begin early. Research takes time. Allow enough time to search for, evaluate, and read sources, and to get help if you need it. Always document your sources immediately.
- Present your research by quoting and paraphrasing.
  - When you use a quote, you use the exact same words with quotation marks, and you indicate exactly where it came from.
  - When you paraphrase, you rewrite an author’s idea using your own words and you do not use quotation marks (but you also make sure to state clearly whose idea it is).
- Learn how to use different citation styles. Refer to Appendix E for information on how to cite references.
- Give credit where credit is due. Never pretend someone else’s idea is your own.
How Will You Know How Well You Are Learning?

You will know how well you are learning in this course by how well you complete the learning activities, assignments, and examinations.

Learning Activities

The learning activities in this course will help you to review and practise what you have learned in the lessons. You will not submit the completed learning activities to your tutor/marker. Instead, you will complete the learning activities and compare your responses to those provided in the Learning Activity Answer Key found at the end of each module.

Make sure you complete the learning activities. Doing so will not only help you to practise what you have learned, but will also prepare you to complete your assignments and the examination(s) successfully. Many of the questions on the examination(s) will be similar to the questions in the learning activities. Remember that you will not submit learning activities to your tutor/marker.

Assignments

Each module in this course contains assignments, which you will complete and submit to your tutor/marker for assessment. The assignments are worth a total of 50 percent of your final course mark.

The tutor/marker will mark your assignments and return them to you. Remember to keep all marked assignments until you have finished the course so that you can use them to study for your examinations.

Midterm and Final Examinations

This course contains a midterm examination and a final examination.

- The midterm examination is based on Modules 1, 2, and 3 and is worth 25 percent of your final mark in this course. You will write the midterm examination when you have completed Module 3.

- The final examination is based on Modules 4, 5, and 6, and is worth 25 percent of your final mark in this course. You will write the final examination when you have completed Module 6.

The two examinations are worth a total of 50 percent of your final course mark. You will write both examinations under supervision.
To do well on each examination, you should review all the work you have completed from the modules, including all learning activities and assignments.

**Requesting Your Examination(s)**

You are responsible for making arrangements to have the examinations sent to your proctor from the ISO office. Please make arrangements before you finish Module 3 to write the midterm examination. Likewise, you should begin arranging for your final examination before you finish Module 6.

To write your examinations, you need to make the following arrangements:

- **If you are attending school**, your examination will be sent to your school as soon as all of the applicable assignments have been submitted. Students should make arrangements with their school facilitator to determine a date, time, and location to write the examination. For more information on examination procedures, please contact your ISO school facilitator or visit the Grading and Evaluation section of the distance learning website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/dl/iso/index.html>.

- **If you are not attending school**, check the Examination Request Form for options available to you. The form was mailed to you with this course. **Three weeks before** you are ready to write the examination, fill in the Examination Request Form and mail, fax, or email it to

  ISO Office  
  555 Main Street  
  Winkler, MB  R6W 1C4  
  Fax: 204-325-1719  
  Toll-Free Telephone: 1-800-465-9915  
  Email: distance.learning@gov.mb.ca
How Much Time Will You Need to Complete This Course?

Learning through independent study has several advantages over learning in the classroom. You are in charge of how you learn and you can choose how quickly you will complete the course. You can read as many lessons as you wish in a single session. You do not have to wait for your teacher or classmates.

From the date of your registration, you have a maximum of 12 months to complete the course, but the pace at which you proceed is up to you. Read the following charts for suggestions on how to pace yourself.

Chart A: Semester 1

If you want to start the course in September and complete it in January, you can follow the timeline suggested below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Middle of October</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
<td>End of October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td>Middle of November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 5</td>
<td>End of November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 6</td>
<td>End of December</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>Middle of January</td>
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Chart B: Semester 2

If you want to start the course in January and compete it in June, you can follow the timeline suggested below.

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<td>Module 2</td>
<td>End of February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Middle of March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
<td>End of March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td>Middle of April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 5</td>
<td>End of April</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 6</td>
<td>Middle of May</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>End of May</td>
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</table>
Chart C: Full School Year (Not Semestered)

If you want to start the course in September and compete it in June, you can follow the timeline suggested below.

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<th>Module</th>
<th>Completion Date</th>
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<td>Module 2</td>
<td>End of October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 3</td>
<td>Middle of November</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
<td>Middle of January</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 4</td>
<td>End of February</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module 5</td>
<td>End of March</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module 6</td>
<td>End of April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>End of May</td>
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Do not wait until the last minute to complete your work, since your tutor/marker may not be available to mark it immediately. It may take a few weeks for your tutor/marker to assess your work and return it to you or your school.

If you need this course to graduate this school year, remember to schedule and complete your final examination by **May 31**.
When and How Will You Submit Completed Assignments?

When to Submit Assignments

While working on this course, you will submit completed assignments to your tutor/marker six times. The following chart shows you exactly what assignments you will be submitting at the end of each module.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submission</th>
<th>Assignments You Will Submit</th>
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</table>
| 1          | **Module 1: World Geography Overview**  
Module 1 Cover Sheet  
Assignment 1.1: Introduction to Geography  
Assignment 1.2: Cultural Study  
Assignment 1.3: Development Case Study |
| 2          | **Module 2: World Population: Characteristics, Distribution, and Growth**  
Module 2 Cover Sheet  
Assignment 2.1: Investigating Population  
Assignment 2.2: Case Study in Current Events  
Assignment 2.3: Present Challenges |
| 3          | **Module 3: World Food Supply: Production and Distribution**  
Module 3 Cover Sheet  
Assignment 3.1: Global Agricultural Production  
Assignment 3.2: Food Security Investigation  
Assignment 3.3: Article Analysis |
| 4          | **Module 4: World Resources, Energy, and the Environment**  
Module 4 Cover Sheet  
Assignment 4.1: Resources and Standard of Living  
Assignment 4.2: Blood Diamonds and International Trade  
Assignment 4.3: Energy Demand, Supply, and Consumption |
| 5          | **Module 5: World Industrialization and Urbanization**  
Module 5 Cover Sheet  
Assignment 5.1: Industrialization  
Assignment 5.2: Urban Planning for a City  
Assignment 5.3: Value Judgments |
| 6          | **Module 6: World Interdependence**  
Module 6 Cover Sheet  
Assignment 6.1: Research Paper |
How to Submit Assignments

In this course, you have the choice of submitting your assignments either by mail or electronically.

- **Mail:** Each time you mail something, you must include the print version of the applicable Cover Sheet (found at the end of this Introduction).

- **Electronic submission:** Each time you submit something electronically, you must include the applicable Cover Sheet. Cover sheets are available on Blackboard Learn (<https://bblearn.merlin.mb.ca/>) or you may scan the Cover Sheets located at the end of this Introduction.

Complete the information at the top of each Cover Sheet before mailing or submitting it through Blackboard Learn along with your assignments.

**Submitting Your Assignments by Mail**

If you choose to mail your completed assignments, please photocopy all the materials first so that you will have a copy of your work in case your package goes missing. You will need to place the applicable module Cover Sheet and assignment(s) in an envelope, and address it to

- ISO Tutor/Marker
- 555 Main Street
- Winkler MB R6W 1C4

Your tutor/marker will mark your work and return it to you by mail.

**Submitting Your Assignments Electronically**

Assignment submission options vary by course. Sometimes assignments can be submitted electronically and sometimes they must be submitted by mail. Specific instructions on how to submit assignments were sent to you with this course. You can also obtain this information in the Grading and Evaluation section of the distance learning website at <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/dl/iso/index.html>.

If you are submitting assignments electronically, make sure you have saved copies of them before you send them. That way, you can refer to your assignments when you discuss them with your tutor/marker. Also, if the original hand-in assignments are lost, you are able to resubmit them.

Your tutor/marker will mark your work and return it to you electronically.

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The Independent Study Option office does not provide technical support for hardware-related issues. If troubleshooting is required, consult a professional computer technician.
What Are the Guide Graphics For?

Guide graphics are used throughout this course to identify and guide you in specific tasks. Each graphic has a specific purpose, as described below.

**Assignment:** Complete an assignment. You will submit your completed assignments to your tutor/marker for assessment at the end of every module.

**Examination:** Write your midterm or final examination at this time.

**Internet:** Use the Internet, if you have access to it, to obtain more information. Internet access is optional for this course.

**Check Your Work:** Check your responses against those provided in the Learning Activity Answer Key found at the end of the applicable module.

**Key Word:** Note that a new important term is being explained. The term is defined in the Glossary.

**Learning Activity:** Complete a learning activity. This will help you to review or practise what you have learned and to prepare for an assignment or an examination. You will not submit learning activities to your tutor/marker. Instead, you will compare your responses to the Learning Activity Answer Keys found at the end of the applicable module.

**Learning Partner:** Ask your learning partner to help you with this task.

**Mail or Electronic Submission:** Mail or electronically submit your completed assignment(s) to your tutor/marker for assessment at this time.

**Note:** Take note of and remember this important information or reminder.

**Phone or Email:** Telephone or email your tutor/marker.

**Remember:** If you have questions or need help at any point during this course, contact your tutor/marker or ask your learning partner for help.

Good luck with the course!
Note: Module 1 contains a number of images that are best viewed in colour. Colour versions of these images in PDF format are available on Blackboard Learn at <https://bblearn.merlin.mb.ca/>. Students are issued a username and password at the time of registration. If Internet access in unavailable, a CD with these images is available upon request from the Distance Learning Unit.
Introduction

Module 1 is divided into four lessons that cover topics such as the history of geography, the general role of geography as an academic discipline, the concepts of geography, the physical geography of the planet as a whole (including climate), human geography, and the differences between developed and developing countries.

The study of geography dates back to the days when people were nomadic hunters and gatherers who drew maps for themselves on stone tablets. Although these maps were little more than rough sketches, they are proof that people were aware of the need to understand the topography of the land to aid in their search for food and shelter. Since that time, geographic methods have evolved through three main stages and the discipline of geography itself has become much more formal and technically advanced.

Presently, geography can be defined as the study of Earth's physical features, climate, resources, and population. This is a very broad definition and it is important to remember that each of these geographic concepts should be studied in greater detail.

This module compares Earth’s physical and human geography using a variety of different research methods. These methods provide us with different information in terms of population, physical characteristics, the causes of natural disasters, the impact of natural disasters, and the composition of the social and cultural environment. All of this information falls under the umbrella of geography. As you can see, geography is a web of interconnected ideas and concepts that, together, form the core of the discipline.

Lastly, this module explores the political process that drives development throughout the world. It will help you to understand why such disparity exists between countries and how geography plays a role in determining the wealth and prosperity of some areas of the world relative to other areas. Geographical studies are a critical first step to being able to close the ever widening gap between the rich and the poor on a global level.
The main focus questions for this module are

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson 1</th>
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<th>Lesson 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is geography?</td>
<td>1. What are the significant concepts related to physical geography?</td>
<td>1. What is meant by the term culture and what are its characteristics?</td>
<td>1. What is the difference between a nation and a country?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What are the important concepts of geography?</td>
<td>2. What are the major physical features of the world and where are they located?</td>
<td>2. How does a sense of place influence and shape our identities?</td>
<td>2. How can countries be grouped? What are the advantages and disadvantages of grouping countries?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How is physical geography different from human geography?</td>
<td>3. Which physical landscapes are hospitable to human settlement? Which are not as hospitable? Why?</td>
<td>3. What are the dangers involved in adopting an ethnocentric attitude?</td>
<td>3. What is meant by the terms developed countries and developing countries? What are some characteristics of either group?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What techniques are used to collect, organize, analyze, and display geographic data?</td>
<td>4. What are some generalizations that can be made about the world climates and climatic regions? About world vegetation zones? About world soils?</td>
<td></td>
<td>4. How and why did developed and developing countries evolve? What are some significant issues facing these countries? What are the interrelationships between developed and developing countries?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Reminders
- Let the computer graphics in the margins guide you through the module.
- Whenever you encounter difficulties, contact your tutor/marker. Do not let a roadblock keep you from working towards the completion of the course.
Assignments in Module 1

In addition to the learning activities, you will complete the following three assignments in Module 1. You will send these completed assignments to your tutor/marker once you have completed this module.

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<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<td>Assignment 1.1: Introduction to Geography</td>
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<td>Assignment 1.2: Cultural Study</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Assignment 1.3: Development Case Study</td>
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Lesson 1: The Origins and Growth of Geography

Lesson Focus

- Learn about the growth and development of geography throughout history as well as be able to answer the question “What is geography?”
- Learn general concepts including the difference between physical and human geography, as well as other types of geography.
- Get an idea of important concepts, including the types of work in which geographers might choose to specialize and, consequently, start to understand why geography is worth learning.
- Be introduced to techniques that are used to collect, organize, analyze, and display information.

Introduction

Lesson 1 looks at human history and summarizes the three general development phases of modern geography. You will also begin to understand the range of topics involved in the modern study of and business industry of geography—nearly all facets of human activity have some kind of geographical component to them.

A Brief History

The lessons in Module 1 will expose you to a variety of tasks such as investigations, readings, and map work—all tasks that geographers perform. Lesson 1, however, takes a brief look back in history to get an idea of how the discipline of geography has evolved into what it is today.

Human beings have always been curious about Earth’s land and resources. There is so much to explore and so many ways in which geographical elements can be used to better the lives of humans. People have sought to better their circumstances through the pursuit of better hunting or grazing land, and through the use and exploitation of natural resources. Curiosity also partly explains the early desire of humans to trade with people from different areas of the world, but a more convincing explanation might be the attraction of a quest to discover new land in order to gain control of its potential resource riches.
According to written records, the earliest map is from the Middle East—it was drawn in the 9th century BCE on a clay tablet by Babylonian scholars in Mesopotamia (the land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers). The best known map from that era is the Imago Mundi of 600 BCE.

Between the 6th and 1st centuries BCE, the Greeks compiled much geographic information. It may be surprising to learn that Pythagoras (Yes, you’ve heard his name in mathematics: \( a^2 + b^2 = c^2 \) is the Pythagorean theorem) was the first to propose that the world was round. Just over 200 years later, through keen observation of the stars and the angle of shadows at various locations, Eratosthenes (276–195 BCE) calculated the circumference of the planet. The expansion of the Roman Empire over the next several hundred years added to this treasure of geographical knowledge.

Meanwhile, in China, between about 500 BCE and 1100 AD, more complex forms of mapping were being developed through the use of grids. Records as far back as the first century AD were being kept that detailed information such as land forms, population, and land use. It is interesting to note that on early maps south appeared at the top of the map.

Between the 7th and 14th centuries, the medieval Islamic world contributed much to the development of geography. Besides collecting information about land forms, population, and climate, trade routes were greatly expanded. Maps were created that indicated flat projections of a spherical Earth and trigonometry was used to calculate measurements with greater accuracy.

In early Medieval Europe (600–1000 AD), there was very little development in any of the academic disciplines. A lot of information was lost or forgotten and it became common to believe that the world was flat.

Fortunately, that era was followed by the Age of Discovery (1400–1800) where, following the inspirational journeys of Marco Polo (1254–1324), a renewed interest in exploration prompted expeditions by Portugal in the 15th century and by the Low Countries (Holland and Belgium) in the 16th century. The Dutch were noted as great map-makers (cartographers).

The following are the three general phases of geographic study:

1. isolated research by individual scholars
2. research organized by groups and societies
3. the coordination of research information by national and international organizations

The first period of growth often involved rich sponsors who encouraged scholars to pursue their research as a way of investing in the improvement of their own social and economic status.
The second period of growth involved the organized sharing of geographic research beginning in the early 1800s. One of the earliest activities was the founding of societies to promote and encourage common interests in geographical research.

The third period of growth saw the establishment of a geography department at most major universities. Often, issues would lead to the creation of institutes and centres for specialist studies such as, for example, studies on Arctic climate change. The last International Polar Year began in 2007 and continued until 2009. It resulted in Canada’s most successful polar research project to date.

What Is Geography?

Geography has been defined as the study of Earth’s physical features, resources, and climate, as well as the study of the physical aspects of its population. This information can be drawn from direct observation or borrowed from the work of specialized sciences, such as geology, meteorology, biology, remote sensing, and anthropology.

Physical geography is the study of Earth’s physical features, climate, and resources. Physical elements include studying Earth’s topography, soil and minerals, surface and underground water, weather and climate, and native plants and animals.

Human geography is the study of Earth’s population in terms of demography, culture, and the interaction of humans with their environment. Cultural elements include politics, religion, demographics, infrastructure, agricultural practices, and settlement patterns.

The following diagram illustrates the general aims of geography:
The subdivisions that are recognized in geographical research include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Geography</th>
<th>Human Geography</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mathematical geography</strong> deals with the shape, size, and movements of Earth and, more recently, it has also included quantitative geography—the mathematical probability and statistical analysis of any quantity of items (resources) found throughout the world.</td>
<td><strong>Anthropogeography</strong> studies the distribution and interaction of humans in relation to the physical geography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Physiography</strong> usually includes the study of topography (the lay of the land), climates, natural vegetation, and oceanography.</td>
<td><strong>Political geography</strong> is concerned primarily with the world’s political divisions and how political events affect human geography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Biogeography</strong> is the study of the distribution of species and the ecological aspect of these distributions—especially as indicators of environmental problems.</td>
<td><strong>Economic or commercial geography</strong> is concerned with how issues relating to resource use, and industry and trade affect physical geography.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Historical geography</strong> is the comparison of the geography of the past and its legacy to the geography of the present.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Generally speaking, geography considers physical and cultural elements and may study both, either systematically or regionally, with the intent of showing how things are connected.

1. **Physical elements**
   - topography
   - soil and minerals
   - surface and underground water
   - weather and climate
   - native plants and animals

2. The **cultural elements** deal with the *human occupancy* (human geography) of Earth and its interaction with the physical elements.
   - politics
   - religion
   - demographics
   - infrastructure (buildings, roads, factories, mines)
   - agricultural practices (farms and arable land patterns)
   - rural and urban settlement
3. The **systematic or topical approach** concerns the study of a set of elements over a whole area or a restricted area.
   - manufacturing geography
   - biogeography: the study of ecosystems, plants, animals, and their relationships to humans

4. **Regional geography** is concerned with the interrelated characteristics of a particular area or region, such as the geography of Manitoba or of North America.

**What Do Geographers Do?**

One way to improve your understanding of geography is to look at a list of employment positions occupied by students who have graduated from university level geography studies. Many geographers become planners for resource management or development within a city, province, or country. Others teach at schools and universities. As well, some work at coordinating transportation networks, while some are environmental workers.

**Top 10 Reasons to Study Geography**


1. To understand basic, physical systems that affect everyday life (e.g., Earth–Sun relationships, water cycles, wind, and ocean currents).
2. To learn the location of places and the physical and cultural characteristics of those places in order to function more effectively in our increasingly interdependent world.
3. To understand the geography of past times and how geography has played important roles in the evolution of people, their ideas, places, and environments.
4. To develop a mental map of your community, province or territory, country, and the world so that you can understand the “where” of places and events.
5. To explain how the processes of human and physical systems have arranged and sometimes changed the surface of Earth.
6. To understand the spatial organization of society and see order in what often appears to be random scattering of people and places.
7. To recognize spatial distributions at all scales—local and worldwide—in order to understand the complex connectivity of people and places.
8. To be able to make sensible judgments about matters involving relationships between the physical environment and society.
9. To appreciate Earth as the homeland of humankind and provide insight for wise management decisions about how the planet’s resources should be used.

10. To understand global interdependence and to become a better global citizen.

How Is Information Collected and Used?

The sources of information that geographers use are just as varied as the types of jobs they occupy. Sources fall into three general categories:

- **primary sources**: raw or first-hand data (e.g., field notes or photos)
- **secondary sources**: constructed from first-hand information (e.g., maps)
- **tertiary sources**: compiled from secondary sources (e.g., textbooks)

Methods can be as simple as the act of observing, recording, and sketching information with a paper and pencil, and as complex as using global satellite data combined with intense climate modelling software to create user-friendly, multi-media presentations.

There is a wide range of tool usage and data collection in the study of geography. An elementary student in Peonan Point, Manitoba, can record and chart the daily temperature and weather information on a calendar using a simple thermometer. On the other hand, a Ph.D. researcher in Churchill, Manitoba, can use a much more complicated apparatus and record complex methane off-gassing of tundra wetlands as part of a study on climate change.

Further examples include government workers who use the most recent census results to create both paper and digital maps that show the changing distribution patterns of agricultural or recreational land use within Manitoba. Forestry workers near Swan River use satellite imaging data combined with Geographic Information Software (GIS) to show wildlife and plant distribution and to determine a harvesting plan with the least harmful impact on the environment.

These examples demonstrate that geography is important to many different people and relevant to various fields of study. You don’t have to be a geographer to appreciate or understand basic geographical data or phenomena.
Learning Activity 1.1

The Origins and Growth of Geography

To help you assess your understanding of the origins of geography, you will now complete Learning Activity 1.1. If you have difficulty with this learning activity, ask your learning partner for help or contact your tutor/marker.

1. Imagine that you were talking to someone new to Earth. Explain geography to them.

2. What do you think are the top three most important goals of geography? Why?

3. What do you think would be the best way to collect information on the number of people in a specific area or region? Why is this done? What would be the best way of first organizing that information and then sharing it with other people?

4. Look at the list Top 10 Reasons to Study Geography, pick two reasons that are most interesting to you, and explain why (focus on awareness of geographical concepts).

Remember to check your responses in the Learning Activity Answer Key found at the end of this module.
Lesson Summary

You should now have a good sense of the growth and development of geography throughout history, and you should also be able to answer the question, “What is geography?”

Hopefully, the differences between physical and human geography are becoming clear to you and you have an idea of the different areas in which geographers might specialize. The more you learn about geography, the more it will become apparent that geography is worth learning.

Finally, you now have some insight into the diverse and dynamic nature of collecting and using geographic data.

It is now time to complete Assignment 1.1.