

5 THEMES OF GEOGRAPHY

CGC1D1 - Mr. A. Wittmann

DEFINITION OF GEOGRAPHY

ge·og·ra·phy

a science that deals with the description, distribution, and interaction of the diverse physical, biological, and cultural features of the earth's surface

IN PLAIN ENGLISH

Geography is the study of the earth and everything on it.

WHERE DID THE 5 THEMES COME FROM?

Originated by the National Geographic Society to fulfill a need for geographers categorize everything they learn.

These 5 themes are easy to remember.

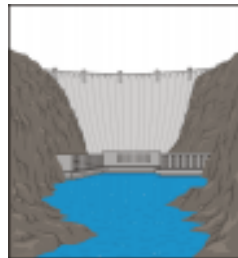


WHAT IS “PRILM”?

A mnemonic device that can be used to help remember what the 5 Themes of Geography are.

Simply put, take the first letter of each Theme to create the word PRILM.

1. Place
2. Region
3. Interaction (Human-Environment)
4. Location
5. Movement



1. PLACE

- What makes a place different from other places.
- Differences might be defined in terms of climate, soil, vegetation, landform features,
- What physical characteristics exist in a place such as plant and animal life.
- What cultural (human) characteristics such as ethnic, religious, or political groups are typical of a place.

2. REGION

- How the Earth is divided into regions for study.
- Regions can be defined by a number of characteristics including area, language, political divisions, religions, and vegetation, climate, soil and landforms.
- What makes a region unique.
- How do these regions change over time.
- Descriptions of regions can include information about the physical or cultural characteristics.

3. Human-Environmental Interaction

- Human-environment interaction
- What are the relationships among people and places
- How have people changed the environment to better suit their needs
- How people relate to their environment
- What commodities do people depend on from, and in a area
- How do people adapt to their environment in terms of what they wear and how they build their homes.
- How do people in this city modify their environment to accommodate them (e.i. building dams, changing landscapes).

4. LOCATION

- Where is a place located in relation to other places.
- A location can be specific (i.e. coordinates of longitude and latitude).
- Location can be general (i.e. Northeast).

5. MOVEMENT

- Includes the movement of people, things, ideas, animals, water, landforms.
- The patterns of movement of people, products, and information.
- A study of movement includes learning about major modes of transportation used by people, an area's major exports and imports, and ways in which people communicate (move ideas).
- How are people transported in a city.
- How are goods transported in this city? What are they? Who depends on them?
- How are ideas transported in this city? (i.e. communication)

Mental Map Exercise

We use an atlas or road map to help us find the location of a place or to discover some missing information. More often, we make use of a collection of special maps that exist in our minds—what we might call our **mental maps**. These mental maps are very important since they provide the basis on which we make decisions and take actions. Some of these maps are much more complete and accurate than others. For example, your mental map of the house or apartment in which you live is going to be more precise than your mental map of New York City or New Zealand.

A very important mental map for any Canadian is that of our country.

1. Take an unlined sheet of 8½" x 11" paper. Turn it sideways, and then draw your mental map of Canada on it. Include any important geographic features you are aware of, such as provinces, main cities, water bodies, and land features. Do not look at someone else's map as you do this—remember, this is *your* mental map!
2. It is interesting to think about the reasons why your mental image looks like it does. Consider the features that you included. Why did you include some and leave others out? You should be able to identify at least two reasons why you are more familiar with certain parts of Canada than with others.
3. Compare your map with that of a classmate whose map seems quite different from yours. Can you determine why the differences exist?

Keep the map you have drawn. You may want to try drawing another mental map later in the course to see what you have learned.

THE END