



Chapter 1 Section 1

The Five Themes
of
Geography

I. The Geographer's Perspective

A. Geographers and Historians

1. Historians look at events over time.

B. Geographers look at:

1. use of space on Earth.
2. interactions that take place there.
3. patterns and connections between people and land.

C. Geography is the study of the distribution and interaction of:

1. physical features on Earth.
2. human features on Earth.

D. Methods of Geography

1. Geographers use a variety of tools:
 - a. maps
 - b. photographs
 - c. charts, graphs, tables
 - d. scale models
 - e. five themes of geography

II. Theme: Location

A. Where is it?

- 1. Absolute location**—exact place where a geographic feature is found.
- 2. Relative location**—location of a place compared to places around it.

B. Absolute Location

1. Earth is divided into two equal halves, vertically and horizontally.
2. Each vertical and horizontal half is called a **hemisphere**.
3. An imaginary line, the **Equator**, divides north and south halves.
4. Another imaginary line, the **Prime Meridian**, divides east and west.

C. Latitude Lines

1. Geographers use latitude lines to locate places north and south.
2. **Latitude**—imaginary lines that run parallel to the equator.

D. Longitude Lines

1. Geographers use longitude lines to mark positions east and west.
2. **Longitude**—imaginary lines that go over the poles.
3. Where latitude and longitude lines cross is the absolute location.

E. Relative Location

1. How a place is related to its surrounding environment.

III. Theme: Place

A. What is it Like?

1. Place includes physical features and cultural characteristics:
 - a. Physical features include climate, landforms, vegetation.
 - b. Cultural characteristics include dams, highways, houses.

IV. Theme: Region

A. How are Places Similar or Different?

1. A region is an area united by similar characteristics.
2. Unifying characteristics—physical, political, economic, cultural.
3. Three types of regions:
 - a. Formal
 - b. Functional
 - c. Perceptual

B. Formal Regions

1. Defined by a limited number of related characteristics
2. Formal regions of the world:
 - a. The United States and Canada
 - b. Latin America
 - c. Europe
 - d. Russia and the Republics
 - e. Africa
 - f. Southwest Asia
 - g. South Asia
 - h. East Asia
 - i. Southeast Asia, Oceania, and Antarctica

C. Functional Regions

1. Organized around interactions and connections between places.
2. Example: a city and its suburbs are connected through human movement.

D. Perceptual Regions

1. Region with characteristics people perceive in much the same way.
2. Example: the American Midwest.
3. Sometimes perceptions differ: Does Midwest begin in Ohio or Illinois?

V. Theme: Human-Environment Interaction

A. How Do People Relate to the Physical World?

1. A relationship exists between people and their environment.
2. People use and change the environment to meet their needs.
3. People adapt to environmental conditions they cannot change.
4. Often, people in similar environments adapt in different ways.

VI. Theme: Movement

A. How Do People, Goods, and Ideas Get from One Place to Another?

- 1. Geographers use three types of distance
to analyze movement:**
 - a. linear distance**
 - b. time distance**
 - c. psychological distance**

B. Linear Distance and Time Distance

1. Linear distance—how far a person, product, or idea travels.
2. Time distance—how long it takes for person, product, and ideas to travel.

C. Psychological Distance

1. Refers to the way people perceive distance.
 - a. Example: unfamiliar places may seem farther away than familiar ones.