

GEOGRAPHY

Citizens should possess a knowledge of geography and an ability to apply a geographical perspective to life situations. All physical phenomena and human activities exist in space as well as time. Geography studies the relationships of people, places, and environments from the perspective of where they occur, why they are there, and what meaning those locations have for us. Citizens with the knowledge and perspectives of geography understand the environmental and human processes that shape the Earth's surface, and recognize the culturally distinctive ways people interact with the natural world to produce unique places. An appreciation of the nature of their world and their place in it will better prepare citizens for a physical environment more threatened and a global economy more competitive and interconnected.

Geography Anchor Standard One: Students will develop a personal geographic framework, or "mental map," and understand the uses of maps and other geo-graphics [MAPS].

A mental map is a person's internalized picture of a part of the Earth's surface. It helps make sense of the world by storing and recalling information about the patterns of the Earth's human and natural features. A well-developed mental map is a great asset in understanding local, national, and world events. Students need to develop mental maps which reflect the relative location and knowledge of major landforms and climatic zones, human settlements, political divisions, and economic activities at local, state, national, and world scales. Students also need to develop the ability to create, use, and interpret maps and other geo-graphics crucial to analyzing and solving geographic problems.

The complexity of the standard will increase at each succeeding grade cluster:

K-3a: Students will understand the nature and uses of maps, globes, and other geo-graphics.

4-5a: Students will demonstrate development of mental maps of Delaware and of the United States which include the relative location and characteristics of major physical features, political divisions, and human settlements.

6-8a: Students will demonstrate mental maps of the world and its sub-regions which include the relative location and characteristics of major physical features, political divisions, and human settlements.

9-12a: Students will identify geographic patterns which emerge when collected data is mapped, and analyze mapped patterns through the application of such common geographic principles as

- Hierarchy (patterns at a detailed scale may be related to patterns at a more general scale)
- Accessibility (how easily one place can be reached from another)
- Diffusion (how people or things move in certain directions at certain speeds)
- Complementarity (the mutual exchange of people or goods among places usually occurs over the shortest possible distances)

9-12b: Students will apply the analysis of mapped patterns to the solution of problems.

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Geography Anchor Standard Two: Students will develop a knowledge of the ways humans modify and respond to the natural environment [ENVIRONMENT].

The relationship between human needs and the natural environment is fundamental to life. Humans modify the environment in culturally distinctive ways as they respond to the resource opportunities and risks present in the physical world. To understand this relationship, students must know of the major processes which shape the world into distinctive physical environments, and gain awareness of the opportunities and limitations to human action presented by those environments.

The complexity of the standard will increase at each succeeding grade cluster:

K-3a: Students will distinguish different types of climate and landforms and explain why they occur.

4-5a: Students will apply a knowledge of topography, climate, soils, and vegetation of Delaware and the United States to understand how human society alters, and is affected by, the physical environment.

6-8a: Students will apply a knowledge of the major processes shaping natural environments to understand how different peoples have changed and been affected by, physical environments in the world's sub-regions.

9-12a: Students will understand the Earth's physical environment as a set of interconnected systems (ecosystems) and the ways humans have perceived, reacted to, and changed environments at local to global scales.

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Geography Anchor Standard Three: Students will develop an understanding of the diversity of human culture and the unique nature of places [PLACES].

Cultural differences produce patterns of diversity in language, religion, economic activity, social custom, and political organization across the Earth's surface. Places reflect the culture of the inhabitants as well as the ways that culture has changed over time. Places also reflect the connections and flow of information, goods, and ideas with other places. Students who will live in an increasingly interconnected world need an understanding of the processes which produce distinctive places and how those places change over time.

The complexity of the standard will increase at each succeeding grade cluster:

K-3a: Students will identify types of human settlement, connections between settlements, and the types of activities found in each.

4-5a: Students will understand the reasons for the locations of human activities and settlements and the routes connecting them in Delaware and in the United States.

6-8a: Students will analyze patterns of cultural activity associated with different world regions in order to explain the reasons for the cultural development of a place.

6-8b: Students will evaluate a location's site and situation in order to identify and explain the distinctive cultural and physical characteristics, patterns of trade, and interactions that make a place unique.

9-12a: Students will understand the processes which result in distinctive cultures, economic activity, and settlement form in particular locations across the world.

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Geography Anchor Standard Four: Students will develop an understanding of the character and use of regions and the connections between and among them [REGIONS].

Regions are areas containing places with common characteristics. They are a major way we simplify a geographically-complex world. Regions can be used for analysis and synthesis. They have practical applications as in political administration or organizing economic behavior. Understanding regions and their use will allow students to better analyze and predict patterns and connections between and among people, places, and environments.

The complexity of the standard will increase at each succeeding grade cluster:

K-3a: Students will use the concepts of place and region to explain simple patterns of connections between and among places across the country and the world.

4-5a: Students will apply geographic skills to develop a profile of the local community by placing it in the context of physical, cultural, and other types of regions.

6-8a: Students will understand the processes affecting the location of economic activities in different world regions.

6-8b: Students will explain how conflict and cooperation among people contributes to the division of the Earth's surface into distinctive cultural regions and political territories.

9-12a: Students will apply knowledge of the types of regions and methods of drawing boundaries to interpret the Earth's changing complexity.