

Unit 1: Basics of Geography

Five Themes of Geography

- **Location: Where is something on the face of the earth**
 - Absolute Location (mathematical) – grid coordinates
 - Latitude and Longitude
 - Universal Transverse Mercator system
 - Local Address Systems
 - Relative Location – uses relationships to landmarks and other places to determine location

- **Place: Characteristics that make a location unique**
 - Physical Characteristics
 - Wildlife and natural vegetation
 - Terrain
 - Natural Features
 - Human Characteristics – Cultural Landscape (Built Landscape)
 - Buildings and roads
 - Farms and Crops
 - Division of Land
 - Places have meaning
 - Ground Zero
 - Mecca
 - Jerusalem
 - Places can change
 - Physical changes: new buildings
 - Cultural change: new people
 - Places are interrelated
 - Distance Decay: the greater the distance between place the lesser the amount of interaction that will occur between two places
 - USA and Mexico have a lot of interaction
 - USA and Argentina have much less interaction
 - Place Names
 - Toponyms: The idea that place names reflect the culture and heritage of that place
 - Language of the name gives clues
 - Example: “Town”
 - English: “town”, “ton”, “boro”, “borough”
 - German: “burg”, “burgh”,
 - French: “bourg”, “ville”

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- Places are commonly named after:
 - Older places (New York, New Orleans, etc)
 - Important People (Washington, Jefferson, San Francisco, etc)
 - Characteristics of the place (Las Vegas (the meadows), Colorado, Rocky Mountains)
 - History of the area/Native traditions and groups (Cheyenne, Kansas, Miami)

- **Regions: Areas/places with similar characteristics**
 - Vary in size and scale
 - Global (most general)
 - National ↓
 - Local (most specific)

 - Three Types of Regions
 - Uniform (formal) Regions
 - have quantifiable characteristics in common
 - have defined borders
 - Examples: Colorado, the Bible Belt, Climate Regions
 - Functional (nodal) Regions
 - are defined by movement around a central hub
 - Examples: TV Viewing Area, Airport
 - Vernacular (perceptual) Regions
 - Based on people's perception of an area
 - Different people have different perceptions
 - Examples: the South, East Coast

- **Movement: Travel of goods (trade), people (migration), and ideas (diffusion) across the earth.**
 - Time-Space Compression
 - The idea that movement has become faster and more frequent over the last 60 years

- **Human-Environment Interaction: How humans interact with, change, and adapt to the environment.**
 - Intentional Change – deliberate changes to environment
 - Unintentional Change – unforeseen consequences of intentional changes