

CHAPTER 2, Lesson 1

Studying Geography

C1 Critical Thinking Skills

Making Connections Ask students to read the sidebar on GIS/GPS systems. **Ask:** *Where do we commonly find a GPS system these days? (Many cars have onboard GPS systems. Smart phones also include GPS features.) How is a GPS system in a car able to tell the driver where to go? (It is receiving information about the landscape from a satellite in orbit.)*

C2 Critical Thinking Skills

Identifying Ask students to describe or identify what they think geographers study. Many students are likely to think that geography involves finding places on Earth and making maps. Explain that geography deals with much more than just location. Tell students that geographers use their tools to show us what the world looks like and to describe how people, plants, animals, physical forces, and the environment interact with one another. Point out that the study of geography can also help us understand the past. **AI**

W Writing Skills

Informative/Explanatory Have students think about the term *awareness* as it relates to geography and the physical world in which they live. Have students interview one another about ways they might improve their awareness of the world around them. For example, students may say that they could broaden their awareness of the geography of their area by taking nature walks, studying local maps, or using the Internet to study satellite imagery of their location. Students should summarize their interviews in a written paragraph or blog entry.

Connections to TODAY

GIS/GPS

Technology has changed the way we make maps. Most mapmakers use software programs called geographic information systems (GIS). This software combines information from satellite images, printed text, and statistics. A Global Positioning System (GPS) helps people locate places based on data broadcast by satellites.



Five Themes and Six Essential Elements of Geography

GUIDING QUESTION *How do geographers use the five themes and six essential elements of geography?*

To understand how our world is connected, some geographers have broken the study of geography into five **themes** or six essential elements.

Five Themes of Geography

The Five Themes of Geography are (1) location, (2) place, (3) human-environment interaction, (4) movement, and (5) regions. You will see these themes highlighted in the geography skills questions throughout the book.

Six Essential Elements

Recently, geographers have begun to divide the study of geography into Six Essential Elements. Understanding these elements will help you build your knowledge of geography. **C2**

The World in Spatial Terms What do geographers do when studying a certain place? They first take a look at where the place is located. Location is a useful starting point. By asking "Where is it?" you begin to develop an **awareness** of the world around you.

Places and Regions Place has a special meaning in geography. It refers to more than where a place is. It also describes what a place is like. It might describe physical characteristics such as landforms, climate, and plant or animal life. Or it might describe human characteristics, such as language and way of life.

To help organize their study, geographers often group places into regions. Regions are united by one or more common characteristics.

Physical Systems When geographers study places and regions, they analyze how physical systems—such as hurricanes, volcanoes, and glaciers—shape the Earth's surface. They also look at the communities of living things. The populations of plants and animals depend upon one another and their surroundings for survival.

ReadingHELPDESK

Academic Vocabulary

theme a topic that is studied or a special quality that connects ideas

awareness the state of having understanding or knowledge

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networks

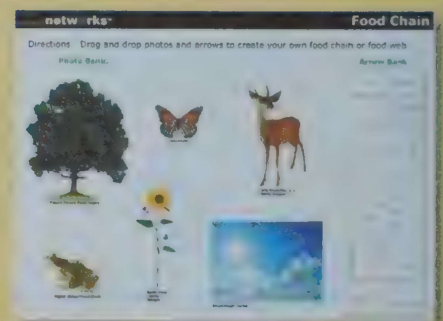
Online Teaching Options

WHITEBOARD ACTIVITY

Food Chain

Diagramming For the geography theme "Physical Systems," show students the Lesson 1 Interactive Whiteboard Activity on food chains. Guide them through making the connections among the different parts to construct food chains or food webs.

See page 25C for other online activities.



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C1 Critical Thinking Skills

Evaluating Have students brainstorm ways in which humans change the physical environment. Give them five minutes to list several of their ideas on a sheet of paper, and then ask students to share their ideas. Ask students to consider whether each is a "positive" or "negative" change, and to explain why they think so.

R Reading Skills

Locating Have students study the images of both Central Park and Mount St. Helens and read the photo captions carefully. **Ask:**

- How many acres of land does Central Park cover? (843 acres)
- How many square miles of forest were destroyed when Mount St. Helens erupted in 1980? (230 square miles) **A**

C2 Critical Thinking Skills

Making Connections Have students draw from memory a simple map from their homes to the school. Then ask them to consider and write down some tools of geography that would make their map easier to create, and more accurate. Have students save their maps for use later in the lesson.

Human Systems Geographers are interested in human systems. Human systems refer to how people have shaped our world. Geographers look at how borders are decided and why people settle in certain places and not in others. A basic theme in geography is the movement of people, ideas, and goods.

Environment and Society How does the relationship between people and their natural surroundings influence the way we live? The theme of human-environment interaction investigates this. It also shows how people use the environment and how their actions affect the environment.

The Uses of Geography Geography helps us understand the relationships among people, places, and environments. Mastering the tools and technology used for studying geography can also help us in our daily lives.

PROGRESS CHECK

Identifying Which Essential Elements of Geography might be involved in the study of an area's landforms and how they affect people living there?



Central Park in New York covers 843 acres of open land. People use the park for recreation. A yearlong study recorded about 35 million visits by people from the city and from around the world.

The 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens in Washington state removed the top 1,314 feet (400 meters) of the volcano's peak and leveled nearly 230 square miles (595 square km) of surrounding forest. The destruction happened in a matter of minutes.

CRITICAL THINKING

Analyzing What does this photo suggest about the wildlife living in the region?



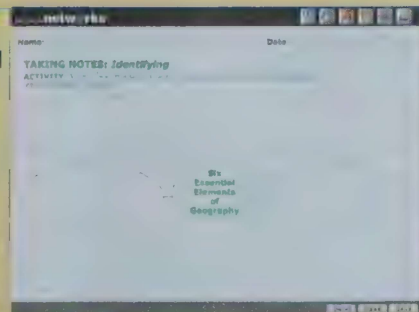
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GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

Taking Notes: Identifying: Six Essential Elements of Geography

Identifying Briefly review the Five Themes of Geography with students. Then show students the interactive graphic organizer on the Six Essential Elements of Geography. Enter each of the elements into the organizer. Then prompt students to provide an example for each element.

See page 25C for other online activities.



ANSWERS, p. 33

CRITICAL THINKING The area around Mount St. Helens is not populated, perhaps because of the volcano, which has scarred the landscape. There would be little food for wildlife.

PROGRESS CHECK Places and Regions would be involved in the description of the landforms. Environment and Society could be involved in studying how people have changed the landforms and adapted to them. The Uses of Geography could address the impact on the landforms over time.