

# PIGSKIN GEOGRAPHY®

## FIVE THEMES IN GEOGRAPHY Source: National Geographic Society

**LOCATION: (Absolute and Relative):** Location answers the basic question: Where? Absolute and relative location are two ways of describing the positions of the Earth's physical and cultural features. For example, knowing the absolute, or exact, location of Tucson, AZ, showed us where the forest fires occurred. A grid system representing latitude and longitude is one way of showing absolute locations. Another way of looking at location has to do with the interaction of places. This is relative location-the way a city is connected to other places. A map can provide a starting point for gathering information. **IN WHAT MOUNTAIN RANGE IS MT. RAINIER LOCATED? IN 2014, HURRICANE ARTHUR MADE LANDFALL BETWEEN CAPE LOOKOUT AND BEAUFORT, NC. CAPE LOOKOUT IS 34.60 DEGREES N. LATITUDE .and 76.52 W. LONGITUDE.**

**PLACE: (Physical and Human Characteristics):** All places on Earth have special features that distinguish them from other places. Geographers usually describe places by their physical and human characteristics. Los Angeles, CA, and its neighboring communities, for example, are known for such physical characteristics as sandy beaches, abundant sunshine, and a mild climate. Human characteristics such as the density of population and its ethnic makeup also play an important role in shaping the image of Los Angeles. **WHAT PHYSICAL AND HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS MAKE THE PLACE YOU LIVE DIFFERENT FROM ANY OTHER? HOW DO THESE CHARACTERISTICS AFFECT YOUR LIFE? HOW IS LIFE IN BAYOU COUNTRY DIFFERENT FROM LIFE IN YOUR CITY?**

**HUMAN-ENVIRONMENT INTERACTIONS: (Relationships Within Places):** People interact with their environments and change them in different ways. Large-scale agricultural development of the dry Texas Panhandle, for instance, did not occur until the invention of circular irrigation systems that distribute water from underground wells. But such change has a price: The region's water supply is rapidly diminishing. Geographers examine how human-environment interactions develop and what their consequences are for people and the landscape. See what the beverage industry is doing to conserve water. [www.bierroundtable.com](http://www.bierroundtable.com) **LOOK AROUND YOU: HOW HAVE PEOPLE CHANGED YOUR ENVIRONMENT? WHY HAVE THEY MADE SUCH CHANGES? WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THESE CHANGES?**

**MOVEMENT: (Mobility of People, Goods, and Ideas):** People everywhere interact. They travel from place to place, they communicate, and they depend upon other people in distant places for products, ideas, and information. How much will the California drought of 2015 influence the price of food, meat, milk and cheese in your town? The Panama Canal will accommodate ships 1,200 feet long (four football fields) after 2015. How many U.S. ports are deep enough to handle these larger ships? How will this affect the movement of goods from China? Geography helps us understand the nature and effects of such movement. **HOW DO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY DEPEND UPON PEOPLE IN OTHER PLACES? HOW DOES MOVEMENT AFFECT WHAT YOU CAN BUY IN STORES IN YOUR CITY?**

**REGIONS: (How They Form and Change):** Regions are areas on the surface of the Earth that are defined by certain unifying characteristics. These characteristics may be physical, or they may be human. The peaks and valleys of the Rocky Mountains, for example, form a physical region. The Corn Belt, on the other hand, forms a human region. Large farms and similar crops unite several Midwestern states into this region, where corn has been the mainstay. Regions provide an organized way to study Earth's landscapes and peoples. **CAN YOU IDENTIFY SOME PHYSICAL AND HUMAN REGIONS IN THE UNITED STATES? DRAW A MAP OF THESE REGIONS. DO ANY OF THEM OVERLAP?**