

## A Geographer's World

### Section 1



#### MAIN IDEAS

1. Geography is the study of the world, its people, and the landscapes they create.
2. Geographers look at the world in many different ways.
3. Maps and other tools help geographers study the planet.

### Key Terms and Places

**geography** the study of the world, its people, and the landscapes they create

**landscape** the human and physical features that make a place unique

**social science** a field that studies people and the relationships among them

**region** a part of the world with one or more common features distinguishing it from surrounding areas

**map** a flat drawing that shows part of Earth's surface

**globe** a spherical model of the entire planet

### Section Summary

#### WHAT IS GEOGRAPHY?

For every place on Earth, you can ask questions to learn about it: What does the land look like? What is the weather like? What are people's lives like? Asking questions like these is how you study geography. **Geography** is the study of the world, its people, and the **landscapes** they create.

Geographers (people who study geography) ask questions about how the world works. For example, they may ask why a place gets tornadoes. To find answers, they gather data by observing and measuring. In this way, geography is like science.

Geography can also be like a social science. **Social science** studies people and how they relate to each other. This information cannot be measured in the same way. To study people, geographers may visit places and talk to the people about their lives.

**Underline the sentence that states how geography is like science.**

**LOOKING AT THE WORLD**

Geographers must look carefully at the world around them. Depending on what they want to learn, they look at the world at different levels.

Geographers may study at the local level, such as a city or town. They may ask why people live there, what work they do, and how they travel. They can help a town or city plan improvements.

Geographers may also study at the regional level. A **region** is an area with common features. A region may be big or small. Its features make it different from areas around it. The features may be physical (such as mountains) or human (such as language).

Sometimes geographers study at the global level. They study how people interact all over the world. Geographers can help us learn how people's actions affect other people and places. For example, they may ask how one region influences other regions.

Circle the three levels that geographers study.

**THE GEOGRAPHER'S TOOLS**

Geographers need tools to do their work. Often, they use maps and globes. A **map** is a flat drawing that shows Earth's surface. A **globe** is a spherical (round) model of the whole planet.

Maps and globes both show what Earth looks like. Because a globe is round, it can show Earth as it really is. To show the round Earth on a flat map, some details have to change. For example, a place's shape may change a little. But maps have benefits. They are easier to work with. They can also show small areas, such as cities, better.

Geographers also use other tools, such as satellite images, computers, notebooks, and tape recorders.

In what way are maps and globes similar?

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Underline two sentences that tell the benefits of using maps.

**CHALLENGE ACTIVITY**

**Critical Thinking: Solving Problems** Pick a foreign country you would like to study. You want to develop the most complete picture possible of this place and its people. Make a list of questions to ask and tools you would use to find the answers.