

## A Geographer's World

### Section 3



#### MAIN IDEAS

1. Physical geography is the study of landforms, water bodies, and other physical features.
2. Human geography focuses on people, their cultures, and the landscapes they create.
3. Other branches of geography examine specific aspects of the physical or human world.

### Key Terms and Places

**physical geography** the study of the world's physical features, such as landforms, bodies of water, climates, soils, and plants

**human geography** the study of the world's people, communities, and landscapes

**cartography** the science of making maps

**meteorology** the study of weather and what causes it

### Section Summary

#### PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

The field of geography has many branches, or divisions. Each branch has a certain focus. No branch alone gives us a picture of the whole world. When looked at together, the different branches help us understand Earth and its people better.

Geography has two main branches: physical geography and human geography. **Physical geography** is the study of the world's physical features, such as landforms, bodies of water, and weather.

Physical geographers ask questions about Earth's many physical features: Where are the mountains and flat areas? Why are some areas rainy and others dry? Why do rivers flow a certain way? To get their answers, physical geographers measure features—such as heights of mountains and temperatures of places.

**What do the different branches of geography help us do when they are looked at together? Underline the sentence that answers this.**

**List the two main branches of geography:**

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Physical geography has important uses. It helps us understand how the world works. It also helps us predict and prepare for dangers, such as big storms.

**HUMAN GEOGRAPHY**

**Human geography** is the study of the world's people, communities, and landscapes. It is the other main branch of geography.

Human geographers study people in the past or present. They ask why more people live in some places than in others. They also ask other questions, such as what kinds of work people do.

People all over the world are very different, so human geographers often study a smaller topic. They might study people in one region, such as central Africa. They might study one part of people's lives in different regions, such as city life.

Human geography also has important uses. It helps us learn how people meet basic needs for food, water, and shelter. It helps people improve their lives. It can also help protect the environment.

**Why do human geographers often study one smaller topic?**

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**Circle three basic needs that people have to meet.**

**OTHER FIELDS OF GEOGRAPHY**

Other branches of geography study one aspect of the world. Some of these are smaller parts of physical geography or of human geography.

Here are a few other branches to know about.

**Cartography** is the science of making maps.

Hydrology is the study of water on Earth.

**Meteorology** is the study of weather and what causes it.

**What is meteorology?**

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**CHALLENGE ACTIVITY**

**Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences** Examine a map of an unfamiliar city using a road atlas or an online map. Write a paragraph telling a visitor what physical and human features to look for in each quadrant (NE, SE, NW, SW).

