

INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY

Topics for Term Papers

NOTE: For all of the following include appropriate spatial examples at either the local, regional, national or international levels. Your choice as to the selected regional scale.

1. What is meant by the term “geography” and why it is important to be geographically literate.
2. How did the discipline of geography evolved.
3. What is geography and the nature of geography.
4. The process necessary for the interpretation of geographic phenomena. Historical and current explanations.
5. The use of absolute and relative location. Applied examples.
6. Distinguishing the physical and cultural landscapes and how humans can change the attributes of a place.
7. Geographic concept evolution and their use: examples such as accessibility, connectivity and distance decay when concerned with the interaction among places.
8. Regional classifications and examples such as “formal” or “functional”.
9. Important geographers and their contributions.
10. The introduction and use of latitude and longitude and how these are applied to present day situations.
11. The introduction and need of the time zones and their applications.
12. Maps and projections: their use, types, suitability and applications.
13. The process of reading and interpreting a Topographic Map.
14. The various forms of remote sensing and their purposes.
15. Computer assisted cartography and geographic information systems as a means of analyzing and presenting data in map form.
16. Cartography: its history and thought and the major cartographers.
17. Types of forces that interact to produce landforms and associate the major landforms with each process.
18. Structure of the earth and the theory of continental drift.
19. Primary tectonic forces and the kinds of landforms which are associated with them.
20. Glacier formation and the types of landforms they leave behind from both erosion and deposition.
21. Erosion due to groundwater and erosion resulting from surface water.
22. Wind as an agent of weathering, erosion and deposition.
23. Landforms resulting from waves and currents and how they differ from landforms resulting from wind movement.
24. Landforms of Connecticut.
25. Landforms of New England.
26. Landforms of the United States.
27. Weather and climate.
28. Weather and climate of Connecticut.
29. Weather and climate of New England.
30. Weather and climate of the United States.
31. The role of the sun in supplying energy to the earth and how energy (solar insolation) varies by latitude and time of the year, using Connecticut as an example.
32. Factors responsible for variations in solar energy and identify the components of the earth’s solar energy budget.
33. Temperature and elevation in Connecticut using the lapse rate, deviations from normal lapse rates as temperature inversions.
34. Understand the relationship between temperature, atmosphere pressure and winds.
35. Differentiate between warm and cold currents and note their relationship to wind belts.
36. Forms of precipitation, convectional, orographic and cyclonic, and note under what conditions they are likely to occur.
37. Identify major types of climate according to characteristic vegetation, climographs and soils.

38. Climograph from monthly averages for precipitation and temperature for Connecticut and its towns.
39. World's climate distribution and where Connecticut falls.
40. Three constituent elements of the earth's ecosphere.
41. Food chain and be able to trace the passage of elements through one.
42. The hydrologic cycle and its component processes.
43. Types of water pollution, sources and impacts on the environment.
44. Sources of air pollution, its specific environmental impact and possible solutions.
45. Ways in which human activity modifies landforms, soils and even climates.
46. Primary and secondary effects of soil erosion and the measures currently used to retard or stop them.
47. Biological magnification and understand its implications for humans.
48. New species, deforestation and use of insecticides on numbers and distribution of plants and animals.
49. Sources of solid and hazardous wastes and the locational problems associated with current and proposed methods of their disposal.
50. Construct a population pyramid from data on age and sex of a population, explain the pattern and provide background as to causes.
51. Cultural and physical factors which account for the geographic distribution of fertility, mortality and natural increase.
52. Determine any country's position in the demographic transition from knowledge of its birth and death rates and population growth rate. Elaborate.
53. Differences in population growth characteristics between the developed world and the developing world.
54. Locate on a map the most densely populated and least densely populated areas of the world and explain their geographic distribution.
55. Overpopulated areas and those that are not on the basis of carrying capacity.
56. The relationship between urbanization and population growth and density.
57. Evaluate Malthusian concepts of population growth in light of twentieth century knowledge about demographic processes.
58. Population momentum and describe its implications for future population growth.
59. Culture, culture traits, culture complex, culture region and culture realm.
60. Component subsystems of a culture.
61. Cultural traits as being either technological, sociological or ideological.
62. Major world cultural hearths and the chief centers of plant and animal domestication.
63. Conditions which both promote and retard diffusion of cultural traits.
64. Indicators of cultural diversity at the global level and plot their spatial distribution on a world map.
65. Religion and language as indicators of cultural identity.
66. Role of language and religion in cultural identification, cultural change and cultural diffusion.
67. The world's religions as being either universalizing, ethnic or tribal.
68. The spatial diffusion of the major religions through history and identify which form of diffusion was dominant under certain historical conditions.
69. Arguments against race and environmental determinism as valid concepts in the study of cultural geography.
70. Characteristic features of the major religions which set them apart from each other.
71. Geographic distribution of national political subdivisions to aspects of cultural diversity.
72. State, a nation and a nation-state.
73. Factors which govern the drawing of political boundaries.
74. Various shapes which political entities take on and articulate their strengths and weaknesses.
75. Factors which foster political integration.
76. Classes of boundaries and be able to classify actual boundaries when presented with a map.
77. Important geographical problems associated with the use of and control over maritime regions.
78. Landlocked countries of the world and discuss their unique geographical problems.
79. International political systems play in global political geography.

80. Local and regional political organization can be fragmented and enumerate the attempts to overcome political fragmentation of space.
81. Factors which influence the shape and content of human activity spaces.
82. How distance, population density and hierarchy affect spatial interaction and the diffusion of innovations.
83. Distance decay and critical distance.
84. “push” and “pull” factors which cause human migrations.
85. The role of place utility in inducing or inhibiting migration.
86. Major recent international migration streams.
87. Major natural events classified as hazards.
88. Factors which influence the accuracy of mental maps.
89. Human spatial behavior employing the concepts of activity space, spatial search, perception, place utility and diffusion.
90. Subsistence, commercial, and planned economies; their characteristics.
91. The Green Revolution and list its costs and benefits.
92. Von Thunen’s model of agricultural land use and the mechanism by which land uses are allocated to different locations.
93. Comparative advantage and how it relates to international development.
94. Primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary activities and classify occupations into one of the four activities.
95. Major manufacturing regions of the world and enumerate the locational factors which led to their importance.
96. Major locational considerations for industrial production.
97. The rise of high technology industries and their associated locational considerations.
98. Resources as being either renewable or non-renewable.
99. Countries or regions of the world which are the primary producers and consumers of important mineral resources, including fossil fuels.
100. Stocks, resources and reserves.
101. International trade in resources based on the locations of producers and consumers.
102. The advantages and disadvantages of the exploitation of synthetic fuels, nuclear energy and renewable natural resources.
103. Processes for producing nuclear energy and enumerate the advantages and disadvantages of each.
104. Processes involved in the development of synthetic fuels and enumerate the advantages and disadvantages of their exploitation.
105. Areas of the world with the greatest potential for producing energy from biomass, hydropower, wind, solar radiation, tides and geothermal power.
106. Major ways in which resource management can extend the limited supply of natural resources.
107. Urbanization and urban growth.
108. Urbanizing areas of the world and be able to explain the difference in demographic terms.
109. The legal city, urbanized areas and metropolitan areas.
110. Locational attributes of a city as being either site or situation characteristics.
111. Tenets of Central Place Theory.
112. Economic activities of a city into basic and nonbasic and calculate the employment multiplier from a set of employment figures for basic and nonbasic sectors.
113. The major differences among the three competing models of urban land use.
114. The three criteria used to identify urban social areas and explain their spatial patterns in cities.
115. Factors which promote suburbanization and central city change.
116. The process of gentrification.
117. Differences in urbanization and urban structure between developed and developing parts of the world.
118. What geographers mean by the term region.
119. Regional descriptions as being either “formal” or “functional”.
120. Boundaries separating regions based on one or more distinguishing criteria of a physical, human,

economic or mental nature.

121. Single factor and multifactor formal regions.
122. Dynamic nature of regional boundaries.
123. Regional description as fitting into one of the other three traditions of geography.
124. Systems analysis approach to regionalization emphasizes.
- 125.** Construct a regional geography of a portion of the earth's surface.