

Concepts underlying the Geographic Perspective A Cheat Sheet/various sources

Geographers look through the lens of space to understand place

Space: the extent of area that is occupied by something. It can refer to physical and cultural objects on the surface of the Earth.

1. Location:

- **Absolute** – coordinates (long and lat)
- **Relative** – refers to the location of a place in relation to the location of other places. For example, “Pittsburgh is located at the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers approximately 90 miles north of Morgantown, West Virginia.
- **Place** – is another word for location and refers to the specific human and physical characteristics of a location
- **Site** – physical location of a place (soil, climate, labor force, and human structures). For example, the site of Foxburg is on the banks of Allegheny River in northwestern Pennsylvania.
- **Situation** – refers to the location of a place based on its relation to other places. For example, the situation of Foxburg is that it lies between Erie and Pittsburgh and is 3 miles upstream from the town of Emlenton.
- **Toponyms** – place name (locations can also be designated using names)

2. Distance – measurement of how far or how near things are to one another

- Distance can be measured in miles or time
- **Time-space – compression** – shrinking of time and distance because of technology
- Distance and connection
 - **Spatial interaction** – the contact, movement, and flow of things between locations
- **Friction of distance** – things far apart have less contact vice versa
- **Distance decay** – friction of distance brings about distance decay

3. Density and Distribution

- **Density** – the number of something in a specifically defined area
 - Described in terms of high or low
- **Distribution** – the way a phenomenon is spread out over an area
 - Cluster or sparse
- **Pattern of distribution** – gives geographers clues about causes or effects of distribution

Geographers emphasize spatial patterns, general arrangements of things being studied, and the processes, the repeated sequences of events, that create them

1. Maps

2. Scale – the ratio between the size of things in the real world and the size of those same things on the map

- a. a small-scale map shows a smaller amount of detail for a larger area
- b. a large-scale map shows a larger amount of detail for a smaller area

3. Reference maps – to refer general information

4. Thematic maps – show spatial aspects of information or of a phenomenon