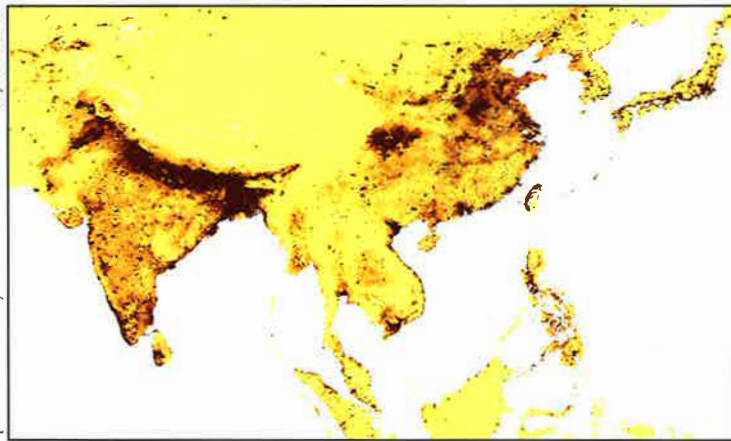


GEOGRAPHY STANDARD 9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface



Image credit: William R. Strong

The population of the pilgrimage center of Shirdi, Maharashtra state, India is about 26,000, but each day more than 25,000 devotees visit the shrine of the popular guru Shirdi Sai Baba. During holidays that number may swell to 500,000 people.



Map credit: University of North Alabama/Lisa Keys-Matthews

A population density map shows the high population densities of regions in South and East Asia. Data source: Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN).

The geographically informed person must understand that the growth, spatial distribution, and movements of people on Earth's surface are driving forces behind not only human events but also physical events. Human population is a dynamic force in reshaping the planet. Advances in agriculture, sanitation, and health care have contributed to a dramatic increase in the number of people over the last few centuries. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the world's population transitioned from being primarily rural to primarily urban.

Therefore, Standard 9 contains these themes: Characteristics of Population, Spatial Distribution of Population, and Migration.

The interaction between human and environmental conditions helps to explain the characteristics, spatial distributions, and movements of human populations. These characteristics can be described in terms of demographic concepts such as fertility and mortality rates, crude birth and death rates, natural increase and doubling time, race and ethnicity, and population structure (i.e., age distribution and age/sex ratio).

Population pyramids show the age and sex of a population. They also illuminate the impacts that wars or famine as well as education levels, urbanization, religion, or population policies have on the population in a country or region.

The spatial distribution and density of the world's population reflects a variety of factors. These include the influence of such physical features such as topography, soils, vegetation, climate types, and the availability of resources. Population distribution and density are also affected by human factors such as geopolitical structures, levels of economic development, and quality-of-life issues that address education, health care, housing, and employment opportunities. People move from place to place for voluntary and involuntary reasons. Pull factors may make another place seem more attractive and beneficial and therefore convince people to migrate. Push factors are often unpleasant or life-threatening conditions that force people to leave a place.

Movement occurs on many scales such as families moving to the suburbs, job seekers moving to a more prosperous part of the country, or mass migrations of people to other countries due to famine or political unrest. Moves may take place over distances from a few miles to thousands of miles. Some people move many times in their lifespans, others never. Some migration streams persist over several generations or centuries.

Students must understand how the characteristics, spatial distribution, and movement of human population change. Understanding these themes enables students to understand the essential connection between human population and social, political, and ecological issues.

GEOGRAPHY STANDARD 9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

4th GRADE

the student knows and understands:

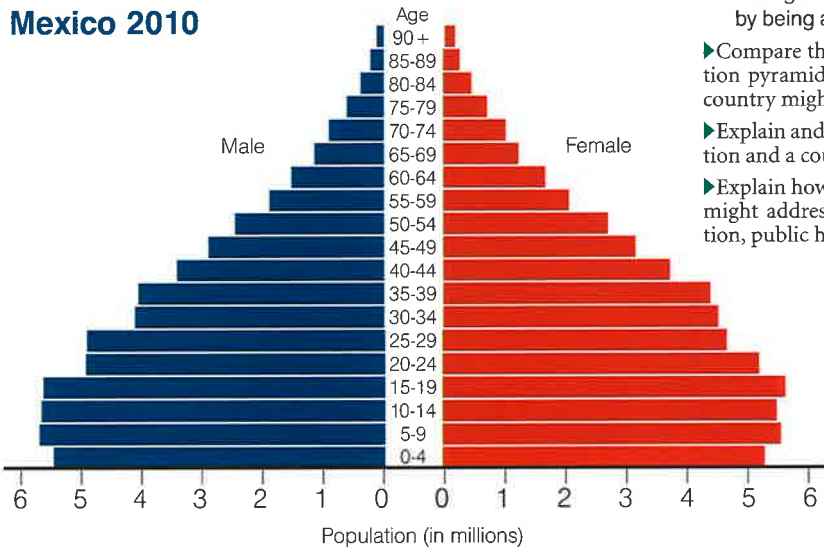
Characteristics of Population

1. Demographic characteristics can be used to describe a population

Therefore, the student is able to:

- Describe and compare the demographic characteristics of people in the local area, as exemplified by being able to
 - Identify and describe the demographic characteristics (e.g., age in months and sex) of the students in the classroom by constructing a population pyramid representing the student data.
 - Describe the demographic characteristics (e.g., age, sex, race/ethnicity) of the local community and identify the types of services or businesses that might be in demand (e.g., parks and schools for communities with younger populations, medical and senior centers for communities with older populations, restaurants and shops to meet the needs of ethnic groups).
 - Describe the demographic characteristics of a local county using the US Census data and compare it to the prior Census report to identify trends or changes in the population of the county over time.

Mexico 2010



A population pyramid shows the age and sex structure of Mexico's population in 2010. The wide base shows a large number of children in the population. The small bars at the top show slightly more women living longer than men.

Data source: US Census Bureau International Data Base.

8th GRADE

the student knows and understands:

Characteristics of Population

1. Demographic concepts help explain the structures of populations

Therefore, the student is able to:

- Describe and explain the demographic concepts of fertility and mortality, crude birth and death rates, natural increase and doubling time, race and ethnicity, as exemplified by being able to
 - Describe the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of countries that have high and low crude birth rates and high and low crude death rates.
 - Describe how the rate of natural increase is calculated and how it contributes to determining the population growth rate of a country.
 - Describe the role of population doubling time in planning for services and facilities in a country with population growth (e.g., building schools, hospitals, housing, transportation, food stability, employment).
- Compare the structures of populations in different places through the use of key demographic concepts, as exemplified by being able to
 - Compare the population structures of two countries using population pyramids and describe what the population structure for each country might be 20 years in the future.
 - Explain and compare the issues a country with a very young population and a country with a very old population might need to address.
 - Explain how countries with different types of population structures might address policies (e.g., national defense, education, immigration, public health care).

12th GRADE

the student knows and understands:

Characteristics of Population

1. Culture, economics, and politics influence the changing demographic structure of different populations

Therefore, the student is able to:

- Explain the demographic history of countries using the demographic transition model, as exemplified by being able to
 - Compare the experiences of European countries that underwent the demographic transition in the 18th and 19th centuries and Asian countries experiencing the demographic transition in the 20th and 21st centuries.
 - Explain how the demographic transition model may be used to predict population trends in different countries (e.g., when moving from a subsistence agricultural economy to a more diverse market economy).
 - Describe and explain the effects of changing dependency ratios in a country during the demographic transition (e.g., slowing population growth requires proportionately fewer people to support more people in the upper ages of a population, faster growing populations have more workers to support aging populations).
- Evaluate the effects of governmental policies on population characteristics, as exemplified by being able to
 - Describe and evaluate the possible effects of a nation's policies in terms of population growth (e.g., immigration limits, tax incentives or penalties influencing the number of births, foreign policy agreements affecting migration for documented workers).
 - Describe and explain possible obstacles a country or government might encounter in establishing limited population growth policies (e.g., cultural and religious beliefs, traditional beliefs about family size, gender roles in the society).
 - Explain and evaluate the effects of public health programs on population growth in different countries (e.g., Sweden, China, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Kenya).

GEOGRAPHY STANDARD 9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface**4th GRADE***the student knows and understands:***Spatial Distribution of Population****2. People live in many different places on Earth***Therefore, the student is able to:*

- A. Describe how the number of people varies from place to place, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Identify and describe the locations of types of places where different numbers of people live in the local area (e.g., city high-rise apartments, single-family suburban homes, row houses, apartment buildings and complexes).
 - ▶ Describe how ways of making a living influence how many people live in a certain place (e.g., farm communities versus cities).
 - ▶ Identify and describe places in the state where the greatest and fewest numbers of people live.
- B. Explain why people live in different types of places, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Describe and explain why the founders of the local community elected to settle there (e.g., easily accessible or defensible, acceptable climatic conditions, proximity to other resources or transportation routes).
 - ▶ Identify and describe the places in the world where the majority of people live using satellite images or population density maps and how these places may differ.
 - ▶ Explain why people sometimes settle in inhospitable environments (e.g., availability of valuable resources, economic opportunities, diminishing availability of more desirable locations).

8th GRADE*the student knows and understands:***Spatial Distribution of Population****2. The distribution and density of population varies over space and time***Therefore, the student is able to:*

- A. Explain the concepts of population distribution and density and how they change over time, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Identify and explain how the distribution and density of populations shift through time (e.g., movement of people westward out of the 13 US colonies, rural to urban migration in China).
 - ▶ Explain how both rural to urban migration and internal growth rate are changing the population size and density of large world cities.
 - ▶ Analyze and explain the positive and negative consequences of the migration of large numbers of people in a country (e.g., shift in US population from the northern industrial cities to the Sunbelt cities after the decline in US manufacturing and assembly jobs beginning in the late 20th century, migration of African Americans from the rural South to northern cities).
- B. Analyze and explain the variations of population distribution on national and global scales, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Describe and analyze the current distribution of population in the United States (e.g., comparing the East and West Coasts, pattern of population east versus west of the 100th meridian).
 - ▶ Analyze and explain why the majority of the world's population is located close to coastlines.
 - ▶ Analyze and explain how the population distribution and density vary by continent.

12th GRADE*the student knows and understands:***Spatial Distribution of Population****2. Population distribution and density are a function of historical, environmental, economic, political, and technological factors***Therefore, the student is able to:*

- A. Identify and explain how historical, environmental, economic, political, and technological factors have influenced the current population distribution, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Identify and explain the role technology plays in increasing the population density in cities (e.g., high-rise structures, sanitation, public transportation systems, concentration of business activities).
 - ▶ Identify and explain the factors contributing to the changing distribution of population in developing countries (e.g., growth of cities in eastern Africa as a result of drought in agricultural areas, growth in cities in India due to high-tech industries).
 - ▶ Explain how transportation routes create corridors of higher population-density clusters in rural areas and in between major cities (e.g., railroad access and routes, interstate highway systems, river and canal access).
- B. Analyze demographic data and identify trends in the spatial distribution of population, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Analyze US Census data and immigration tables to predict demographic changes that might influence future electoral politics in a state or region (e.g., Hispanic population growth in some regions, redistricting changing the number of congressional districts, shifts in retirement destinations).
 - ▶ Analyze the population growth rate for several countries and describe the pattern of population distribution that would most likely occur in each country as it grows over time.
 - ▶ Analyze the possible effects of climate change on the growth and distribution of people in areas such as the Sahel, Pakistan, China, etc.

GEOGRAPHY STANDARD 9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

4th GRADE

the student knows and understands:

Migration

3. People move for a variety of reasons

Therefore, the student is able to:

- A. Describe examples of different human migrations, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Describe why and how people moved west during the California Gold Rush.
 - ▶ Describe why and how the Pilgrims moved from England to the US colonies.
 - ▶ Describe why and how Native Americans moved to federally designated reservations.
- B. Explain why people move from one place to another, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Explain the reasons why people might be willing to move to a new location (e.g., for more or better jobs, for better living conditions).
 - ▶ Explain reasons why people may feel forced to leave their current homes to go to a new location (e.g., fear of war, religious persecution, famine).
 - ▶ Explain how groups of people may be forced to move against their wills (e.g., African slave trade, Cherokee Trail of Tears, Japanese internment camps in World War II).
- C. Describe how people and places change as a result of migration, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Describe how the movement of people into cities can change the need for housing and services.
 - ▶ Describe the ways in which immigrant groups coming to the United States change after arriving and living in the new location (e.g., learned a new language, change in jobs, change in types of available housing).
 - ▶ Describe how neighborhoods can change as new groups of people settle in close proximity to each other (e.g., new ethnic restaurants and grocery stores, signs in multiple languages, observance of new festivals and holidays based on ethnic or national tradition).

8th GRADE

the student knows and understands:

Migration

3. There are multiple causes and effects of migration

Therefore, the student is able to:

- A. Identify and describe the types of migrations in terms of time, distance, and cause, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Identify and describe examples of short-term migrations (e.g., temporary workers going to another country or region, people on pilgrimages, refugees from environmental hazards).
 - ▶ Identify and describe examples of involuntary versus voluntary migrations (e.g., war or famine refugees, emigrating for work or education, deployed military units, forced migration of the African slave trade).
 - ▶ Describe examples of migrations in the United States for work or recreation (e.g., seasonal fishing in Alaska; retirees spending part of the year in Florida, Texas, or Arizona; college students to spring break destinations).
- B. Identify and explain push and pull factors influencing decisions to migrate, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Identify and explain the role of pull factors (e.g., better jobs, cultural opportunities, better education) as reasons for migration.
 - ▶ Identify and explain the role of push factors (e.g., political unrest or war, famine, loss of jobs) as reasons for migration.
 - ▶ Explain reasons for temporary migration streams or chain migration (e.g., movements of seasonal workers in agriculture, movements of workers from Indonesia and Pakistan to the Persian Gulf states, movements of people from rural areas to nearby small towns to distant big cities).
- C. Describe the consequences of migration for people as well as on the origin and destination places, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Identify and describe positive and negative impacts that might occur at the places of origin for emigration (e.g., falling real estate prices, money being sent back home by migrants, fewer people to pay taxes resulting in reduced government resources in the original location).
 - ▶ Identify and describe positive and negative impacts that might occur at migration destinations (e.g., increased real estate prices, more competition for jobs and possible impact on local wage rates, increased tax base, increased economic activity).
 - ▶ Explain the effects on northern Plains states of long-term out migration, especially of graduating high school students (e.g., an aging population requiring social services, the closing of stores in small towns, schools closing as a result of declines in school-age populations).

12th GRADE

the student knows and understands:

Migration

3. Migration is one of the driving forces for shaping and reshaping the cultural and physical landscape of places and regions

Therefore the student is able to:

- A. Compare and explain different examples of migrations in terms of the "laws of migration," as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Explain situations where the migration flow also produces a "counter-flow" in the opposite direction (e.g., stream of workers who return to their original locations, money sent back to original locations by migrant workers).
 - ▶ Compare examples of recent migrations that are rural to urban (e.g., rural residents into fast-growing cities in developing countries, workers in the suburbs moving into the cities to reduce commute times and expenses).
 - ▶ Explain reasons why most migrants traveling long distances usually settle initially in urban areas.
- B. Evaluate and explain the impact of international migration on physical and human systems, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Identify areas where transborder forced migrations have occurred and explain the effects on both areas (e.g., movements from Afghanistan into Pakistan, movements from central African nations, movements of Kurds among Turkey, Iran, and Iraq).
 - ▶ Explain the potential effects of cross-border migration to an area that is not able to easily absorb an influx of people (e.g., increased demand for food production, shortages of fresh water, shortages of sanitation services, pressure on medical facilities).
 - ▶ Analyze and evaluate the impacts of post-Soviet migrants on places such as Europe, the Middle East, and North America.
- C. Compare and explain the ways in which different groups and governments adjust to the departure and arrival of migrants, as exemplified by being able to
- ▶ Describe the benefits and challenges migrants face in bridging cultures and adjusting to a new place (e.g., resolving conflicts between old and new traditions, resolving differences between rates of adjustment when children may learn the language and adjust faster than parents, resolving differences in access to food items and traditional cooking methods in a new place).
 - ▶ Compare the immigration policies of different countries and explain the reasons contributing to the development of these policies (e.g., shortage of workers, high unemployment rates, concerns about cultural differences).
 - ▶ Explain the reasons for and effects of policies designed to deal with the results of diaspora (e.g., Israel's Law of Return, the origins of Liberia and Sierra Leone as colonies for freed enslaved persons).