What is geography?

• The study of spatial variation
• How – and why – things differ from place to place on the surface of the earth
• The study of how observable spatial patterns evolved through time
What is geography?

• Geography is a spatial science
• Spatial behavior of people
• Spatial relationships between places
• Spatial processes that create or maintain those behaviors and relationships
Five fundamental themes of geography

1) Location: the meaning of relative and absolute position on the earth's surface
   - Sample terms: Latitude and longitude, site and situation, direction, distance, scale
   - Skills: Map reading, identification
   - Questions: Where is _____? Where is _____ relative to where I am?
Five fundamental themes of geography

2) Place: the distinctive and distinguishing physical and human characteristics of locales

- Sample terms: Physical and cultural landscapes, sense of place
- Skills: Description, compare and contrast
- Questions: What does ____ look like? Why? How is it different from ____?
Five fundamental themes of geography

3) Relationships within places: the development and consequences of human-environment relationships

- Sample terms: Ecosystems, natural resources, environmental pollution
- Skills: Evaluation, analysis
- Questions: What human-environment relationships are occurring? How do they affect the place and its inhabitants?
Five fundamental themes of geography

4) Movement: patterns and change in human spatial interaction on the earth
   - Sample terms: Migration, diffusion, globalization
   - Skills: Explanation, prediction
   - Questions: How has this spatial pattern developed? Will it continue to change? What does it mean for the places involved?
Five fundamental themes of geography

5) Regions: how they form and change
- Sample terms: Formal vs. functional regions
- Skills: Synthesis, application
- Questions: How has this spatial pattern developed? Will it continue to change? What does it mean for the places involved?