Unit 1: Human and Physical Geography

Content Area: **Social Studies**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Trimester 2**
Length: **4 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Summary

With the goal of fostering awareness and understanding of diverse cultures, global issues, and interconnectedness in an increasingly globalized world, students in the Global Citizen course engage with topics such as environmental sustainability, geographic understanding, social justice, and international relations. In doing so, students develop empathy, critical thinking, and a sense of responsibility toward the global community, ultimately broadening their perspectives and equipping them with the skills and knowledge needed to contribute positively to a more inclusive and sustainable future.

This unit is part of the larger aforementioned course sequence and specifically focuses on human and physical geography. Students will understand how physical geography has impacted the development of societies and cultures and how humans have altered physical geography to attempt to meet the needs of societies with varying levels of success on social structure and the environment. By the end of this unit, students will be able to explain the five major themes of geography, the variants of physical geography and how they impact human development/adaption, the influence of political boundaries on geography and cultural experiences, the causes and effects of migration, and the impact of human activities on the environment, and how cultural identity is shaped and influenced by physical geography. Students will also develop skills such as how to read and utilize maps, reflect on the responsibilities of global citizens, draw connections between physical geography and human geography through causation and comparison lenses, understand the impact of language and dialect on cultural identity, reflect on unit topics and their connection to current events, and create arguments based on credible evidence and original analysis.

The ability to make informed and reasoned decisions as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an increasingly globalized world is essential to students' post-secondary success. The skills and content of this unit and the curriculum as a whole encourage students to think critically about important issues, engage in the processes of problem solving, and develop civic competence as part of preparation for college, career, and/or civic life.

Revision Date: August 2024

Standards

Amistad Commission
This unit also reflects the goals of the Department of Education and the Amistad Commission including the infusion of the history of Africans and African-Americans into the curriculum in order to provide an accurate, complete, and inclusive history regarding the importance of of African-Americans to the growth and development of American society in a global context.

New Jersey Diversity and Inclusion Law
In accordance with New Jersey's Chapter 32 Diversity and Inclusion Law, this unit includes instructional materials that highlight and promote diversity, including: economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with race and ethnicity.

Asian American and Pacific Islander History Law
This unit includes instructional materials that highlight the history and contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in accordance with the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Social Studies.

The standards in this unit reflect a developmental progression across grade levels and make interdisciplinary connections across content areas including the humanities, technology, career readiness, cultural awareness, and global citizenship.

L.KL.7.2	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
9.4.8.CT.1	Evaluate diverse solutions proposed by a variety of individuals, organizations, and/or agencies to a local or global problem, such as climate change, and use critical thinking skills to predict which one(s) are likely to be effective (e.g., MS-ETS1-2).
L.KL.7.2.B	Gather vocabulary knowledge when selecting a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
9.4.8.CT.2	Develop multiple solutions to a problem and evaluate short- and long-term effects to determine the most plausible option (e.g., MS-ETS1-4, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.1).
RI.CR.7.1	Cite several pieces of textual evidence and make relevant connections to support analysis of what an informational text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RI.CI.7.2	Determine a central idea in an informational text and explain how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
RI.IT.7.3	Analyze how particular elements of a text interact including how a text makes connections and distinctions among individuals, events, and ideas (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).
9.4.8.GCA.1	Model how to navigate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (e.g., 1.5.8.C1a).
9.4.8.GCA.2	Demonstrate openness to diverse ideas and perspectives through active discussions to achieve a group goal.
RI.PP.7.5	Determine how an author conveys or develops perspective or purpose in a text through distinguishing their position from that of others using evidence.
RI.MF.7.6	Compare and contrast texts to analyze the unique qualities of different mediums, including the integration of information from multiple formats and sources to develop deeper understanding of the concept, topic or subject and resolve conflicting information.

RI.AA.7.7	Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.
RI.CT.7.8	Analyze and reflect on (e.g., practical knowledge, historical/cultural context, and background knowledge) how two or more authors writing informational texts about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.
W.AW.7.1	Write arguments on discipline-specific content (e.g., social studies, science, technical subjects, English/Language Arts) to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
W.AW.7.1.A	Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
W.AW.7.1.B	Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.
9.4.8.IML.7	Use information from a variety of sources, contexts, disciplines, and cultures for a specific purpose (e.g., 1.2.8.C2a, 1.4.8.CR2a, 2.1.8.CHSS/IV.8.AI.1, W.5.8, 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a, 6.1.8.CivicsDP.4.b, 7.1.NH. IPRET.8).
9.4.8.IML.8	Apply deliberate and thoughtful search strategies to access high-quality information on climate change (e.g., 1.1.8.C1b).
W.AW.7.1.C	Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
W.AW.7.1.D	Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
W.AW.7.1.E	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
W.IW.7.2	Write informative/explanatory texts (including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes) to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
W.IW.7.2.A	Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using text structures (e.g., definition, classification, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, etc.) and text features (e.g., headings, graphics, and multimedia) when useful to aid in comprehension.
W.IW.7.2.B	Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
9.4.8.IML.12	Use relevant tools to produce, publish, and deliver information supported with evidence for an authentic audience.
W.IW.7.2.C	Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
W.IW.7.2.D	Use precise language and domain/grade-level-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
W.IW.7.2.E	Establish and maintain a formal style/academic style, approach, and form.
W.IW.7.2.F	Provide a concluding statement or section (e.g., sentence, part of a paragraph, paragraph, or multiple paragraphs) that follows the flow of ideas, reflects back on the topic, and supports the information or explanation presented.
9.4.8.TL.1	Construct a spreadsheet in order to analyze multiple data sets, identify relationships, and facilitate data-based decision-making.
9.4.8.TL.3	Select appropriate tools to organize and present information digitally.
9.4.8.TL.4	Synthesize and publish information about a local or global issue or event (e.g., MSLS4-5, 6.1.8.CivicsPI.3).

W.WR.7.5	Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.
9.4.8.TL.6	Collaborate to develop and publish work that provides perspectives on a real-world problem.
W.SE.7.6	Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
W.RW.7.7	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, metacognition/self-correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.
SL.PE.7.1	Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
SL.PE.7.1.A	Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
SL.PE.7.1.B	Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.
SL.PE.7.1.C	Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed.
SL.PE.7.1.D	Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views.
SL.II.7.2	Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study.
SL.PI.7.4	Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
SL.UM.7.5	Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and findings and emphasize salient points.
6.2.8.HistoryCC.1.c	Describe how the development of both written and unwritten languages impacted human understanding, development of culture, and social structure.
6.2.8.GeoHE.4.b	Use geographic models to determine the impact of environmental modifications made by earlier civilizations on the current day environmental challenges.
6.2.8.GeoHE.4.c	Explain how the geographies and climates of Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas influenced their economic development and interaction or isolation with other societies.
6.3.8.CivicsPI.4	Investigate the roles of political, civil, and economic organizations in shaping people's lives and share this information with individuals who might benefit from this information.
6.2.12.GeoSV.1.a	Use geographic representations to assess changes in political boundaries and the impact of European political and military control in Africa, Asia, and the Americas by the mid-18th century.
6.2.12.GeoHE.1.a	Determine the role of natural resources, climate, and topography in European exploration, colonization, and settlement patterns.
6.2.12.GeoPP.5.a	Use a variety of sources to explain the impact of migration on the way of life in the country of origin and the new country (e.g., social, economic, political structures).
6.2.12.GeoSV.5.a	Use geographic data to interpret the factors of post-independence struggles in South Asia (e.g., the struggle over the partitioning of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan, as well as later tensions over Kashmir).

6.2.12.HistoryCC.5.c	Cite evidence describing the role of boundary disputes and limited natural resources as sources of conflict.

Essential Questions / Enduring Understandings

Essential Questions:

- To what extent does physical geography impact human experiences?
- How may human alterations to the environment lead to positive and negative change?
- How do the experiences of people living in different regions compare based on their geographical environment?

Enduring Understandings:

- Physical geography has impacted the development of societies and cultures, through which groups have adapted to thrive in various environments.
- Humans have and continue to alter physical geography in an attempt to meet the needs of societies, which has had varying levels of success on social structure and the environment.

Objectives

Students will know:

- Vocabulary relating to physical and human geography (including, but not limited to physical features, cultural features, compass rose, hemisphere, Equator, latitude, Prime Meridian, longitude, land cover, precipitation, growing season, land use, population, ocean, lake, river, plain, plateau, mountain, mountain range, basin, island, region, country, territory, urban, suburban, rural, tropic zone, temperate zone, polar zone, population density, population distribution, migration, settlement, sovereignty, displacement, dialect, language)
- The five themes of geography and how they can help us understand the world around us (Location, Place, Human-Environment Interaction, Movement, and Region)
- What it means to be a global citizen and what steps can be taken to enhance one's role as a global citizen
- The different types of landforms (mountains, valleys, plains, plateaus, deserts) and bodies of water (oceans, lakes, rivers, seas)
- The major climate zones (tropical, temperate, polar) and the factors that influence climate (latitude, altitude, ocean currents, wind patterns)
- The different ways that humans divide the globe into distinct areas and the types of boundaries that

maintain these distinctions

- How humans adapt to and modify their environment
- The impact of human activities on the environment, including urbanization, deforestation, and pollution
- The concept of culture and how it varies across different regions of the globe
- The elements of culture, including language, religion, customs, and traditions
- The way migration has contributed to geographical changes
- The ways in which physical geography has impacted human geography
- The difference between political and geographical boundaries
- The difference between dialect and language
- The way dialect impacts cultural identity

Students will be skilled at:

- Defining what it means to be a “global citizen” and actions that can be taken to become a better citizen of the world
- Reading and using maps.
- Using thematic maps to gather information about regions.
- Assessing the extent to which geographical features impact human geography.
- Identifying and explaining the significance of different landforms and bodies of water, as well as their geographical and political impact.
- Explaining the factors that influence settlement and development of societies and cultures.
- Examining the role of migration in human geography.
- Describing how migration impacts physical and human geography.
- Comparing the living practices of groups based on their physical location.
- Comparing and contrasting countries in the same region or continent.
- Comparing how regions with similar physical geography in different continents compare in their development of social practices and norms.
- Drawing connections between one’s own geographical region to those across the globe.

- Analyzing how alterations or challenges to existing political boundaries have impacted populations in regions of dispute.
- Assessing how humans have altered geography to meet wants and needs and the extent to which it has benefited societies.
- Creating a claim in response to a prompt.
- Writing with evidence and analysis to support an original claim.
- Applying content understanding to current events to assess the impacts of migration, human disruption to geographical landscape and the environment, and political struggles over territorial claims.

Learning Plan

- **What is a global citizen?:** Students will reflect on what it means to be a "citizen" of a place. What are the rights and responsibilities of a citizen? What does a "good" citizen look like? After discussing their ideas, students will then think about what it means to be a global citizen. How can one be a good citizen of the world? Students will read the Newsela article, How to be a world citizen, and compose a written reflection on the suggestions made in the article.
- **Mapping our world:** Students will review basic geography skills and learn how to use the World Atlas resource. Working in small groups, students will complete a scavenger hunt to familiarize themselves with the resources that are available in the World Atlas.
- **Exploring land and water:** Students will complete a close reading of the "Introducing the World" passage, identifying at least three words or phrases that are confusing or that make them think of a question. Students will then annotate a world map to identify the world's largest bodies of water and landforms and complete a graphic organizer to summarize their annotations.
- **Torn Paper World Map:** Students will create a map of the world using construction paper, glue, and markers. Without using scissors or any other tools, students will tear continents from construction paper, then glue them into place and label them. Each map needs a title, compass rose, equator, prime meridian, and all continents and oceans must be labeled.
- **How do people divide the world?:** Students will differentiate ways that the world can be divided into regions, countries, territories, and urban/suburban/rural areas. Using the World Atlas, students will annotate a world map to identify examples of these divisions. As an exit ticket, students will write a brief description of Cranford's location using the terms highlighted in class (region, country, state, urban or rural area, city or community, etc.), explaining their selections.
- **Inquiry Activity: To what extent do politics impact geographical boundaries?** Students will take findings from their understanding of political relief maps and assess how border disputes complicate our understanding of physical and human geography. Students will examine the case studies of Kashmir, the War in Ukraine, and/or claims to the South China Sea to assess how attempted control over geographical boundaries have impacted the individuals living in regions of dispute.
- **Climate and weather:** Using Cranford as an example, students will discuss the difference between weather and climate. How does the daily weather affect the way we live our lives? The climate? What

are the advantages and disadvantages of the climate in our area? Next, students will watch an Edpuzzle video covering the major global climate zones and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each. How do you think the lives of people in those regions are affected by the climate? If you could live in another climate zone, which one would you choose? Why?

- **Population:** Using the World Atlas, students will examine population maps to identify which regions of the world are the most densely populated. Student groups will then rotate through stations, examining sources that identify the physical and human factors that affect population density. Next, groups will research a country/region and use the information from the stations to explain why the population density of that area is high or low. Students will discuss the extent to which physical or human factors affect population density, as well as how population density impacts the physical geography of a region.

- **The World in Focus (group):** Working in groups, students will use the UpFront World Affairs Almanac and 2024 Facts & Figures resources to research one of seven global regions. Student groups will create and deliver a brief presentation that provides an overview of the key geographical features, climate, land use, population distribution/density, as well as current trends within the region.

- **The World in Focus (individual):** Students will choose two countries within the region/continent that they researched with their group and complete a graphic organizer that compares the two countries. After completing the graphic organizer, students will write a brief essay that highlights the similarities and differences between the two nations.

- **Human Geography Stations Activity:** Students will evaluate the impact of geography on human experience through examining primary and secondary sources relating to the different major geographical formations (rivers, coastal regions, mountains, plains, etc.) Students will determine the ways in which geography impacts the cultural practices of groups in different regions, comparing amongst continents.

- **Intro to Dialect:** Students will first take an online dialect quiz answering questions about speech and vocabulary in which the quiz will "guess" where students live based on their answers. Students will compare findings and reflect on how accurate the quiz was in its estimate. Students will then define dialect (in relation to language) and create their own list of regional dialect and word meanings. Students will assess how dialect has impacted their own identity and experiences with those who share a dialect with them (such as friends or family in the region) as well as those who do not (such as out-of-state relatives, traveling interactions, etc.)

- **Dialect Investigation**: After students have defined "dialect," they will investigate how dialect varies based on geographical location through a comparative case study. Students may examine how dialects of English vary in parts of North America or the United Kingdom, Spanish from Spain vs. Latin America, or variants of dialect in parts of China. Students will collect three examples of varying dialect in their chosen region of study and attempt to draw conclusions to address the following questions: "How does region and geography impact dialect? To what extent does dialect impact regional identity? How do dialects in different regions show similarities and differences?"

- **Impact of Migration Analysis:** Students will analyze the role of migration in human geography through examination of varying migration patterns. Students will assess how migration impacts language, dialects, and culture through map and source analysis.

- **Comparative Analysis of Human Geography:** Students will first identify major aspects of Cranford's geography and how it has impacted the town's development on a small scale by identifying a geographical marker on a map, such as the Rahway River, and then explaining how it has impacted

the development of the town, such as where houses are built and the impact of flooding. Students will then pick another city from a list provided and compare how the geographical markers of the region have impacted human development to their findings of Cranford. Students will consider population size/ density, climate, and geographical landmarks (both man-made and natural) in their comparison.

- **Human Impact on Geography:** Students will work in small groups to assess how humans have impacted our understanding of geography. Students will consider the role of nation-making, infrastructure, agriculture, and transportation on geography, assessing how it has both positively and negatively impacted the environment. Students will consider questions such as, "How have man-made developments divided or brought together regions? How has geography changed due to man-made developments? Have these changes led to growth, or limitations?"

- **Current Events in Human Geography:** Each week, a current event will be studied in relation to the Unit of study. In this unit, students will analyze current events relating to the impact of geography on groups and cultures. Students will address, "How does geography impact societies in the present day?" Topics of study may be development of new infrastructure, climate, migration, and/or more.

Assessment

When taking a Social Studies course, students demonstrate differentiated proficiency according to their ability to answer the essential questions through formative and summative assessments. Many of the performance tasks below can be implemented as formative and/or summative assessments. As teachers strive for students to demonstrate proficiency, they will need to create additional or alternative assessments based on demonstration or absence of skill.

- Formative
    - What is a global citizen? reflection
    - Mapping Our World scavenger hunt
    - "How do people divide the world?" exit ticket
    - Climate zones reflection
    - Dialect Investigation
    - Vocabulary quizzes on map terms; landforms and bodies of water
    - Current events analysis assignments
- Summative
    - The World in Focus group presentation
    - Comparative analysis of human geography
    - Unit test

- Benchmark
    - Analytical Writing Responses:
        - What does it mean to be a global citizen?
        - To what extent does geography impact the human experience?
        - To what extent do physical and human factors influence population density?
- Alternative assessments
    - Continental Case Study: Students will identify and explain how the physical and human geography of a continent of their choice has impacted its development. Students will identify examples of political boundaries, impact of physical geography (climate, waterways, etc.), examples of man-made changes to geography, and how geography has impacted societal development in two ways.

Materials

The design of this course allows for the integration of a variety of instructional, supplemental, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available In addition to the materials below, the following link connects to district approved textbooks and resources utilized in this course: Core Book List.

The following are approved resources that teachers can include to further unit related objectives:

- Mapping Our World Teacher's Guide (Nystrom World Atlas)
- How to be a world citizen (Newsela)
- Climate Zones for Kids (EdPuzzle)
- Global Patterns of Human Migration (National Geographic)
- World in Focus Atlas & Almanac (UpFront)
- Human Geography by Region (Newsela)
- Why the Kashmir Conflict is not just an India-Pakistan Border Dispute (PBS)
- Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea (Council on Foreign Relations)
- Russia-Ukraine War in Maps and Charts (Al Jazeera)

- Human Impacts on the Environment (National Geographic)
- How Geography Shapes a Culture (Intro Video)
- Geography of the Middle East, an ancient and modern crossroads (Newsela)
- Does Geography Influence How a Language Sounds? (National Geographic)
- The U.S. Dialect Quiz (NY Times)

Any additional resources that are not included in this list will be presented to and reviewed by the supervisor before being included in lesson plans. This ensures resources are reviewed and vetted for relevance and appropriateness prior to implementation.

Suggested Strategies for Modification

This link includes content specific accommodations and modifications for all populations:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Pp6EJOCsFz5o4-opzsXpQDQoa6aClW-bkRGPDRHXVrk/edit?usp=sharing

These additional strategies are helpful when learning Social Studies content and skills:

- Highlighter for close reading and annotation strategies.
- Bolded terms in directions.
- Reading texts aloud for students to assist in comprehension and analysis.
- Providing opportunities for text-to-speech for written responses.
- Use visual presentations of all materials to include graphic organizers for writing.