

## What is geography?

The field of geography describes the earth as the home of human beings. We ought to know a great deal about the earth, because we live on it and use many of its products.

**1. What does the field of geography describe?**

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The earth supplies us with food, clothing, and all other useful things. Do you not wish to know where wheat and corn grow? Where grassy plains are covered with cattle, horses, and sheep? Where fields are white with cotton or blue with flax? Where trees are cut down, floated to the mills, and sawed into lumber? Where coal, iron ore, and granite are taken out of the earth?

**2. Name two things supplied by the earth.**

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**3. What plants are cut down, floated to mills, and sawed into lumber?**

- a. bushes
- b. flowers
- c. grasses
- d. trees

All these products, and many more, are found in various parts of the United States, but some of the things which Americans use are raised by people in other lands. By studying geography, we learn what kind of country those people live in, how they dress, what work they do, what they buy of us, and what they sell to us.

**4. Americans are entirely self-sufficient, meaning that the United States produces everything that it needs and uses.**

- a. True
- b. False

From geography, we shall also learn why the same kinds of products are not found in all parts of the earth. Our study will lead us

to the cold land of the Lapps, where the sun shines low in the sky for several weeks each summer without setting. In that region, the warm season is too short to ripen much grain, but the flesh, milk, and skins of reindeer supply food and clothing.

**5. The Lapps rely on what animal for survival?**

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In other cold parts of the earth, there are vast fields of ice and snow, upon which Eskimos hunt the seal or the polar bear. How different is their life from that of people living in the lower 48 states of the United States! They see no grain ripening in fields, no cattle grazing in pastures, no fruit hanging on trees.

**6. Name two animals hunted by Eskimos.**

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Geography describes wide regions of shifting sand, where no rain falls and no plants grow,

except near a few springs. There the people traditionally travel mostly on the backs of camels, because camels can travel great distances without needing a drink of water.

Do you know how tea leaves are dried and how silk is woven into fine cloth? You will, when you learn about the people in Japan and China.

There are warm lands where coffee berries and many kinds of spices grow. Do you not wish to learn about the people who send us coffee, cloves, and nutmegs? Every day as we study geography, we shall learn something about the earth—its forms of land and water, its plants, its animals, and its people.

**7. What pack animal can travel a great distance without needing a drink of water?**

- a. camel
- b. gazelle
- c. horse
- d. mule

**8. Name two countries where tea and silk are produced.**

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