

01 – Basic Concepts →

Key Issue #2

Why is each point on Earth unique?

Learning Outcomes →

- 1.2.1: Identify geographic characteristics of places, including toponym, site, and situation.
- 1.2.2: Identify the three types of regions.
- 1.2.3: Describe two geographic definitions of culture.

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

- A **place** is a specific point on Earth distinguished by a particular characteristic.
- Describing the features of a place is an essential building block for geographers to explain similarities, differences, and changes across Earth.

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? ➡

- Geographers describe a feature's place on Earth by identifying its **location**, the position that something occupies on Earth's surface.

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? ➡

- Location can be identified in three ways.
 1. Place Names
 - A **toponym** is the name given to a place on Earth.
 - Names derived from people of prominence, religious affiliation, physical features, or origins of its settlers

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? ➡

2. Site
 - **Site** is the physical character of a place.
 - Characteristics include climate, water sources, topography, soil, vegetation, latitude, and elevation.

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

3. Situation

- **Situation** is the location of a place relative to other places.

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

- Region: A Unique Area
 - An area on Earth defined by one or more distinctive characteristics is a **region**.
 - Most often applied at two scales
 1. Spanning political states
 2. Constrained within one political state.

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

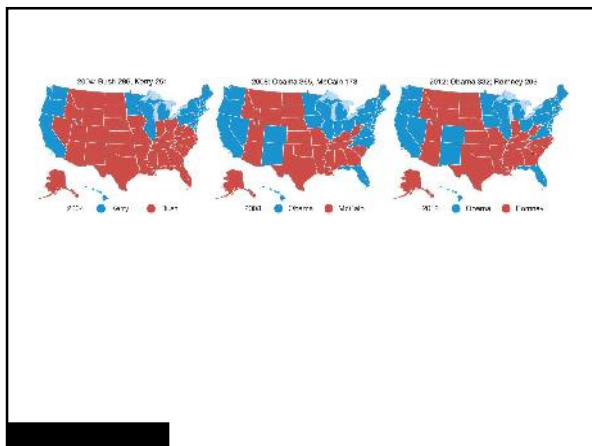
- A region derives its unified character through the **cultural landscape** - a combination of cultural, religious, and physical features.
 - “Culture is the agent, the natural area the medium, the cultural landscape is the result.” - Carl O. Sauer, American Geographer

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

- Region: A Unique Area
 - Geographers identify three types of regions.

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

1. **Formal Region** (aka uniform region or homogeneous region)
 - An area in which everyone shares in common one or more distinctive characteristics
 - »Ex. Common language, economic activity, or climate
 - »Characteristic may be predominant rather than universal.



Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

2. **Functional Region** (aka nodal region)

–An area organized around a node or focal point

»The characteristic chosen to define a functional region dominates at a central focus or node and diminishes in importance outward.

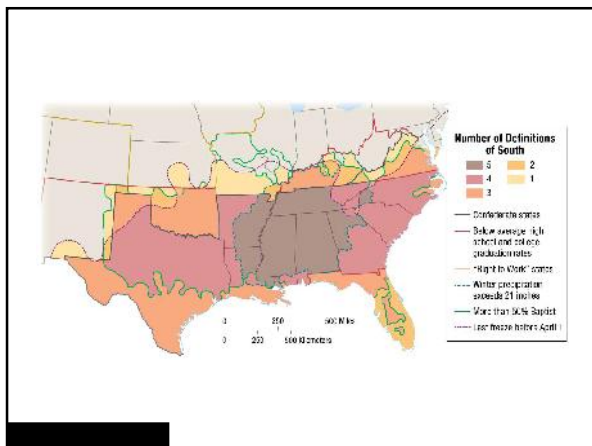
»Ex. Circulation of a newspaper, such as *The New York Times*

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

3. **Vernacular Region** (aka perceptual region)

–An area that people believe exists as part of their cultural identity.

»Ex. The American South is a region individuals recognize as having distinct environmental, cultural, and economic preferences.



Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

- Regions of Culture
 - **Culture** is the body of customary beliefs, material traits, and social forms that together constitute the distinct tradition of a group of people.

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

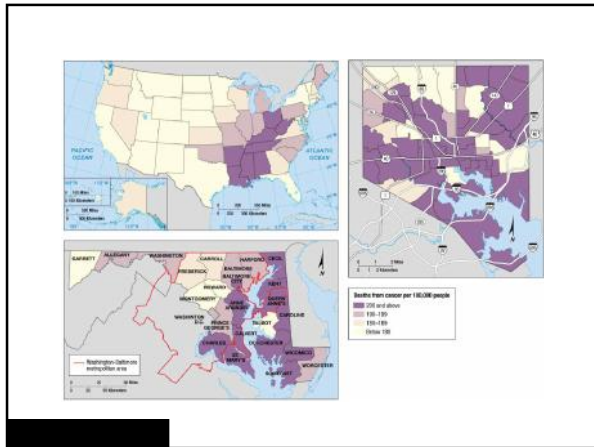
- Origin of word, culture, is the Latin *cultus*, which means “to care for.”
 - Two meanings
 1. To care *about*
 2. To care *of*

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

- Geographers study both definitions of culture.
 - Culture: What People Care About
 - » Geographers study why the customary ideas, beliefs, and values of a people produce a distinctive culture in a particular place.
 - » Especially important cultural values derive from a group’s language, religion, and ethnicity.

Why Is Each Point on Earth Unique? →

- Culture: What People Take Care Of
 - »The second element of culture of interest is production of material wealth, such as food, clothing, and shelter that humans need in order to survive and thrive.



The End
