

GEOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Each place has distinctive characteristics that distinguishes it from other places. Geographic characteristics are divided into two categories: physical characteristics and human characteristics.

Physical characteristics describe the natural environment of the place. They include:

- **physical features** - are landforms and bodies of water.
- **weather and climate**
 - weather - is how hot or cold and how wet or dry a place is.
 - climate - is the kind of weather a place has over a long period time.
- **soil** - is the top layer of the Earth in which plants can grow. Sand, silt, and clay are the basic types of soil. Types of soil vary from place to place.
- **minerals** - natural substances, such as coal or gold, which are found in rock and in the ground.
- **vegetation** - is plant life. Types of vegetation vary from place to place, such as, forest, grassland, tundra and desert. Climate affects the vegetation of a place.
- **animal life** - includes all the large and small animals that live on Earth.

Human characteristics describe the people of a place (past and present), their languages, religions, economic activities, political systems, population distribution and their modifications of the environment.

- **human-made features** - are modifications people have made to the land.
(buildings, bridges, tunnels, railroad tracks, dams, monuments, piers, cultivated land)
- **language** - is a way of communicating with words, symbols, signs, or gestures that are used and understood by a group of people.
- **religion** - is a belief in a god or gods and the way people express this belief in their life and worship.
- **political system** - is how people develop and change structures of power, authority and government.
- **economic activities** - show how people make a living in a place.
- **population distribution** - is the pattern of the number of people who live in a place. For example, more people live in cities than in rural areas. More people live near bodies of water than in very dry places.

Geographic Characteristics of a Place

Physical Characteristics

of a place include:

- **physical features**
 - landforms**
 - bodies of water**
- **weather and climate**
- **soil**
- **minerals**
- **vegetation**
- **animal life**

Human Characteristics

of a place include:

- **human-made features - modification to the environment**
 - buildings**
 - bridges**
 - tunnels**
 - railroad tracks**
 - dams**
 - monuments**
 - port**
 - cultivated lands**
- **religion**
- **political system**
- **economic activities**
 - (how people make a living)**
- **population distribution**

Physical Characteristics

physical features

weather and climate

soil

minerals

vegetation

animal life

Human Characteristics

human-made features

language

religion

political system

economic activities

(how people make a living)

population distribution
