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UNIT SYNOPSIS

This first unit sets the foundation for the course by teaching students how geographers approach the study of places. Students are encouraged to reflect on the “why of where” to better understand geographic perspectives. Many other high school courses ask students to read and analyze data, but for this course, students also apply a spatial perspective when reading and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data.

Students learn the ways information from data sources such as maps, tables, charts, satellite images, and infographics informs policy decisions such as voting redistricting or expanding transportation networks. They also learn about how people influence and are influenced by their environment; the resulting impact on topography, natural resources, and climate; and the differences between and consequences of environmental determinism and possibilism.

Finally, students are introduced to the language of geography, learning discipline-specific terminology, and applying that language to contemporary, real-world scenarios so they can better study population processes and patterns in the next unit.

All 2025-26 AP Human Geography Materials can be found [here](#); the Unit 1 Materials are [here](#).

ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS AND CONTENT STANDARDS

Below are the standards **taught** and **assessed** in this unit.

Topic, Enduring Understanding, Learning Objectives (<i>Students will be able to...</i>)
1.1 Introduction to Maps <ul style="list-style-type: none">• IMP-1: Geographers use maps and data to depict relationships of time, space, and scale.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ IMP-1.A: <i>Identify types of maps, the types of information presented in maps, and different kinds of spatial patterns and relationships portrayed in maps.</i>
1.2 Geographic Data <ul style="list-style-type: none">• IMP-1: Geographers use maps and data to depict relationships of time, space, and scale.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ IMP-1.B: <i>Identify different methods of geographic data collection.</i>
1.3 The Power of Geographic Data <ul style="list-style-type: none">• IMP-1: Geographers use maps and data to depict relationships of time, space, and scale.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ IMP-1.C: <i>Explain the geographical effects of decisions made using geographical information.</i>
1.4 Spatial Concepts <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PSO-1: Geographers analyze relationships among and between places to reveal important spatial patterns.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ PSO-1.A: <i>Define major geographic concepts that illustrate spatial relationships.</i>
1.5 Human-Environmental Interaction <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PSO-1: Geographers analyze relationships among and between places to reveal important spatial patterns.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ PSO-1.B: <i>Explain how major geographic concepts illustrate spatial relationships.</i>
1.6 Scales of Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PSO-1: Geographers analyze relationships among and between places to reveal important spatial patterns.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ PSO-1.C: <i>Define scales of analysis used by geographers.</i>○ PSO-1.D: <i>Explain what scales of analysis reveal.</i>
1.7 Regional Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SPS-1: Geographers analyze complex issues and relationships with a distinctively spatial perspective.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ SPS-1.A: <i>Describe different ways that geographers define regions.</i>

UNIT OVERVIEW AND PACING NOTES

This unit is designed to span ten instructional days, aligned to the region with the latest school start date. If your campus calendar allows for additional time, you are encouraged to extend the learning. As long as Unit 1 is completed by the end of August, you will remain on track to finish Units 1–4 before the semester exam. Below are the 10 core instructional lessons, along with optional lessons for deeper exploration of Unit 1 content. The AP Human Geography team recommends teaching the eight core lessons and incorporating any extensions that fit your schedule, provided the Unit 1 exam is administered by August 31.

Unit-at-a-Glance:

Core Lessons:

Lesson:	Pacing Notes:
Lesson 1: Orange Peel Projections	If you start your first day of content by August 18, utilize the extension lessons below.
Lesson 2: Introduction to Maps	
Lesson 3: Geographic Data	
Lesson 4: Spatial Concepts	
Lesson 5: Ice Cream FRQ	
Lesson 6: Scales of Analysis	
Lesson 7: Regional Analysis	
Lesson 8: Human-Environment Interaction	
Day 9: Unit 1 Review	
Day 10: Unit 1 Exam	

Extension Lessons:

Lesson:	Pacing Notes:
McDonald's Around the World	This lesson serves as an introduction to diffusion. It can be taught after completing the Ice Cream FRQ or can be used as an introduction to Unit 3: Cultural Patterns and Processes.
Sustainability	Can be taught after Lesson 7: Regional Analysis
Theories of Development	This lesson serves as a preview of Unit 7 content. It can be taught at the end of this unit, at the beginning of Unit 2, or at any point in the course as a preview of economic development.
Regional Analysis Additional Practice	Can be used as additional practice at the completion of the unit.
Regional Analysis FRQ	