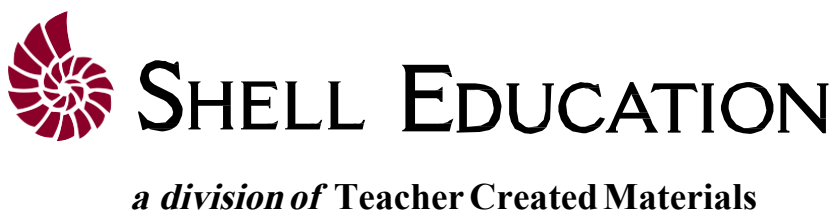


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# 180 Days of GEOGRAPHY

for Sixth Grade





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .....	3
How to Use This Book .....	4
Standards Correlations .....	10
Daily Practice Pages .....	15
Answer Key .....	195
Additional Maps .....	205
Rubrics .....	210
Analysis Pages .....	213
Digital Resources .....	216

## INTRODUCTION

With today's geographic technology, the world seems smaller than ever. Satellites can accurately measure the distance between any two points on the planet and give detailed instructions about how to get there in real time. This may lead some people to wonder why we still study geography.

While technology is helpful, it isn't always accurate. We may need to find detours around construction, use a trail map, outsmart our technology, and even be the creators of the next navigational technology.

But geography is also the study of cultures and how people interact with the physical world. People change the environment, and the environment affects how people live. People divide the land for a variety of reasons. Yet no matter how it is divided or why, people are at the heart of these decisions. To be responsible and civically engaged, students must learn to think in geographical terms.

### The Need for Practice

To be successful in geography, students must understand how the physical world affects humanity. They must not only master map skills but also learn how to look at the world through a geographical lens. Through repeated practice, students will learn how a variety of factors affect the world in which they live.

### Understanding Assessment

In addition to providing opportunities for frequent practice, teachers must be able to assess students' geographical understandings. This allows teachers to adequately address students' misconceptions, build on their current understandings, and challenge them appropriately. Assessment is a long-term process that involves careful analysis of student responses from a discussion, project, practice sheet, or test. The data gathered from assessments should be used to inform instruction: slow down, speed up, or reteach. This type of assessment is called *formative assessment*.



# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

## Weekly Structure

The first two weeks of the book focus on map skills. By introducing these skills early in the year, students will have a strong foundation on which to build throughout the year. Each of the remaining 34 weeks will follow a regular weekly structure.

Each week, students will study a grade-level geography topic and a location in the world. Locations may be a town, a state, a region, or the whole continent.

Days 1 and 2 of each week focus on map skills. Days 3 and 4 allow students to apply information and data to what they have learned. Day 5 helps students connect what they have learned to themselves.



**Day 1—Reading Maps:** Students will study a grade-appropriate map and answer questions about it.



**Day 2—Creating Maps:** Students will create maps or add to an existing map.



**Day 3—Read About It:** Students will read a text related to the topic or location for the week and answer text-dependent or photo-dependent questions about it.



**Day 4—Think About It:** Students will analyze a chart, diagram, or other graphic related to the topic or location for the week and answer questions about it.



**Day 5—Geography and Me:** Students will do an activity to connect what they learned to themselves.

## Five Themes of Geography

Good geography teaching encompasses all five themes of geography: location, place, human-environment interaction, movement, and region. Location refers to the absolute and relative locations of a specific point or place. The place theme refers to the physical and human characteristics of a place. Human-environment interaction describes how humans affect their surroundings and how the environment affects the people who live there. Movement describes how and why people, goods, and ideas move between different places. The region theme examines how places are grouped into different regions. Regions can be divided based on a variety of factors, including physical characteristics, cultures, weather, and political factors.

# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK *(cont.)*

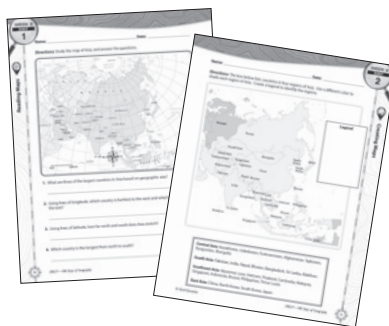
## Using the Practice Pages

The activity pages provide practice and assessment opportunities for each day of the school year. Teachers may wish to prepare packets of weekly practice pages for the classroom or for homework.

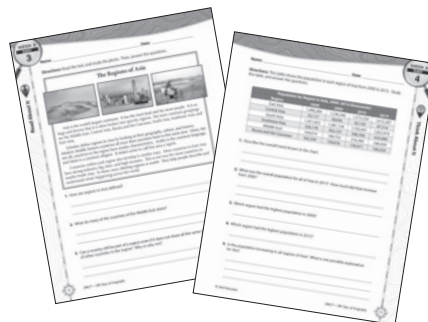
As outlined on page 4, each week examines one location and one geography topic.



The first two days focus on map skills. On Day 1, students will study a map and answer questions about it. On Day 2, they will add to or create a map.



Days 3 and 4 allow students to apply information and data from texts, charts, graphs, and other sources to the location being studied.

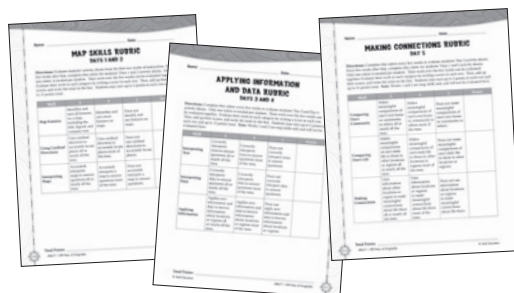


On Day 5, students will apply what they learned to themselves.



## Using the Resources

Rubrics for the types of days (map skills, applying information and data, and making connections) can be found on pages 210–212 and in the Digital Resources. Use the rubrics to assess students' work. Be sure to share these rubrics with students often so that they know what is expected of them.

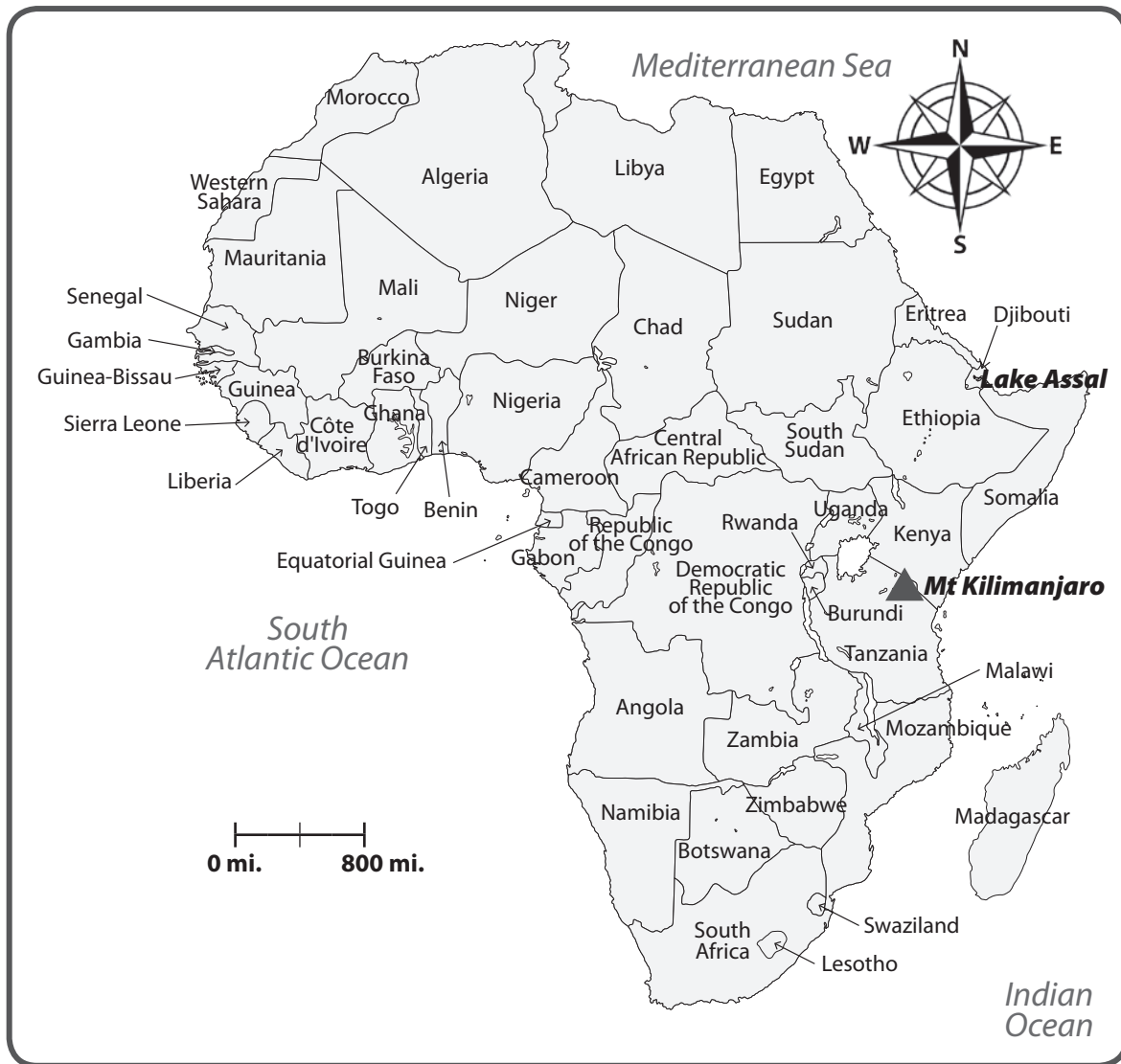






Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** This is a map of Africa. Use the map and scale to answer the questions.

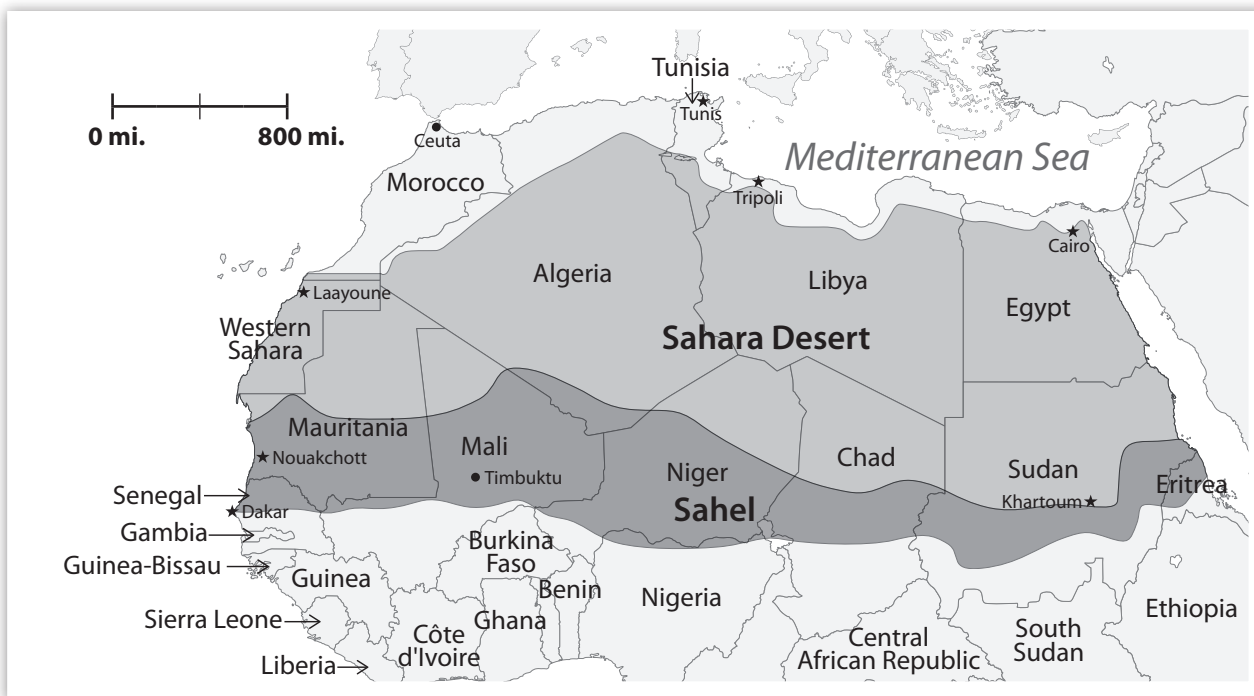


1. What political information is provided on this map of Africa?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Outline the borders of the landlocked countries (countries that do not border the ocean).  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Draw a line a between the highest point, Mt. Kilimanjaro, and the lowest point, Lake Assal.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Using the scale, what is the approximate distance between the two points?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Timbuktu was a major trading center in Medieval times. Follow the steps to complete the map.

## The Sahara Desert and Sahel



1. Draw a route from Cairo to Timbuktu.
2. Draw a route from Tripoli to Timbuktu.
3. Draw a route from Tunis to Timbuktu.
4. Draw a route from Ceuta to Timbuktu.
5. Use the scale to label the distance of each trade route.

**Challenge:** Cover the names of the countries that contain part of the Sahara Desert with sticky notes. Write the names of as many countries as you can. Then, check your answers.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Read the text, and study the photos. Then, answer the questions.

## The Regions of Asia



Asia is the world's largest continent. It has the most land and the most people. It is so large and diverse that it is often broken into specific regions. The most common groupings are the Middle East, Central Asia, Russia and the Caucasus, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia.

Scholars define regions in Asia by looking at their geography, culture, and history. Modern Middle Eastern countries all trace their ancestors back to this same area. Many, but not all, countries in the region have similar characteristics. Arabic is the common language, and Islam is a common religion. It makes sense to call this area a *region*.

Countries within each region also develop in similar ways. Most countries in East Asia have strong industry, big cities, and high incomes. This is not true for most countries in nearby South Asia. In these cases, labeling regions is useful. They help people describe and understand what's happening across the world.

1. How are regions in Asia defined?

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2. What do many of the countries of the Middle East share?

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3. Can a country still be part of a region even if it does not share all the same characteristics of other countries in the region? Why or why not?

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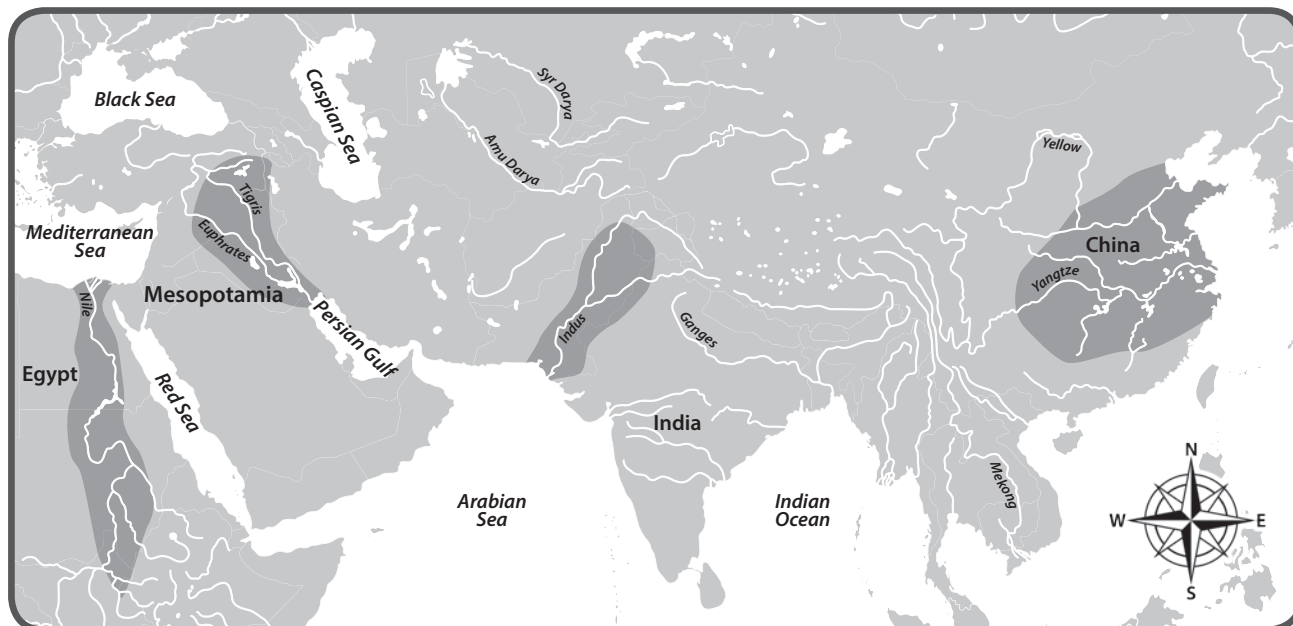
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** This is a map of the four earliest river valley civilizations. Study the map, and answer the questions.

## Early Civilizations



1. What part of the map has the most rivers?

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2. In what parts of the modern world were these four civilizations located?

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3. Based on their locations, which early civilizations would you expect to have the most interaction?

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4. What likely resulted from that interaction, and why?

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Imagine that you lost your current source of water. Brainstorm three options you might have for getting drinking water. What are the pros and cons of each option? Record your ideas in the table.

Option	Pros	Cons