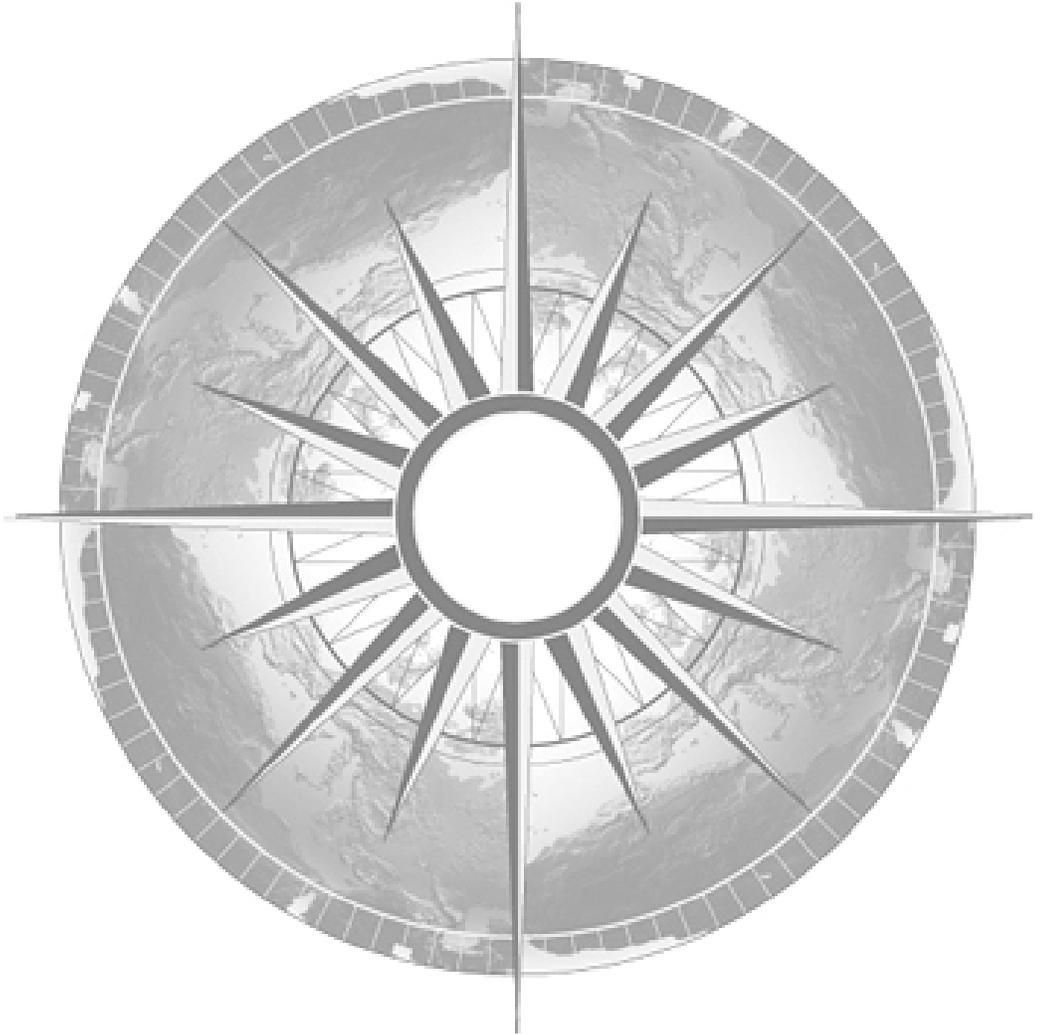


HEMISPHERES

People and Place Curriculum Resources on Human-Environmental Interactions

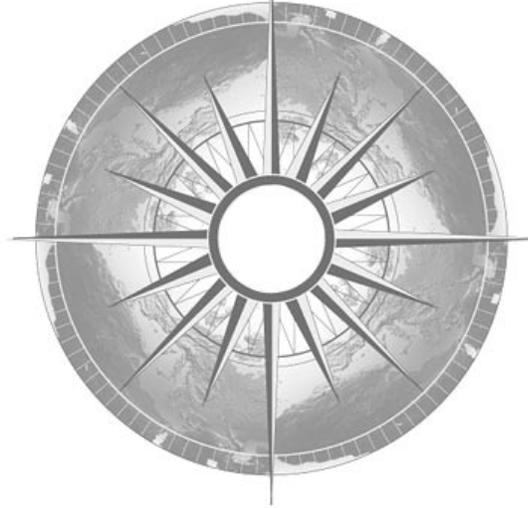


Hemispheres is a joint project of:
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People and Place

Curriculum Resources on
Human-Environmental Interactions



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Final Version

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Welcome!

Inspired by Hemispheres' 2004 Teachers' Summer Institute, *People and Place: Human-Geographic Relations*, this curriculum unit was designed to address *human adaptation to and modification of the environment*. How have humans adjusted to life in extreme climates? To limited water resources? How have people affected their surroundings? How have solutions to geographical challenges damaged the natural environment? How has the use of fossil fuels increased the need to find renewable sources of energy? How has urbanization modified both land and air? Regional case studies were chosen to address these, and other, essential questions.

Each case study is complete unto itself, with activities that build social studies skills by incorporating primary and secondary sources, presenting information in a variety of formats (including graphs, charts, and maps), representing varying points of view, and using mathematical skills to interpret social studies information. If time and interest allow, case studies can also be grouped to present global trends: energy use, water management, and waste disposal are among the cross-regional topics that appear in this unit.

Each case study is designed to be completed in its entirety, and activities are presented in sequence. Learning activities build on one another, and the final assessment tasks require students to use information from each of the previous activities.

ESTABLISHED GOALS—STATE AND NATIONAL STANDARDS

This curriculum unit is designed to address the following standards in the Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills (TEKS):

113.22, Social Studies Grade 6

(7) Geography. The student understands the impact of interactions between people and the physical environment on the development of places and regions. The student is expected to:

- (a) identify and analyze ways people have adapted to the physical environment in selected places and regions;
- (b) identify and analyze ways people have modified the physical environment; and
- (c) describe ways in which technology influences human capacity to modify the physical environment.

34.34, World Geography Studies

(8) Geography. The student understands how people, places, and environments are connected and interdependent. The student is expected to:

- (b) compare ways that humans depend on, adapt to, and modify the physical environment using local, state, national, and international human activities in a variety of cultural and technological contexts; and
- (d) analyze statistical and other data to infer the effects of physical and human processes on patterns of settlement, population distribution, economic and political conditions, and resource distribution.

This curriculum unit also addresses the following National Geography Standards (Standards for Life, 1994):

Grades 5–8

Standard 4, Place and Regions: The Physical and Human Characteristics of Places

2. How different human groups alter places in distinctive ways

Standard 8, Physical Systems: The Characteristics and Spatial Distribution of Ecosystems on Earth's Surface

4. How human activities influence changes in ecosystems

Standard 12, Human Systems: The Processes, Patterns, and Functions of Human Settlement

3. The causes and consequences of urbanization

Standard 14, Environment and Society: How Human Actions Modify the Physical Environment

1. The consequences of human modification of the physical environment
2. How human modifications of the physical environment in one place often lead to changes in other places
3. The role of technology in the human modification of the physical environment

Standard 15, Environment and Society: How Physical Systems Affect Human Systems

1. Human responses to variations in physical systems
2. How the characteristics of different physical environments provide opportunities for or place constraints on human activities
3. How natural hazards affect human activities

Standard 16, Environment and Society: The Changes That Occur in the Meaning, Use, Distribution, and Importance of Resources

1. The worldwide distribution and use of resources
2. Why people have different viewpoints regarding resource use
3. How technology affects the definitions of, access to, and use of resources
4. The fundamental role of energy resources in society

Standard 18, The Uses of Geography: How to Apply Geography to Interpret the Present and Plan for the Future

1. How the interaction of physical and human systems may shape present and future conditions on Earth
2. How varying points of view on geographic context influence plans for change
3. How to apply the geographic point of view to solve social and environmental problems by making geographically informed decisions

How do people both adapt to and change their environments?

Materials:

butcher paper, various colored markers

Instructions:

To introduce the central concept of the unit, the teacher asks the question of how people adapt to and modify their environments. First, brainstorm a few possibilities on the board/overhead.

Next, use a “graffiti wall” to expand on the discussion. Have six large sheets of butcher paper taped to the walls around the classroom. They should be labeled **Economy, Energy, Transportation, Recreation, Agriculture, and Housing**. Draw a line down the center of each piece of paper and write **How we adapt to the environment** on one side and **How we change the environment** on the other. Remind students that “adapting to the environment” means that we do things to adjust to the environment in which we live (e.g., we wear sweaters in cold weather), and that “changing the environment” means that we take actions that change the environment around us (e.g., we cut down trees to build houses).

Divide the class into groups of 4–5. Each group should have a different colored marker so that you can later attribute various ideas to the correct group.

Assign each group to stand by one of the posters. Direct each group to write as many examples as they can think of, for both adaptation and change, that correspond to the topic of the specific piece of paper (economy, transportation, etc.). Depending on the level and preparation of your students, you may ask them to consider local examples or worldwide examples. Give each group 2–3 minutes, then rotate the groups to the next topic. Groups should try not to repeat ideas already listed on the posters. Rotate until each group has completed each topic.

To finish up, the class reflects on all ideas posted. Posters are shared and students discuss their reactions.

Extension:

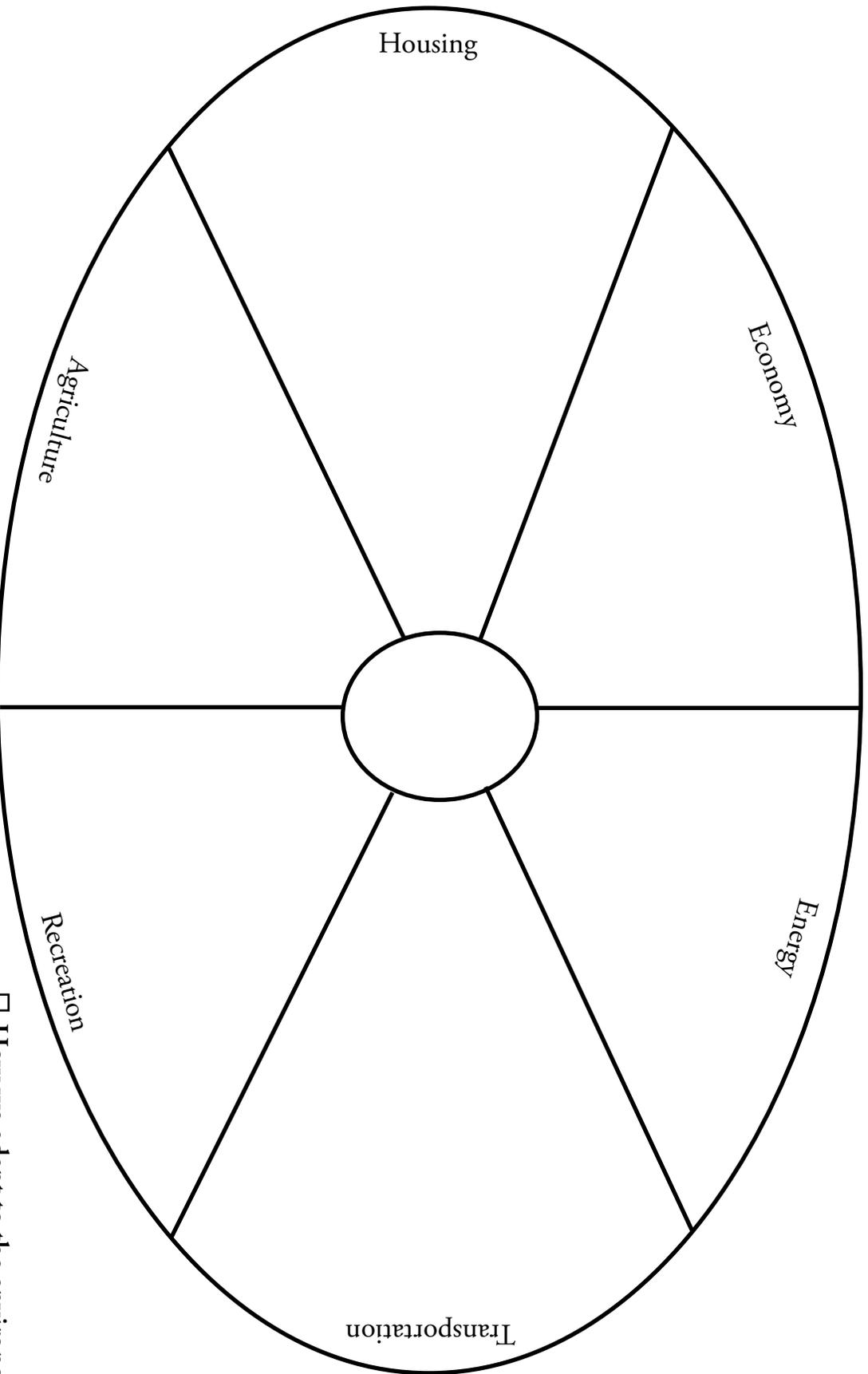
Each student fills out the graphic organizer on the following page. Have students choose one category they found most interesting and write a summary/reaction to their findings.

Source: Modified from Lesson 2 of *Ecuador: People and their Effect on the Environment*, by Kate Hall, participant in a 2005 Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program.

How do people adapt to and change their environments?

Name: _____

Choose a different color pen or pencil for each: Adapt to and Change. Indicate your color choices in the boxes at the bottom of the page.



- How we adapt to the environment
- How we change the environment