

*Human Geography is the most vocabulary-dependent AP course: an FRQ point is usually earned by naming the correct term and applying it to the named place or scenario. A definition on its own earns nothing. Learn each sentence, then practise adding “for example, in ...”.*

## Thinking geographically

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**Scale** – the level at which a phenomenon is examined, from local to global; the pattern seen can change with the scale chosen

**Region** – an area defined by one or more shared characteristics that distinguish it from surrounding areas

**Diffusion** – the spread of a phenomenon from its hearth across space and through time

**Distance decay** – the weakening of a phenomenon’s effect as distance from its origin increases

**Site** – the physical characteristics of a place itself, such as its terrain, soil and climate

**Situation** – the location of a place relative to other places, such as its access to routes and markets

## Population and migration

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**Demographic transition model** – a model describing how birth and death rates change as a country develops, moving it through stages of population growth

**Population pyramid** – a bar graph showing a population’s age and sex structure, used to infer its growth and dependency

**Carrying capacity** – the maximum population an environment can support given its resources and technology

**Push factor** – a negative condition at the origin that drives people to leave

**Pull factor** – a positive condition at the destination that attracts migrants to it

**Remittance** – money sent home by a migrant working abroad, often a major income source for the origin country

## Culture

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**Culture** – the shared beliefs, practices and material objects that characterise a group of people

**Language family** – a group of languages descended from a single common ancestral language

**Lingua franca** – a language adopted for communication between speakers of different first languages

**Syncretism** – the blending of two cultural traits into a new one

**Cultural landscape** – the visible imprint of human activity on the physical environment

## Political geography

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- Nation** – a group of people sharing a common culture and identity who see themselves as one people
- State** – a territory with defined borders, a permanent population and a sovereign government recognised by others
- Nation-state** – a state whose borders correspond closely with the territory of a single nation
- Sovereignty** – a state's right to govern its own territory without outside interference
- Devolution** – the transfer of political power from a central government to regional authorities
- Gerrymandering** – drawing electoral district boundaries to give one group an unfair advantage
- Supranational organisation** – an alliance of three or more states formed for a shared purpose, in which members give up some sovereignty

## Agriculture and land use

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- Green Revolution** – the mid-20th-century spread of high-yield seeds, fertilisers and irrigation that sharply raised agricultural output
- Von Thünen model** – a model placing agricultural land uses in rings around a market, ordered by transport cost and perishability
- Subsistence agriculture** – farming that produces food for the farmer's own household rather than for sale
- Commercial agriculture** – farming that produces crops and livestock primarily for sale

## Cities and urban land use

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- Urbanization** – the increasing share of a population living in urban areas
- Megacity** – a city with more than 10 million inhabitants
- World city** – a city that exerts influence far beyond its own borders through finance, culture and business
- Gentrification** – the renovation of a deteriorated inner-city neighbourhood by wealthier arrivals, which displaces poorer residents
- Suburbanization** – the movement of population and activity from a central city to its surrounding suburbs
- Urban sprawl** – the low-density, unplanned spread of urban development into surrounding rural land

## Development

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- Core** – the industrialised, high-income regions that dominate global trade and decision-making
- Periphery** – the less-developed regions that supply raw materials and labour and depend on the core
- Outsourcing** – contracting part of a firm's production or services to another company, often abroad
- Sustainable development** – development that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs