

Past-paper walk-through

Forms of Governance ■ 4.7

eXercise

Questions in this set

- 2025 Set 2 Q3
- 2024 Set 2 Q2
- 2023 Set 1 Q1
- 2023 Set 2 Q1

Reading the mark scheme

- **B1** a mark that stands on its own – the point is either made or not.
- **M1** a *method* mark: the right approach, even if the number is wrong.
- **A1** an *answer* mark, and it usually needs its M mark first.
- **C1** a working mark on the way to the answer.
- **//** separates answers the examiner accepts equally.
- **ecf** = error carried forward: a later part is marked on your own earlier answer.
- **owtte** = “or words to that effect” – the wording need not match.

Question 3

2025 Set 2 ■ Q3

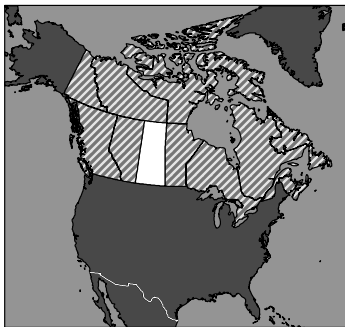
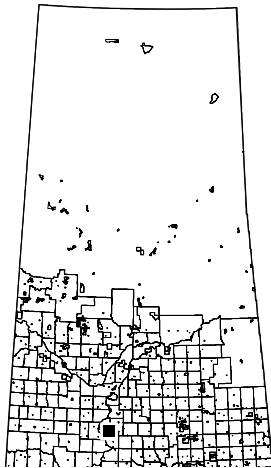
The two maps show political boundaries in Saskatchewan, Canada, and in Finland. Both Finland and Saskatchewan are home to populations of indigenous peoples with a significant amount of political autonomy. Finland is a member state of the European Union.

- (a)** Identify the scale of analysis used for Finland's political divisions in Map 2.
- (b)** Define geometric boundaries as shown in Map 1.
- (c)** Describe one function of internal boundaries.
- (d)** Explain how the spatial organization of a country such as Canada is affected by a federal system of governance.
- (e)** Explain how the supranational organization shown in Map 2 may limit the actions of Finland as a member state.

Question 3

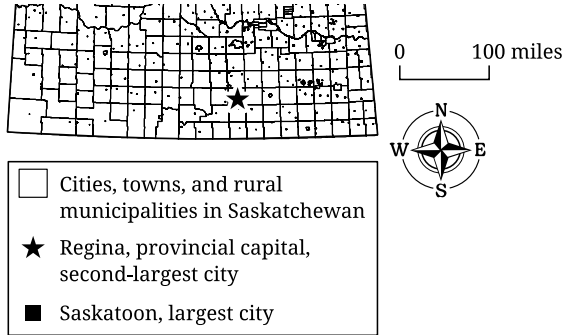
- (f) Describe one characteristic of a cultural landscape that may reflect cultural beliefs and identities.
- (g) Explain how communication technologies may affect the cultural patterns of indigenous languages.

Question 3



-  Saskatchewan
-  Other Canadian provinces and territories
-  Other countries

Question 3



Source: Statistics Canada

Question 3

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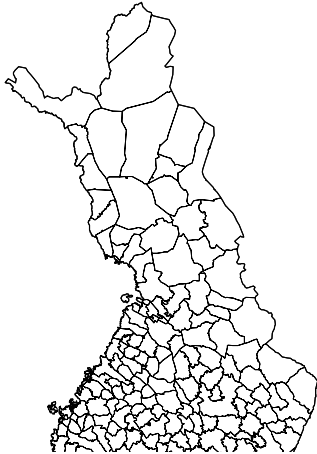
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AP HUMAN GEOGRAPHY 2025 ▪ **FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

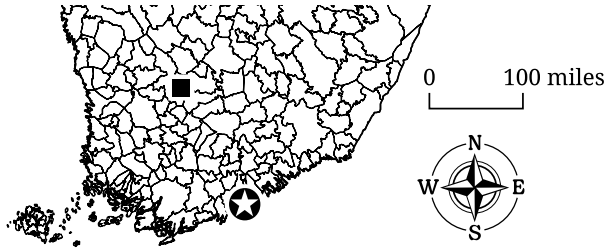
Map 2: Political Divisions in Finland

Question 3



- Finland
- Other European Union countries
- Other countries

Question 3



Solution 3

(a)

Mark scheme

- - Local scale (e.g., city, town, rural municipality) or subnational scale.

Solution 3

(b)

Mark scheme

- - Border lines on a map (two-dimensional plane) that are straight, angled, and/or curved to form a geometric shape (e.g., straight line, square, rectangle, circle, other polygons).
- - A boundary or border drawn based on lines of latitude and longitude, a grid system, and/or a township and range system (baselines and meridians).
- - Boundary lines drawn without regard to the physical or cultural landscape.

Solution 3

(c) Mark scheme

- - Internal boundaries define the limits of sovereignty or government control between one subnational region and another.
- - Internal boundaries delimit or unify different types of subnational regions (e.g., voting districts, states, provinces, territories, special administrative regions, autonomous zones).
- - Internal boundaries can unify or separate distinct ethnic, cultural, or national groups.

Solution 3

- - Internal boundaries can delineate, divide, or fragment zones of public infrastructure and/or local government (e.g., water districts, school districts, voting districts).
- - Internal boundaries can reflect, preserve, or reduce cultural, linguistic, or historical identities.
- - Internal boundaries can prevent, resolve, or exacerbate conflicts.
- - Internal boundaries can facilitate or hinder the collection or analysis of data.
- - Internal boundaries can facilitate or hinder the management, protection, or distribution of natural resources or ecosystems.

Solution 3

(d) Mark scheme

- - Federal systems of governance affect the spatial organization of a country by creating locally based, dispersed power centers (e.g., subnational state or provincial capitals).
- - Countries with a federal system of governance are typically organized into subnational units (e.g., autonomous regions, semiautonomous regions) and/or have regional capitals that may help reduce centrifugal forces and/or limit ethnic separatism.
- - Federal systems tend to divide large amounts of land area into subnational divisions that may be difficult to govern from a centralized or single capital.

Solution 3

- - Federal systems tend to divide multicultural countries into subnational divisions based on cultural differences (e.g., ethnic, religious, and/or linguistic diversity) that may be difficult to govern from a centralized or single capital.

Solution 3

(e) Mark scheme

- - The EU may enact international laws or policies that limit the economic actions of Finland or other member states (e.g., reducing or eliminating trade barriers, introducing a common currency, regulating industry).
- - The EU may implement international laws or policies that limit the political actions of Finland or other member states (e.g., requiring common border policies, observing elections, sharing a common foreign policy).
- - By joining the EU, Finland has agreed to allow the EU government to make laws and regulations on behalf of Finland and the other member states.

Solution 3

(f) Mark scheme

- - Art, music, toponyms, clothing, architecture, and/or evidence of sequent occupancy may indicate elements of a culture or cultures.
- - Religion, language, social institutions, and/or systems of governance may be based on a culture or cultures.
- - Land use, land survey patterns, agriculture, resource use (e.g., hunting, fishing, crafts), and/or trade may indicate the practices of a culture or cultures.
- - Foods, social interactions, holidays, and/or festivals are based on or have elements of a culture or cultures.

Solution 3

- - Attitudes towards ethnicity or gender (e.g., the role of women in the workforce) may help shape the use of space in a given society.

Solution 3

(g) Mark scheme

- - Communication technologies (e.g., the Internet) may encourage members of indigenous communities to adopt more commonly used languages (e.g., English), resulting in indigenous language loss.
- - Language loss may occur due to cultural convergence, which is accelerated by the use of communication technologies.
- - Communication technologies may increase the availability of indigenous language resources (e.g., via websites, apps, social media), resulting in language preservation.

Solution 3

- - Communication technologies may be used to increase awareness of indigenous identity issues, which may result in language preservation.
- - Limited access or cultural resistance (e.g., reliance on oral tradition) to communication technologies can restrict or prevent significant changes in the cultural patterns of indigenous languages.

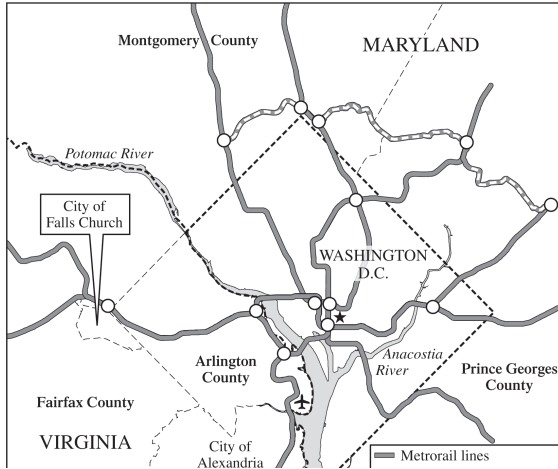
Question 2

2024 Set 2 ■ Q2

The map shows political jurisdictions and Metrorail, a subway system in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The city and county jurisdictions shown on the map operate the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which runs Metrorail.

(a) Identify ONE type of boundary shown on the map.

Question 2



Question 2



Question 2

2024 Set 2 ■ Q2

The map shows political jurisdictions and Metrorail, a subway system in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The city and county jurisdictions shown on the map operate the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which runs Metrorail.

(b) Describe ONE site characteristic of Washington, D.C., shown on the map.

Question 2

2024 Set 2 ■ Q2

The map shows political jurisdictions and Metrorail, a subway system in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The city and county jurisdictions shown on the map operate the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which runs Metrorail.

(c) Explain how political power is spatially distributed within a federal system of governance.

Question 2

2024 Set 2 ■ Q2

The map shows political jurisdictions and Metrorail, a subway system in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The city and county jurisdictions shown on the map operate the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which runs Metrorail.

(d) Explain ONE way suburban sprawl is likely to negatively affect environmental sustainability in metropolitan areas.

Question 2

2024 Set 2 ■ Q2

The map shows political jurisdictions and Metrorail, a subway system in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The city and county jurisdictions shown on the map operate the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which runs Metrorail.

(e) Describe ONE way transportation-oriented development, such as expanding a Metrorail line, may promote urban sustainability.

Question 2

2024 Set 2 ■ Q2

The map shows political jurisdictions and Metrorail, a subway system in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The city and county jurisdictions shown on the map operate the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which runs Metrorail.

(f) Explain how regional transportation networks led to the development of edge cities.

Question 2

2024 Set 2 ■ Q2

The map shows political jurisdictions and Metrorail, a subway system in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The city and county jurisdictions shown on the map operate the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which runs Metrorail.

(g) Explain how the geographic fragmentation of local governments could present a challenge to the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area's ability to construct a new Metrorail line. and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.

Demographic Transition Model Demographic Data for Selected Countries, 2019

Country	Birth Rate	Death Rate	Population Over Age 65
Croatia	21%		
Estonia	20%		
Germany	22%		
Greece	22%		
Japan	28%		
Portugal	23%		
Romania	19%		

Source: World Bank

Solution 2

(a) Mark scheme

- - Political boundary (e.g., state, district, county)
- - Physical or natural boundary (e.g., the Potomac River)
- - Geometric boundary (e.g., District of Columbia, Arlington County)
- - Relict boundary (e.g., Arlington County was once part of the District of Columbia)
- - Superimposed boundary (e.g., District of Columbia)
- - Consequent boundary (e.g., Potomac River between the District of Columbia and Virginia)

Solution 2

- - Antecedent boundary (e.g., colonial-era boundaries)
- - Subsequent boundary (e.g., District of Columbia carved out of already existing Maryland and/or Virginia)

Solution 2

(b)

Mark scheme

- - Washington, D.C., is located along the Potomac River and/or the Anacostia River.
- - Washington, D.C., is at the confluence or intersection of the Potomac River and the Anacostia River.
- - Washington, D.C., is at the intersection of the coastal plain and the Piedmont (foothills) or on the fall line.
- - Washington, D.C., is located in an area with a tidal estuary, a peninsula, freshwater streams, wetlands, fertile soils, low-lying areas, and/or tidal flats.

Solution 2

(c)

Mark scheme

- - Power is dispersed or shared between the central, sub-national, and/or local governments.
- - Most federal systems have capital districts (e.g., Washington, D.C., Brasília) or locations (e.g., courts, military bases) where some government functions are centralized and also sub-national (state, provincial, departmental) capitals where local or regional political functions are dispersed.

Solution 2

(d) Mark scheme

- - Development related to sprawl (e.g., construction, transportation, utilities) can lead to increased air or water pollution.
- - Land cover change related to sprawl (e.g., deforestation) can lead to the loss or fragmentation of habitats, water pollution, and/or decreased biodiversity.
- - Expansion of transportation networks related to sprawl can lead to more pollution and/or warmer climates (e.g., traffic, congestion, urban heat islands, inefficient energy use).
- - Development related to sprawl can inhibit the use of land for local food production, open space, conservation, greenbelts, or preservation efforts.

Solution 2

(e) Mark scheme

- - By promoting walkability, livability, more efficient land use (e.g., fewer roadways, reduction in impermeable surfaces), and/or reductions in pollution.
- - By reducing the number of cars, resulting in decreased air and/or noise pollution.
- - By reducing the ecological footprint (e.g., reduced carbon footprint, reduced energy use) of the city.
- - Heavily trafficked and/or accessible transit stops may become places of mixed-use development.
- - Additional transit stops can reduce commuting distances or travel times to work and/or to other service locations.

Solution 2

- - Commuting can be more economically sustainable than car travel (e.g., cost of car ownership, fuel, maintenance, insurance, parking).

Solution 2

(f)

Mark scheme

- - Transportation enabled commercial land use to decentralize (move away) from city centers.
- - Edge cities formed near major highway intersections or transit stations because those developments needed to be accessible to workers and/or consumers.
- - By providing access to services or office locations for the people who live, work, and/or shop there.
- - Transportation provides access to lower-cost land away from the city center (bid rent theory).

Solution 2

(g) Mark scheme

- - Construction could be challenging because it would involve multiple governments to fund, plan, zone, and/or cooperate.
- - Local governments could disagree with the federal government about where to construct a new Metro line.
- - Construction could be challenging because parts of the new Metro line might not fall clearly under the jurisdiction of a specific government.
- - Having many competing ideas or authorities could make the planning process inefficient and/or make it difficult to determine accountability.

Solution 2

- - Local governments could disagree on how to share the costs of construction and/or operational costs of the rail system.
- - Local governments could disagree on the location of new stations because development around new Metro stations is a source of tax revenue and/or economic development.

Question 1

2023 Set 1 ■ Q1

No stimulus.

The rate of natural increase (RNI), also known as the natural increase rate, helps geographers assess annual population growth or decline.

- (a)** Define the concept of RNI.
- (b)** Describe how a country may have a negative RNI.
- (c)** Compare ONE difference between RNI and the total fertility rate as indicators of population change.
- (d)** Explain ONE reason why RNI in urban areas may vary significantly from RNI in rural areas in the same country.
- (e)** Explain why there are often differences in doubling times between less developed countries and more developed countries.

Question 1

(f) Explain ONE reason ethnonationalism might lead a government to promote pronatalist policies.

(g) Explain the degree to which a unitary government may be more effective than a federal government in enforcing antinatalist policies.

Solution 1

(a)

Mark scheme

- Define RNI (1 point) — accept any: the difference between the crude birth rate and crude death rate (optionally expressed as a percentage or per thousand of population); the number of live births minus deaths per thousand population; the difference between crude birth and death rates over a set period (e.g., a year); OR the annual percent change in population NOT including immigration or emigration.

Solution 1

(b)

Mark scheme

- Describe a negative RNI (1 point): a country has a negative RNI when the death rate is higher than the birth rate (i.e., the number of deaths exceeds the number of live births) in a given year.

Solution 1

(c) Mark scheme

- Compare RNI vs total fertility rate (1 point) — accept any: RNI is the annual percent growth rate of a population (excluding migration), while TFR estimates the number of children a woman of childbearing age (15–45) may have; RNI combines crude birth and death rates while TFR involves no mortality measure; RNI is an annual statistic for a specific year while TFR is a point-in-time estimate; an RNI of 0 is zero growth while a TFR of 2.1 is replacement level; RNI predicts growth via the demographic transition while TFR predicts growth by comparison to the replacement rate (2.1).

Solution 1

(d) Mark scheme

- Explain ONE reason urban RNI differs from rural RNI (1 point) — accept any well-explained reason, e.g.: urban families have fewer children due to reduced need for agricultural labor; higher urban cost of living (housing, schooling) incentivizes fewer children; greater urban access to health care, education, or family planning lowers fertility; urban women more often work outside the home; less urban living space; higher urban female education/political power/financial stability delays or reduces childbearing; lower urban infant/child mortality reduces the need for more children. Conversely, rural areas may lack access to contraception/family planning, hold traditional pronatalist values, need child labor for agriculture, or have poorer health care raising infant mortality — all raising rural RNI.

Solution 1

(e)

Mark scheme

- Explain differing doubling times LDCs vs MDCs (1 point): LDCs have higher RNI (higher birth/fertility rates from social/economic conditions such as agrarian economies, lower female status/education, early marriage, higher infant mortality, less family planning) → shorter doubling time; MDCs have lower RNI (service/technology economies, equitable female roles, later marriage, urbanization, low infant mortality, accessible family planning) → longer doubling time.

Solution 1

(f)

Mark scheme

- Explain ONE link from ethnonationalism to pronatalist policy (1 point) — accept any: children seen as a symbol of national pride / a centripetal (cohesion) force; a larger national/ethnic population improves social cohesion; higher birth rates support territorial expansion, economic growth, irredentism, or a larger military; a theocratic state promotes births on religious grounds; boosting the majority (dominant) group's numbers increases its political power over minorities; a state with restrictive immigration promotes births to reverse population decline.

Solution 1

(g) Mark scheme

- Explain the degree to which a unitary government is more effective at antinatalist enforcement (1 point). Must include a statement of degree AND a valid reason. Moderate/high degree: a unitary government can enact uniform countrywide family-planning laws with penalties/enforcement; may run a centralized national health/insurance system delivering family planning efficiently; can deliver incentives directly with fewer levels of governance to lose funds; a federal system's regional variation weakens enforcement. Low/moderate degree: little difference if the health-care/family-planning system is inadequate or inaccessible (or, conversely, if adequate), or if the government lacks enforcement or funding capacity — in which case governance type matters little.

Question 1

2023 Set 2 ■ Q1

AP[®] Human Geography 2023 Free-Response Questions

HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

SECTION II

Time—1 hour and 15 minutes

3 Questions

Directions: You have 1 hour and 15 minutes to answer all three of the following questions. It is recommended that you spend approximately one-third of your time (25 minutes) on each question. It is suggested that you take up to 5 minutes of this time to plan and outline each answer. You may plan your answers in this orange booklet, but no credit will be given for anything written in this booklet. **You will only earn credit for what you write in the separate Free Response booklet.**

Question 1

1. Political geographers analyze territoriality and sovereignty at a variety of scales, including regional, state, substate regional, and local.
 - A. Define the concept of territoriality in terms of political geography.
 - B. Describe the concept of sovereignty as it relates to the state.
 - C. Compare ONE difference in territorial organization between the governments of unitary states and the governments of federal states.
 - D. Recently, the United Kingdom decided to withdraw from the European Union. Explain ONE possible reason why sovereignty would play a role in the United Kingdom's decision to withdraw from the European Union.
 - E. During the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union, some people in Scotland proposed independence from the United Kingdom. Explain ONE possible reason why territoriality would play a role in the devolution of a state.
 - F. Local governments often divide cities into representative electoral districts. Explain how the process of redrawing district boundary lines may affect election results within a city.

Question 1

- G. Explain why neighboring local governments may face challenges in providing transportation services to residents of a rapidly growing metropolitan area.

Begin your response to this question at the top of a new page in the separate Free Response booklet and fill in the appropriate circle at the top of each page to indicate the question number.

Question 1

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GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

Solution 1

(a)

Mark scheme

- - Territoriality is the connection of people, their culture, and their economic systems to where they live (can apply to multiple scales).
- - Territoriality is the process by which a set of political units with fixed distinct boundaries are created, expanded, annexed, and/or defended.
- - Territoriality is the process by which a land area (or land and water) is established under a jurisdiction (e.g., an established or recognized system of governance, or administrative control).

Solution 1

(b) Mark scheme

- - Sovereign states have the right to control what is inside their borders without interference from outside states and entities.
- - Sovereign states are recognized by the international community and other foreign entities.
- - Sovereign states have the right to defend their borders against invasion by other states.
- - Sovereign states have the right to close the borders to immigration.
- - Sovereign states have the right to regulate international trade.

Solution 1

- - Sovereign states have the right to establish their own government by establishing a constitution and/or system of political representation.
- - Sovereign states have the right to enact laws or policies (e.g., the criminal justice code, civil legal code, land ownership system, and/or natural resource management system).
- - Sovereign states have the right to establish alliances and recognize foreign states or entities, and/or establish diplomatic relations and embassies in other countries.
- - Sovereign states have the right to establish policies (e.g., taxation, appropriations).

Solution 1

(c) Mark scheme

- - Unitary states tend to have a more top-down form of governance, while federal states have more locally based power centers.
- - Unitary states have a single government that expresses power over the entire territory, whereas federal states divide power among regional governments that control a limited portion of territory.
- - Unitary states have a centralized system of administration (e.g., law enforcement, natural resource management, infrastructure development), whereas federal states have more dispersed power centers.

Solution 1

- - Unitary states tend to have a single system of territorial control, whereas federal states may have multiple types of internal territorial systems based upon each region's culture (e.g., different land survey systems, differing legal systems, different ethnicities).

Solution 1

(d) Mark scheme

- - The United Kingdom (UK) left the European Union (EU) because its leaders believed the UK had surrendered too much sovereignty to the supranational government of the EU.
- - The free movement of people among the EU member states had increased immigration to the UK resulting in political pressure to limit immigration to the UK, in opposition to existing EU policies.
- - The leaders of the UK believed they could form more advantageous trade agreements by working independently from the EU.

Solution 1

- - The UK participated in the EU economic policies but never joined the eurozone, maintaining its own currency, the British pound, as a symbol of British identity, and/or source of economic stability or superiority in value as compared to the euro.
- - The UK is physically separated from Europe, with a long history of world trade and a strong sense of itself as a world power, and this translated into a weaker sense of being part of/belonging to the EU.

Solution 1

(e) Mark scheme

- - People in one region within a state have a connection to the land of the ethnic group, culture, and/or regional identity and believe that they should have autonomy over the region or the right to secede from the state.
- - People in one region within a state believe that the leaders in the government or people in other parts of the country (e.g., core or capital) do not respect the people of the region's long history of culture and attachment to the land.
- - People in one region within a state believe that the economic policies of the state favor a majority group or another group in power at the expense of their region.

Solution 1

- - Many Scots believe that Scotland should have control of foreign policy and defense agreements.
- - Many Scots believe that Scotland is both its own country and a part of Europe (or the European Union) at the same time.
- - Many Scots believe that trade agreements among EU members will be better for the economy of Scotland if it rejoins the EU.
- - Many political leaders desire Scottish independence so that Scotland may have an economy and/or monetary system separate from the rest of the UK.
- - Some in Scotland desire an independent state (separate from England, Wales, and Northern Ireland) that still has the British monarch as the titular head of state.

Solution 1

(f) Mark scheme

- - Redrawing district boundaries may shift the balance of political power among or favor certain political parties, candidates, and/or representative groups (intentionally or unintentionally).
- - If the boundaries are drawn in a manner that divides a voting group among several districts, the power of the group is diminished (cracking to decrease power).
- - If the boundaries are drawn such that a voting group is concentrated in one district, its political power is increased (packing to increase power) or favors a group that has a higher voter turnout (stacking to increase power).

Solution 1

- - If the boundaries are drawn in such a way that a voting group is so overwhelmingly concentrated in one district, then the group may lose the ability to influence power in any surrounding area (packing to decrease power).
- - Districts are often redrawn as population changes over time and new lines may create new districts that are different than before, which may mean voters recently added to these districts may be less familiar with issues and candidates in these districts.

Solution 1

(g) Mark scheme

- - Local governments that are fragmented, divided, and/or dispersed may find it difficult to agree on transportation services and/or projects.
- - Local governments may be completely independent of each other and may not have an official regional or metropolitan forum or interface in which to interact and/or plan for transportation needs.
- - Local governments may compete for transportation funding resources from state, province, national, federal, or supranational government sources and may see neighboring governments as opponents and/or competitors for resources.

Solution 1

- - Local competitiveness (e.g., local pride, rivalries, or racial, ethnic, and/or economic differences) between neighboring communities may hinder effective cooperation between local governments on transportation planning.
- - Disparities in wealth between neighboring local governments dealing with a high volume of commuters coming from other local governments may not have the resources needed to meet the demand for transit infrastructure and/or services.
- - Suburban sprawl and the establishment of separate municipalities on the edge of the metropolitan area may increase demand, pressure, and/or traffic flow through communities closer to the city center and/or along major transit corridors.