UNITED STATES GEOGRAPHY CHAMPIONSHIPS

2025 US Geography Championships Multiple Choice Examination

Instructions – This examination consists of 50 questions. You will receive two points for a correct answer. You will lose one point for an incorrect answer. Blank responses lose no points. Please fill in the bubbles completely on the answer sheet. You may write on the examination, but all responses must be bubbled on the answer sheet. All images are contained in the resource document. Diacritic marks such as accents may have been omitted from place names and other proper nouns. You have 45 minutes to complete this examination.

Questions 1-5 are about culture.

1. Which of these best defines a taboo?
   A. the sacred space inside a religious building
   B. a practice encouraged by a country or government
   C. a restriction placed on behavior by social custom
   D. the spread of cultural practices through family and kinship bonds

2. Which of these is an example of folk culture?
   A. a television show on a major network
   B. internet memes
   C. American fast-food restaurants
   D. a handmade quilt

3. Which of the following is considered a centrifugal force in cultural geography?
   A. ethnic differences
   B. common language
   C. shared religious beliefs
   D. national holidays

4. Which of these best defines a cultural landscape?
   A. natural environment unaffected by human activity
   B. the imprint of human activity on the environment
   C. a recreational area outside of a city
   D. a place that is used solely for agriculture

5. The spread of culture through migration is known by which of these terms?
   A. relocation diffusion
   B. stimulus diffusion
   C. hierarchical diffusion
   D. contagious diffusion

Questions 6-10 are about lakes.

6. The collapse of a cave can result in the formation of which of these types of lake?
   A. paternoster
   B. kettle
   C. karst
   D. lagoon

7. Which of these is NOT a type of lake formed in a floodplain?
   A. confluent
   B. contrafluent
   C. profundal
   D. scree

8. Which of these is NOT true of landslide lakes?
   A. they can often pose risk to nearby populations due to their fundamental instability
   B. they are usually permanent despite their rapid formation
   C. they usually form in mountainous regions
   D. they are most often created through blockage of a river valley

9. Lateral lakes are formed in which of these situations?
   A. when sediment from a main river blocks a tributary
   B. by the damming action of a moraine
   C. in calderas made by volcanoes
   D. in glacially overdeepened valleys

10. Solution lakes are common in which of these regions of the world?
   A. the Gulf Coast region of Texas and Louisiana
   B. the Dalmatian coast of Croatia
   C. the Sahara in Africa
   D. central Australia

Questions 11-15 are about migration.

11. Which of these is true of human migration?
   A. in general, invasion or conquest is not a major cause of migration
   B. nomadic movements are the most common type of internal migration
   C. asylum seekers are those migrants who voluntarily leave their home country for economic opportunity
   D. internal migration is the dominant form of migration globally

12. According to the UN, internally displaced persons are distinct from refugees for which of these reasons?
   A. they are always able to return to their home cities
   B. they do not have any legal rights in their new country
   C. they have not crossed international borders
   D. they are not required to be admitted by UN member states

13. According to Ravenstein's Laws of Migration, which of these is true of most migrants?
- A. they move only a short distance
- B. they are generally older and more affluent
- C. they prefer rural areas
- D. they are highly educated

14. Which of these is NOT an example of a political barrier that serves as an intervening obstacle to migration?
- A. immigration quotas
- B. visa requirements
- C. travel costs
- D. border controls

15. The Great Migration in the United States is an example of which of these?
- A. international migration
- B. return migration
- C. interregional migration
- D. forced migration

Questions 16-20 are about geographic concepts.

16. Perceptual regions are defined by which of these?
- A. precise geographic location
- B. people's beliefs or feelings about an area
- C. the characteristics of physical geography
- D. governmental data

17. Which of the following best illustrates the concept of spatial interaction?
- A. a country's birth rate
- B. the movement of goods and people between cities
- C. a map of tectonic plates
- D. how a place is named

18. Which of these describes the situation of a particular place?
- A. its topographic features
- B. its cultural background
- C. its elevation
- D. its location relative to other places

19. Which of these is the best example of remote sensing?
- A. gathering data from aircraft about Earth's surface
- B. a survey of population data
- C. analyzing hand-drawn maps
- D. analyzing soil samples in a lab

20. The concept of possibilism suggests which of these?
- A. the environment fully determines human activity
- B. humans are able to adjust and adapt to the environment
- C. humans cannot overcome environmental challenges
- D. physical geography has no influence on society

Questions 21-25 are about plate tectonics.

21. Which of these is the primary driving force behind plate movement?
- A. reversals of direction in the crust
- B. convection currents in the asthenosphere
- C. tidal forces in the oceans
- D. the Earth's rotation

22. Which plate boundary is most associated with the formation of mid-ocean ridges?
- A. divergent
- B. convergent
- C. transform
- D. passive

23. What process causes magnetic striping on the ocean floor?
- A. tsunami waves altering seafloor sediments
- B. periodic reversal of Earth's magnetic field during seafloor spreading
- C. folding of the crust at convergent boundaries
- D. subduction of magnetic minerals

24. A Wadati-Benioff Zone is defined by which of these?
- A. a massive plume of hot mantle material
- B. an uplifted mountain belt
- C. a continental rift valley
- D. a zone of earthquake foci that dip along a subducting plate

25. The San Andreas Fault in California is an example of which of these?
- A. convergent boundary
- B. divergent plate boundary
- C. transform boundary
- D. rift zone

Questions 26-30 are about political geography.

26. The concept of a nation-state is best exemplified by which of these?
- A. the United States
- B. South Africa
- C. Japan
- D. Russia

27. In political geography, heartland theory argued that global power would be gained in the twentieth century by controlling which of these?
- A. the interior of Eurasia
- B. sea routes like the Suez Canal
- C. equatorial regions
- D. resource-rich islands in the Pacific

28. Which of these best describes a relic boundary?
   A. a border established by colonial rule
   B. a former boundary that still has cultural significance
   C. a boundary enforced by military zones
   D. a new internal division

29. The term shatterbelt is used to describe which of these?
   A. an industrial area with rapid economic development
   B. a place of extreme isolation
   C. an area that attracts conflict due to ethnic tensions
   D. a region caught between stronger external political or cultural forces

30. Devolution in a state most often occurs in response to which of these stimuli?
   A. an increase in globalization
   B. change in environmental conditions
   C. regional demands for political autonomy
   D. collapse of supranational unions

Questions 31-50 refer to images in the resource section of the examination.

Questions 31-37 refer to Image 1 in the resource section.

31. This image would be most useful in describing which of these concepts in environmental geography?
   A. conservation biology
   B. habitat heterogeneity
   C. island biogeography
   D. serendipity

32. Given that A and B are roughly the same distance from the mainland, which of these would be expected to receive a greater variety of species?
   A. A
   B. B
   C. they would receive roughly the same variety
   D. it is impossible to determine based on the illustration

33. Given the information in the illustration, which of these would be expected to have the LOWEST variety of species?
   A. island C
   B. island D
   C. island F
   D. island G

34. Which of these would have the most impact on the difference in species variety between islands C and D?
   A. the species-area curve
   B. assembly rules
   C. metapopulation ecology
   D. distance decay

35. With which of these would prevalence of parasites or zoonotic diseases in an island population most closely correlate?
   A. species introduction
   B. climate
   C. distance from the mainland
   D. island size

36. Which of these is NOT a major factor in determining species richness and diversification on an island?
   A. distance to its nearest neighbor
   B. habitat suitability
   C. tidal range
   D. human activity

37. In what way is the concept illustrated in this image similar to the gravity model?
   A. both are ways to model population growth over short periods of time
   B. both adhere to the principle that large and close locations have more interactions with populations than small and distant ones
   C. both consider the suitability of both the original and new location
   D. both describe the movement of people and goods

Questions 38- refer to Image 2 in the resource section.

38. Which number on the map indicates the approximate location of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch?
   A. 2
   B. 4
   C. 5
   D. 7

39. From which of these areas does most of the plastic waste in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch originate?
   A. East Africa
   B. Western South America
   C. the West Coast region of the US
   D. East Asia

40. Waste from the eastern and western sections of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch meet in which of these areas of the Pacific Ocean?
   A. the South Equatorial Zone
   B. the North Pacific Subtropical Convergence Zone
   C. the Arctic Dead Zone
   D. the South Pacific Circulation

41. The Arctic Circumpolar Current is located at which number on the map?
   A. 1
   B. 4
   C. 3
   D. 7

42. The current indicated by number 6 on the map is which of these?
- A. Benguela
- B. Ovashio
- C. Agulhas
- D. Falklands

43. Number 4 on the map marks which of these types of ocean currents?
- A. overturning circulation
- B. countercurrent
- C. jet stream
- D. gyre

44. The Coriolis effect causes ocean currents in the Northern Hemisphere to do which of these?
- A. move southward
- B. deflect to the left
- C. deflect to the right
- D. travel in straight lines

45. Which of the following best describes thermohaline circulation?
- A. tides caused by moon phases
- B. wind-driven surface current systems
- C. global ocean circulation driven by temperature and salinity differences
- D. localized upwelling from coastal winds

Questions 46-50 refer to Image 3 in the resource section.

46. This image represents which of the following geographic concepts?
- A. bid rent theory
- B. the core-frame model
- C. the Hoyt sector model
- D. the multiple nuclei model

47. The theory illustrated here, developed in the 1960s, was based on the 19th century model of agricultural land use advanced by which of the following?
- A. J.H. von Thunen
- B. Homer Hoyt
- C. Ernest Burgess
- D. Waldo Tobler

48. Which of these should be the label on the bottom axis of this graph?
- A. distance in miles from the coast
- B. distance in miles from suburb
- C. distance in miles from primate city
- D. distance in miles from central business district

49. This model assumes which of the following ideas?
- A. that industrial use of land generates high incomes
- B. retail establishments want to maximize profits and are willing to pay high rents for prime land
- C. residential developments are usually located near industry
- D. recreational land use is not necessary for a functioning city

50. This model fails to account for which of the following in modern North American cities?
- A. the willingness of industry to locate in city centers
- B. the existence of high-income housing on the edge of cities
- C. agricultural use of land in suburbs
- D. the existence of commerce between cities and suburbs