

The study of geography is far more than just learning the names and locations of countries. Geography, or "earth description," is the investigation of facts about the earth's surface, which differs from place to place. This study includes both natural features and those that result from human occupation of an area. The geographer, who is also interested in climate, vegetation, population, and degree of use of land by animals and people, brings together information from many sciences—physical, biological, and social. In this lesson you will learn words that will aid you in your study of this complex science.

WORD LIST

insular
latitude
longitude
meridian
panorama
peninsula
precipice
quagmire
terrestrial
topography

DEFINITIONS

After you have studied the definitions and example for each vocabulary word, write the word on the line to the right.

1. **insular** (in'sə-lər) *adjective* a. Relating to an island. b. Characteristic of the isolated life of an island people. c. Narrow-minded. (From the Latin word *insula*, meaning "island")

Related Word insularity *noun*

Example The *insular* life of Nantucket Island is relaxed except during the summer tourist season.

1. _____

2. **latitude** (lăt'ĭ-tōod') *noun* a. The distance north or south of the equator, measured in degrees. b. Freedom from usual restraint. (From the Latin word *latitude*, meaning "width" or "breadth")

Related Word latitudinal *adjective*

Example Latitude is indicated on a map by horizontal lines.

2. _____

3. **longitude** (lŏn'jĭ-tōod') *noun* The distance east or west of Greenwich (pronounced GREN-itch), England, and measured in degrees. (From the Latin word *longitude*, meaning "length")

Related Word longitudinal *adjective*

Example Longitude is indicated on a map by vertical lines.

3. _____

4. **meridian** (mə-rĭd'ē-ən) *noun* Any of the imaginary circles around the earth that pass through the North Pole and South Pole. (From the Latin word *meridies*, meaning "midday")

Example Although a *meridian* is an imaginary line, navigators use it to determine location.

4. _____

5. **panorama** (păn'ə-răm'ə) *noun* a. A wide-ranging view over a large area. 5. _____
 b. A comprehensive picture of a specific subject; an overview. (From the Greek *pan-*, meaning "all," and *horama*, meaning "sight")
- Related Word** panoramic *adjective*
Example From the hills of Los Angeles, one sees a spectacular *panorama* of the coast to the downtown area.
6. **peninsula** (pə-nĭn'syə-lə) *noun* A strip of land with water on three sides. 6. _____
 (From the Latin words *paene*, meaning "almost," and *insula*, meaning "island")
- Related Word** peninsular *adjective*
Example The scout troop camped out on a small *peninsula* that jutted into the ocean.
7. **precipice** (prĕs'ə-pĭs) *noun* A steep cliff or overhanging rock. (From the Latin word *praeceps*, meaning "headlong") 7. _____
- Related Word** precipitous *adjective*
Example The horse stumbled and nearly fell from the *precipice*.
8. **quagmire** (kwăg'mĭr') *noun* a. Muddy land into which one can easily sink. 8. _____
 b. A difficult situation in which one can get caught; entanglement.
- Example** David and Christina got caught in a *quagmire* while photographing ducks.
9. **terrestrial** (tə-rĕs'trĕ-əl) *adjective* a. Having to do with the earth. b. Of 9. _____
 or consisting of land in contrast to water or air. (From the Latin word *terra*, meaning "earth")
- Example** *Terrestrial* upheavals such as earthquakes and volcanoes can endanger people living nearby.
10. **topography** (tə-pŏg'rə-fĕ) *noun* The physical features of a region, such as 10. _____
 mountains, plains, and rivers. (From the Greek words *topos*, meaning "place," and *graphein*, meaning "to write")
- Related Word** topographical *adjective*
Example The *topography* of Switzerland is mountainous.

MEMORY CUE:
Topography refers to the top of the land—the features that are visible.

Word History: terrestrial

Latin: *terra*=earth or land

Terrestrial comes from the Latin word *terra*, meaning "earth" or "land," and describes earth as well as land phenomena. Many words referring to the earth or the land contain the Latin root *terra-* or *ter-*. A *subterranean* cave lies under the "earth"; to *inter* a body is to bury it in the "earth"; the *territory* of Texas refers to the "land" it includes. If you combine the Latin prefix *extra-*, meaning "beyond," with the root *terr-*, you will form the word *extraterrestrial* or "creature coming from beyond the earth."

NAME _____

DATE _____

EXERCISE 1 WRITING CORRECT WORDS

On the answer line, write the word from the vocabulary list that fits each definition.

1. Relating to the earth
2. A steep cliff or overhanging rock
3. The distance east and west of Greenwich, England, measured in degrees
4. Any of the imaginary circles around the earth that pass through the poles
5. An area of land with water on three sides
6. The physical features of a region
7. Pertaining to an island
8. Wet, soft ground in which one can get caught
9. The distance north or south of the equator, measured in degrees
10. A wide-ranging view over an area; an overview

EXERCISE 2 USING WORDS CORRECTLY

Decide whether the italicized vocabulary word or related form has been used correctly in the sentence. On the answer line, write *Correct* for correct use and *Incorrect* for incorrect use.

1. Someone with a fear of heights would be comfortable walking near a *precipice*.
2. Marblehead Neck in Massachusetts is a *peninsula* because it is surrounded on three sides by water.
3. A *meridian* is parallel to the equator.
4. The inhabitants of the island of Barbados are *insular* people.
5. You can figure out the *latitude* of an island by measuring east of Greenwich.
6. When geographers examine the *topography* of a region, they are studying the elements in the earth's core.
7. Whales are *terrestrial* mammals.
8. In geography class Christopher found the *longitude* of Vancouver by measuring west of the meridian at Greenwich, England.
9. When his mother learned that he had lied to her, Joseph found himself in a *quagmire*.
10. A convict in a cell with a small window near the ceiling would probably have a *panoramic* view of the outside.

EXERCISE 3 CHOOSING THE BEST WORD

Decide which vocabulary word or related form best completes the sentence, and write the letter of your choice on the answer line.

1. As the chair lift reached the peak, we saw a spectacular _____ of the snow-covered landscape. 1.
a. meridian b. quagmire c. peninsula d. panorama
2. Dogs and cats are _____ animals, but fish are aquatic and live in the sea. 2.
a. precipitous b. insular c. terrestrial d. topographical
3. Some _____ native tribes living in South American rain forests have never seen an automobile or a telephone. 3.
a. insular b. quagmire c. peninsula d. terrestrial
4. When the Calkins drove through Manitoba, they noticed that the _____ was very flat. 4.
a. quagmire b. topography c. peninsula d. longitude
5. Sir Francis Drake determined the _____ of his ship to find out how far he was from the equator. 5.
a. topography b. meridian c. latitude d. panorama
6. Fred could not pull his boot free when it got stuck in the _____. 6.
a. precipice b. peninsula c. panorama d. quagmire
7. At 112° _____ east of Greenwich, the captain of the steamship noticed some huge rocks that were not shown on the charts. 7.
a. panorama b. longitude c. latitude d. meridian
8. The Pritzlaffs' house on the _____ has a beautiful view of the water to the east, north, and west. 8.
a. panorama b. meridian c. quagmire d. peninsula
9. The imaginary lines we call _____ allow us to determine how far east or west we are. 9.
a. latitudes b. precipices c. meridians d. peninsulas
10. Our guide warned us not to get too close to the dangerous _____ because we might lose our balance and fall off. 10.
a. precipice b. panorama c. quagmire d. peninsula

EXERCISE 4 USING DIFFERENT FORMS OF WORDS

Decide which form of the vocabulary word in parentheses best completes the sentence. The form given may be correct. Write your answer on the answer line.

1. _____ navigation involves the use of a map and compass. (*terrestrial*) 1. _____
2. The _____ position of the lighthouse is 14°E. (*longitude*) 2. _____
3. The _____ form of the jetty protects the harbor from high seas and rough weather. (*peninsula*) 3. _____
4. It is hard for Hawaiians to get some goods from the mainland because of their _____. (*insular*) 4. _____

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5. The book provides a _____ history of the sports and games people have played since the earliest times. (*panorama*) 5. _____
6. The geologists checked the _____ map to determine the shape of the mesa. (*topography*) 6. _____
7. Mrs. Gunn asked the class to determine the _____ distance between Miami and Minneapolis. (*latitude*) 7. _____
8. The novice skier found himself at the top of a _____ expert slope. (*precipice*) 8. _____
9. Denise plotted several _____ on the map of the world. (*meridian*) 9. _____
10. Can you tell me if a fen and a marsh and a bog and a _____ are different? (*quagmire*) 10. _____