

Developing Democratic Citizens Through Geography

MARCH 22, 2025

Jerry T. Mitchell, PhD

Professor and Chair

Department of Geography

University of South Carolina

PROFILE OF THE South Carolina Graduate

WORLD-CLASS KNOWLEDGE

Rigorous standards in language arts
and math for career and college
readiness

Multiple languages, science, technology,
engineering, mathematics (STEM), arts and
social sciences



WORLD-CLASS SKILLS

Creativity and innovation

Critical thinking and
problem solving

Collaboration and teamwork

Communication, information,
media and technology

Knowing how to learn

LIFE AND CAREER CHARACTERISTICS

Integrity • Self-direction • Global perspective • Perseverance • Work ethic • Interpersonal skills

Geography

“Geography is the study of Earth as the home of people.”

CONTENT

SKILLS

TOOLS

DISPOSITIONS

Skills – Doing Geography

Indicator	Expression
<p>M: Mapping- Identify, use, interpret, and construct large-scale maps.</p>	<p>To demonstrate their ability to use the skill of mapping in the study of geography, students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and describe the properties and functions of maps. • use a variety of paper and digital technologies to display and analyze geospatial data. • interpret maps for understanding and problem-solving. • construct maps using available technology for understanding and problem-solving.
<p>MR: Models and Representations- Identify, use, interpret, and construct basic geographic models and other visual representations.</p>	<p>To demonstrate their ability to use the skill of models and representations in the study of geography, students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and describe alternative methods of displaying geospatial data. • interpret and use models and representations for understanding and problem-solving. • construct models and representations for understanding and problem-solving.
<p>GE: Gather Evidence and Communicate Findings- Identify, use, and interpret different forms of evidence, including primary and secondary sources.</p>	<p>To demonstrate their ability to gather evidence and communicate findings in the study of geography, students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify, collect, and analyze geospatial data. • evaluate geospatial data and other data sources for accuracy, quality, perspective, and value. • synthesize and communicate findings using verbal, written, visual, or other appropriate forms.

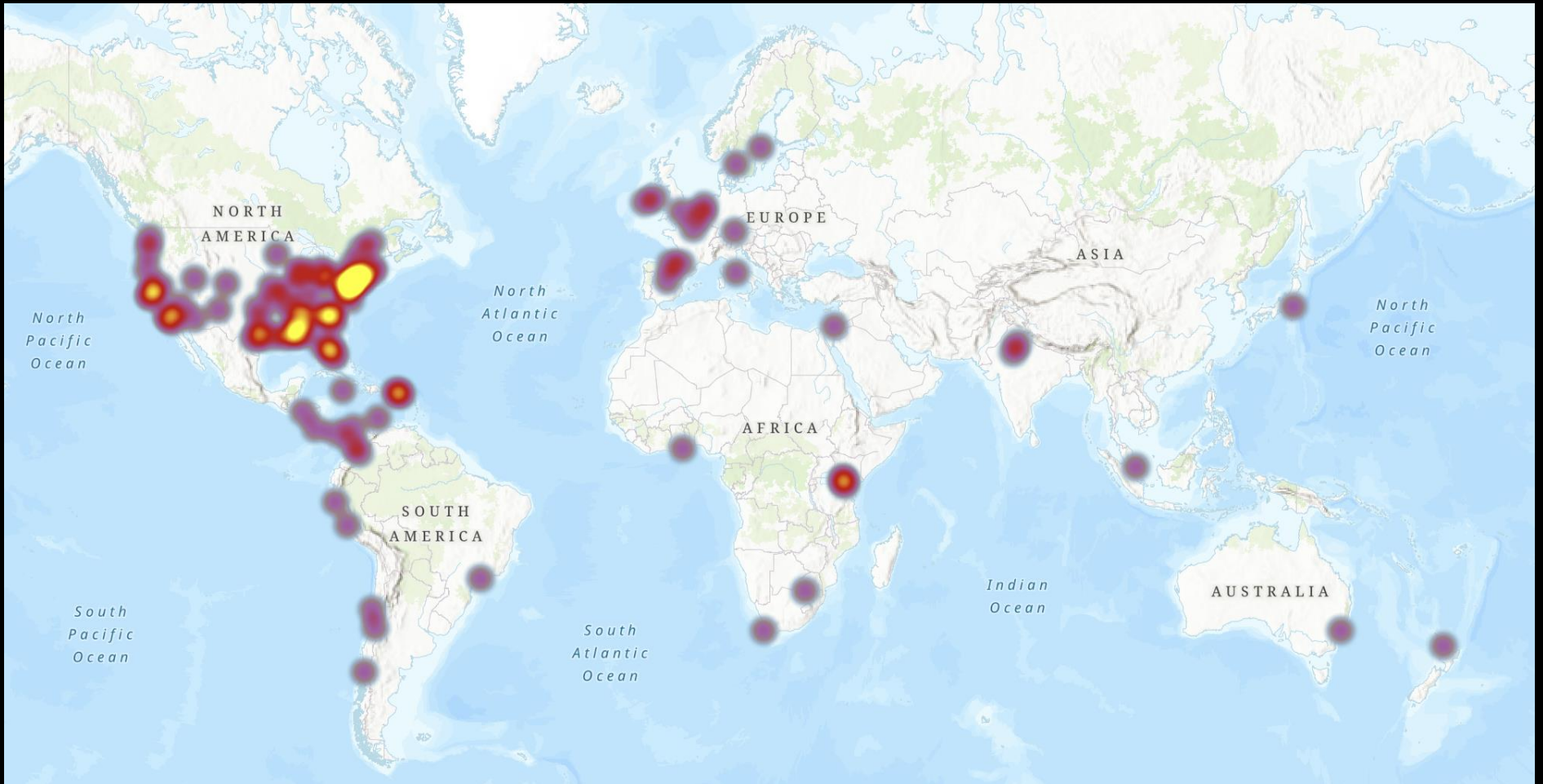
Mapping



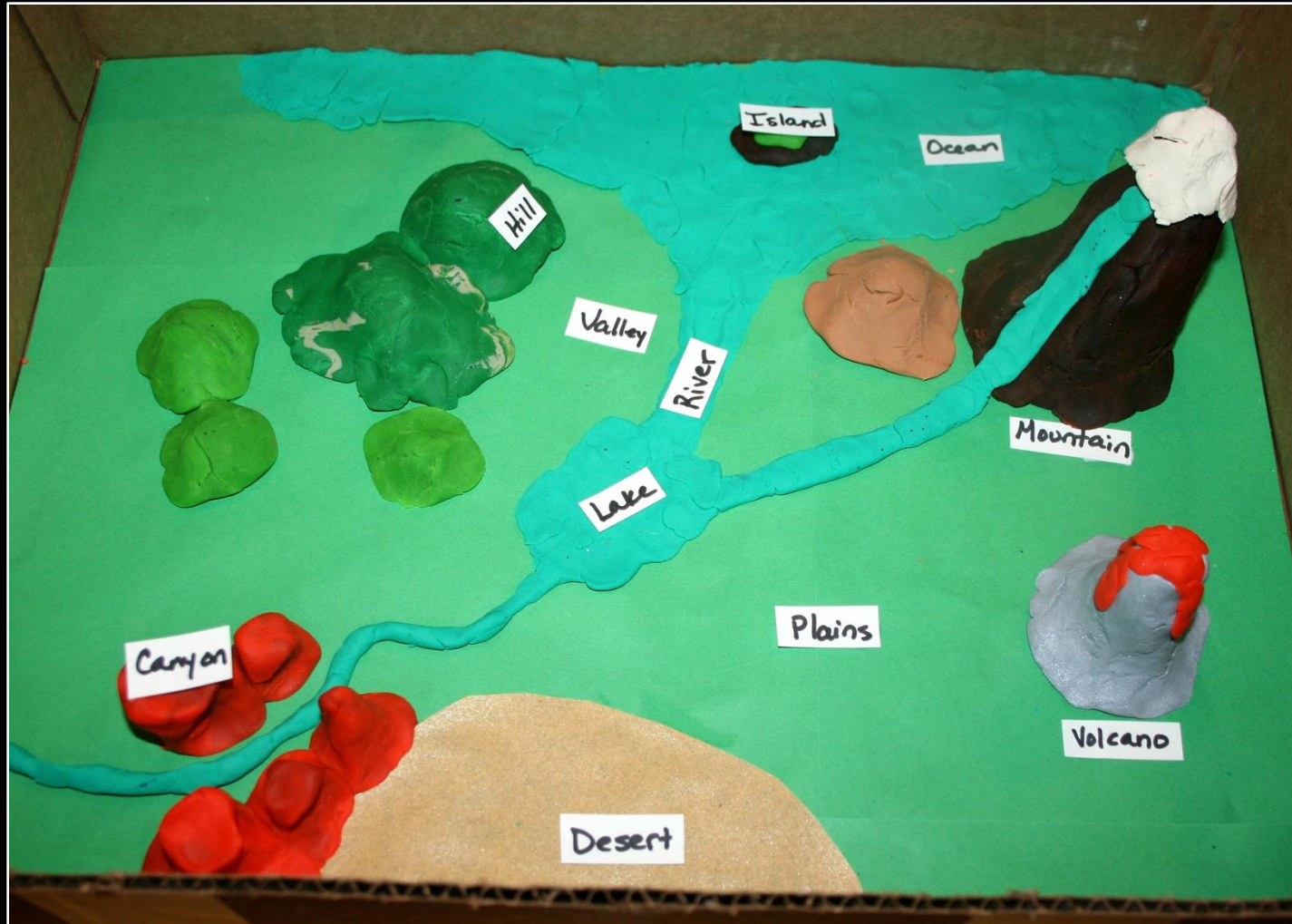
Mapping



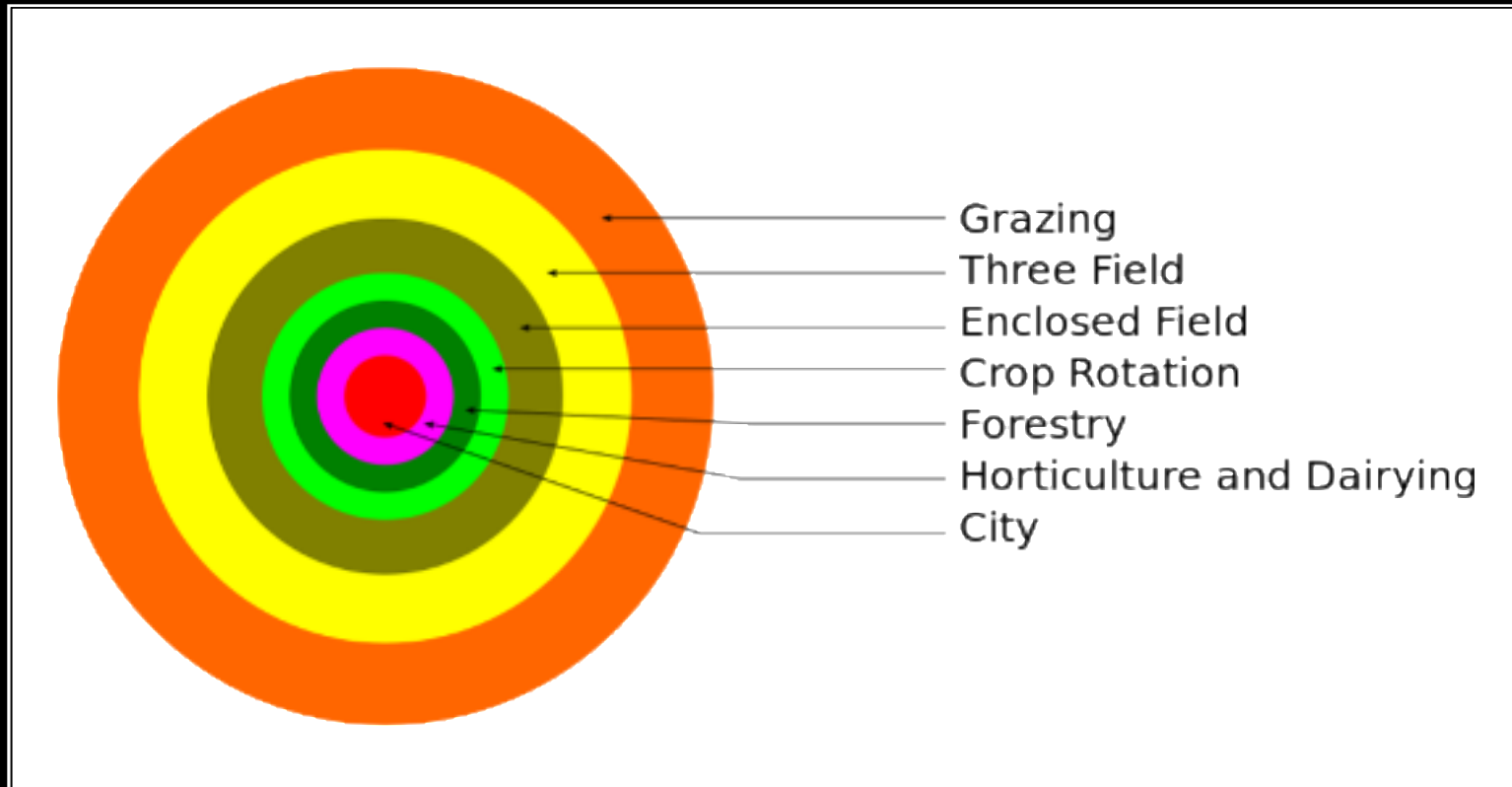
Mapping



Models and Representations

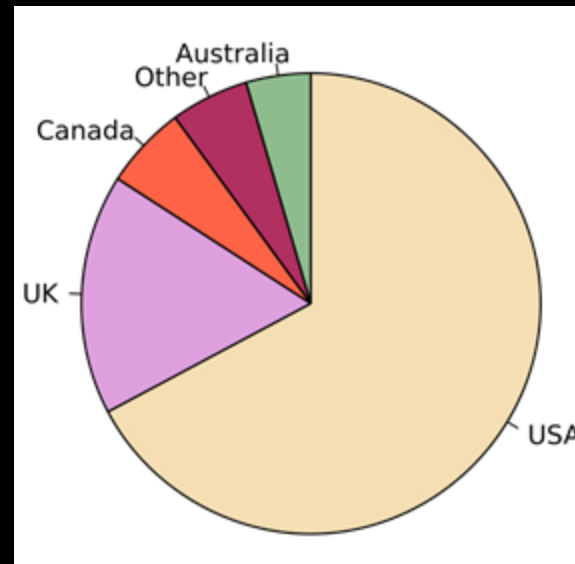


Models and Representations



Models and Representations

Name & postal abbreviation ^[1]	Cities		Established ^[upper-alpha 1]	Population ^{[upper-alpha 2][3]}	Total area ^[4]		Land area ^[4]		Water area ^[4]		Number of Reps.	
	Sort ascending	Largest ^[5]			mi ²	km ²	mi ²	km ²	mi ²	km ²		
Alabama	AL	Montgomery	Birmingham	Dec 14, 1819	4,874,747	52,420	135,767	50,645	131,171	1,775	4,597	7
Alaska	AK	Juneau	Anchorage	Jan 3, 1959	739,795	665,384	1,723,337	570,641	1,477,953	94,743	245,384	1
Arizona	AZ	Phoenix		Feb 14, 1912	7,016,270	113,990	295,234	113,594	294,207	396	1,026	9
Arkansas	AR	Little Rock		Jun 15, 1836	3,004,279	53,179	137,732	52,035	134,771	1,143	2,961	4
California	CA	Sacramento	Los Angeles	Sep 9, 1850	39,536,653	163,695	423,967	155,779	403,466	7,916	20,501	53
Colorado	CO	Denver		Aug 1, 1876	5,607,154	104,094	269,601	103,642	268,431	452	1,170	7
Connecticut	CT	Hartford	Bridgeport	Jan 9, 1788	3,588,184	5,543	14,357	4,842	12,542	701	1,816	5
Delaware	DE	Dover	Wilmington	Dec 7, 1787	961,939	2,489	6,446	1,949	5,047	540	1,399	1
Florida	FL	Tallahassee	Jacksonville	Mar 3, 1845	20,984,400	65,758	170,312	53,625	138,887	12,133	31,424	27
Georgia	GA	Atlanta		Jan 2, 1788	10,429,379	59,425	153,910	57,513	148,959	1,912	4,951	14
Hawaii	HI	Honolulu		Aug 21, 1959	1,427,538	10,932	28,313	6,423	16,635	4,509	11,678	2



Gather Evidence and Communicate Findings

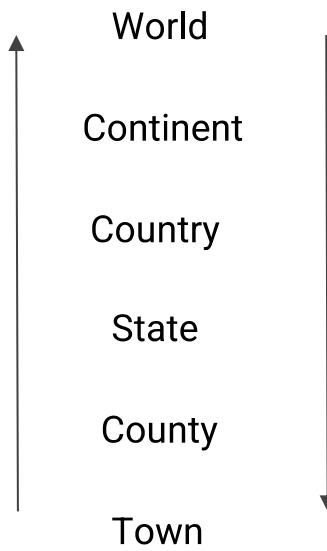
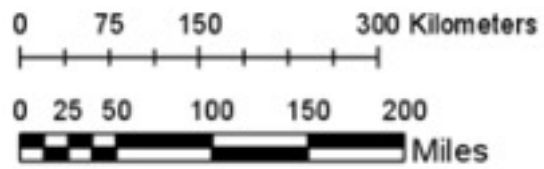
Skills – Language of Geography

<p>CC: Conditions, Connections, and Regions- Identify and compare the development of conditions, connections, and regions.</p>	<p>To demonstrate their ability to recognize conditions and connections in the study of geography, students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify the physical and human conditions of places and the connections among places.• compare the physical and human conditions of places and the connections among places.
<p>S: Scale- Identify spatial hierarchies.</p>	<p>To demonstrate their ability to understand scale in the study of geography, students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify spatial hierarchies from local to global scale.
<p>DP: Distribution and Patterns- Identify spatial distributions, patterns, and associations.</p>	<p>To demonstrate their ability to understand distribution and patterns in the study of geography, students should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify spatial distributions, patterns, and associations.

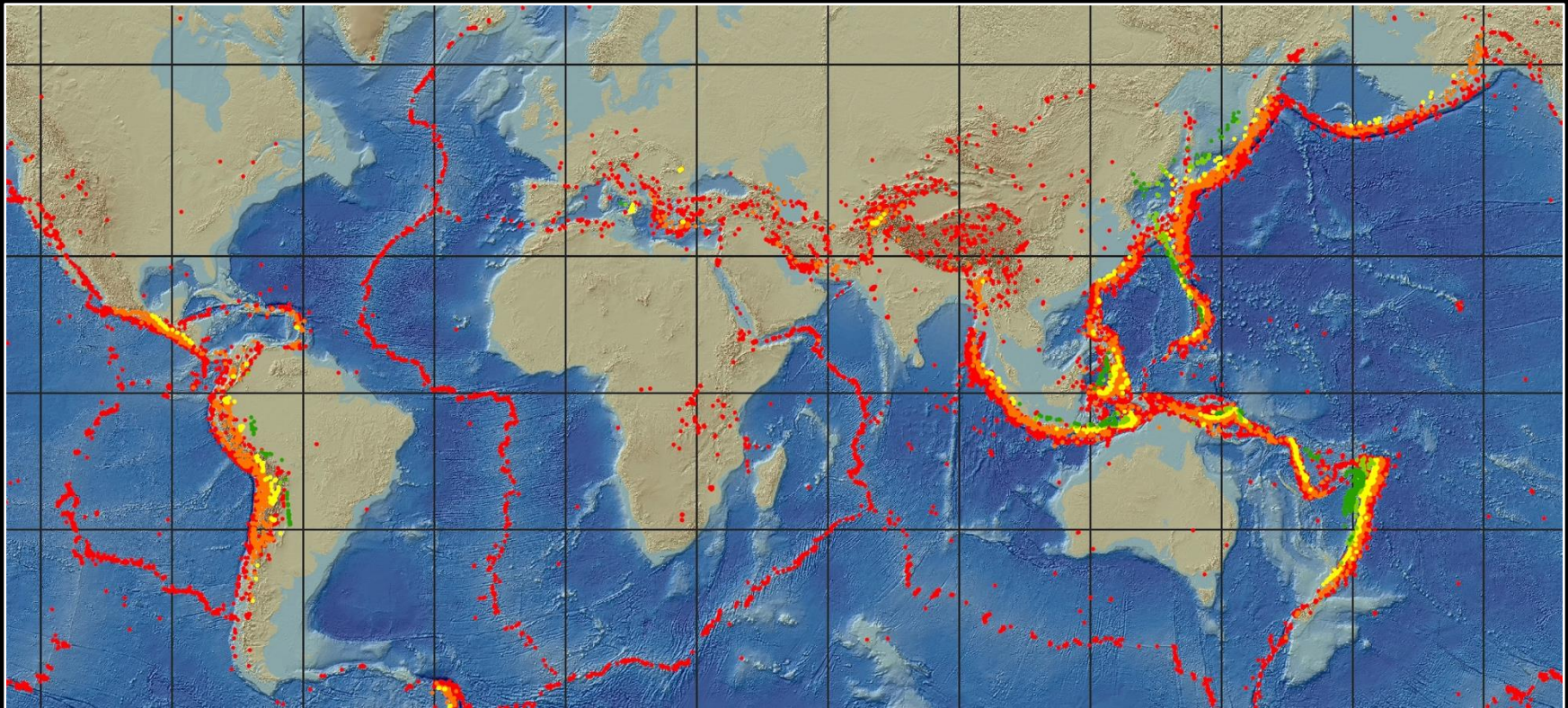
Conditions, Connections, and Regions



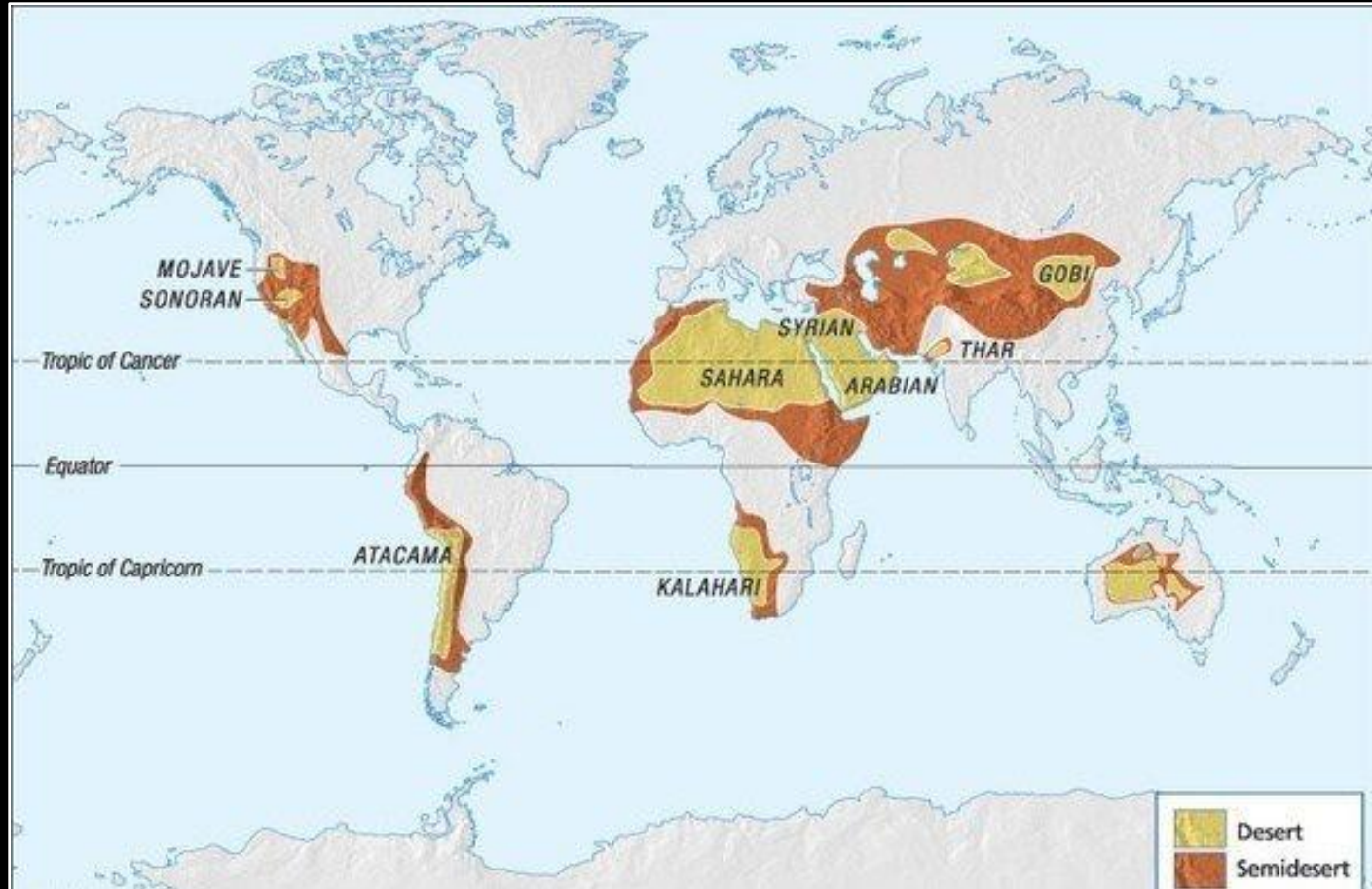
Scale



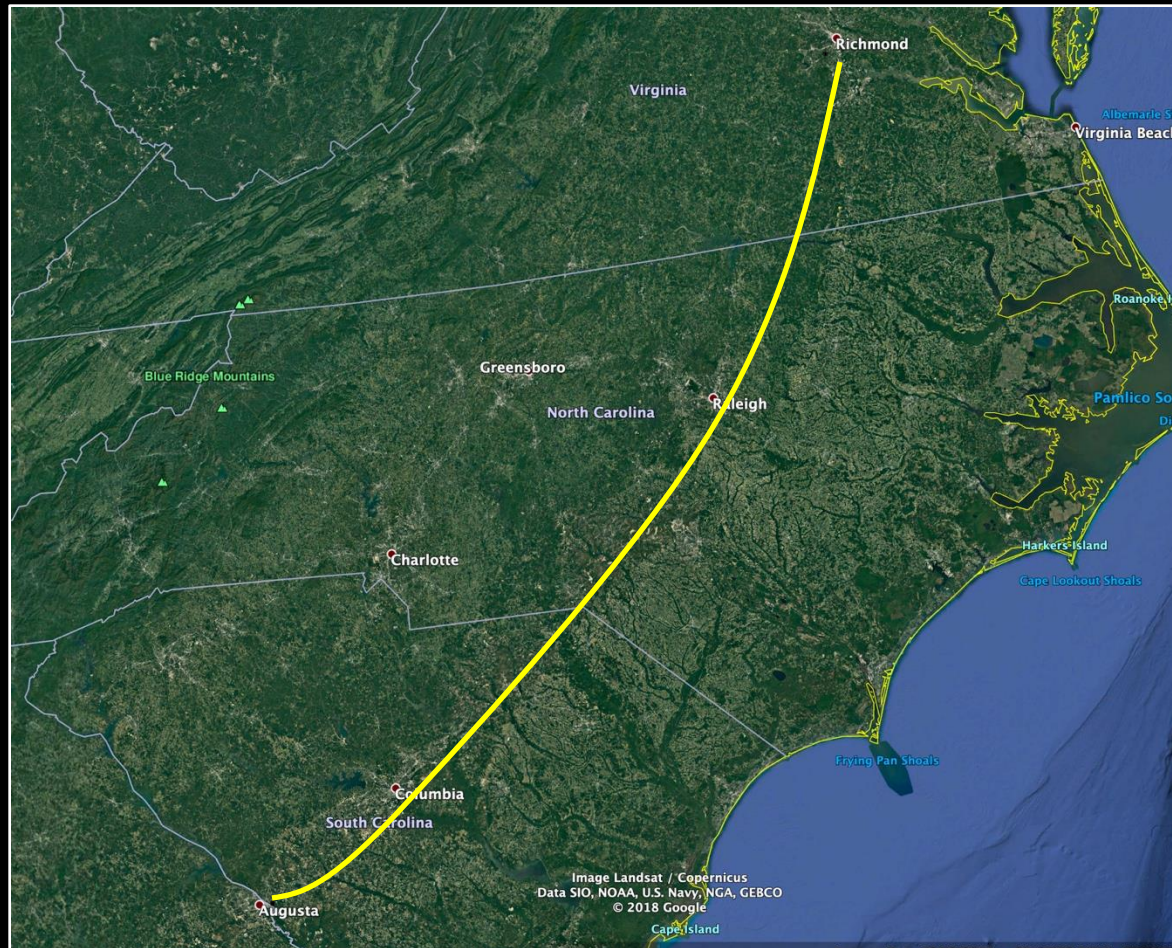
Distribution and Pattern



Distribution and Pattern



Distribution and Pattern



All Together, Now

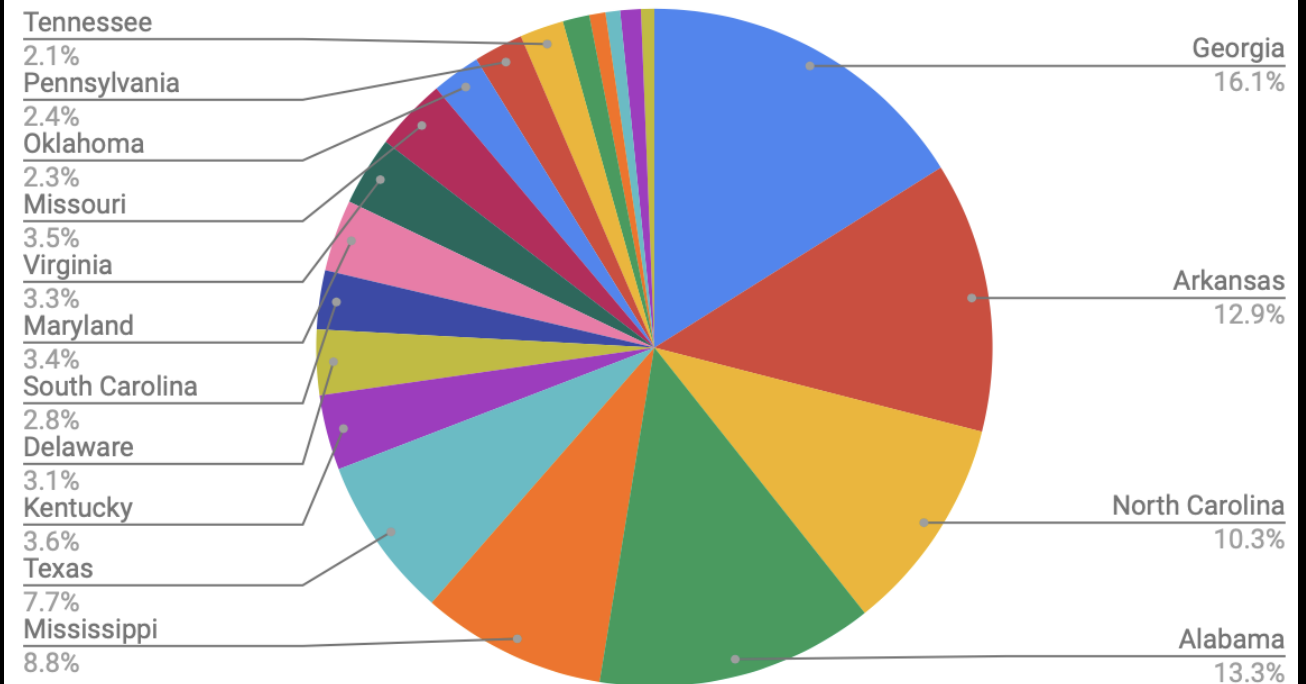
Mapping; Models and Representations; Gather Evidence and Communicate Findings

Conditions, Connections, Regions; Scale; Distribution and Patterns

How does chicken production vary in the United States?

Chickens	
STATE	NUMBER (000)
Georgia	1,361,400
Arkansas	1,092,000
North Carolina	873,600
Alabama	1,123,700
Mississippi	748,800
Texas	653,500
Kentucky	303,300
Delaware	263,600
South Carolina	237,800
Maryland	289,400
Virginia	278,900
Missouri	293,100
Oklahoma	196,800
Pennsylvania	200,100
Tennessee	177,300
Ohio	107,900
Florida	65,400
Minnesota	59,100
West Virginia	83,300
Wisconsin	53,800

NUMBER (000)



Civics and Places

Understanding geography is essential to effective civic participation because communities are organized in defined locations reflecting distinctive social and physical characteristics.

THE LAW IS JURISDICTIONAL



The Scales of Civic Education

Students are members of multiple communities, from their homes and neighborhoods to cities, states, countries, and the planet.

IMPACTS AND SOLUTIONS VARY BY SCALE



Geographic Perspectives Link Individuals to the Governance Process

Students who have an opportunity to explore their environment and ask questions about who lives where and why, examine what kinds of resources are available there, and consider past decisions there, will have a more intimate connection with their community.

The **South Carolina Giant Traveling Map** can be borrowed by any South Carolina school! This 17 x 21 foot floor map also comes with a trunk of cones, flash cards, and other materials for creating an exciting and educational program for your students.

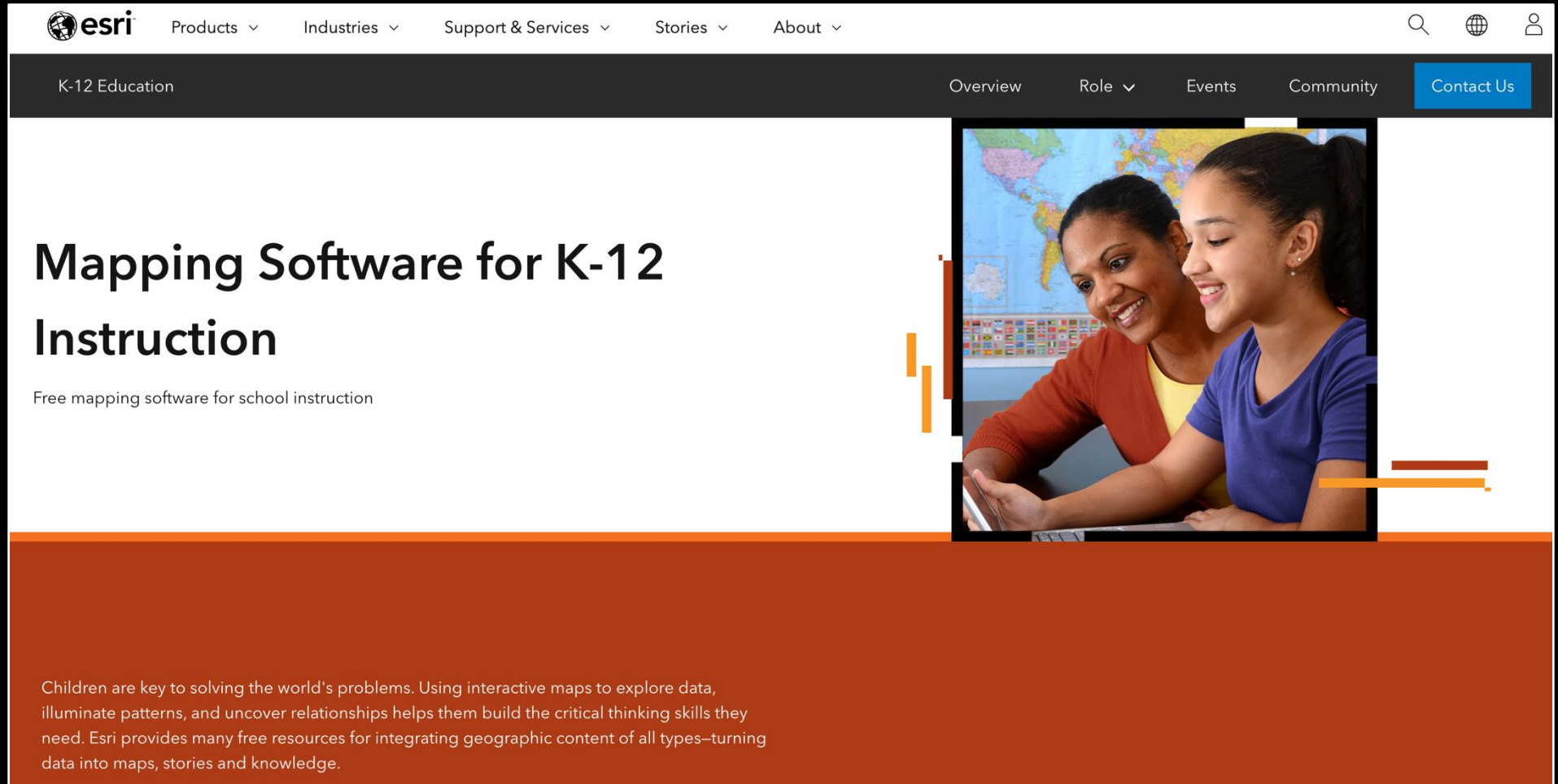


Geospatial Technology

GEOINQUIRIES

GIS DEMONSTRATION

Geospatial Technology




esri Products ▾ Industries ▾ Support & Services ▾ Stories ▾ About ▾

K-12 Education Overview Role ▾ Events Community [Contact Us](#)

Mapping Software for K-12 Instruction

Free mapping software for school instruction



Children are key to solving the world's problems. Using interactive maps to explore data, illuminate patterns, and uncover relationships helps them build the critical thinking skills they need. Esri provides many free resources for integrating geographic content of all types—turning data into maps, stories and knowledge.

Conclusion

People CARE about their local places.

- Geography explains how those places came to be.

People long to PARTICIPATE in their communities.

- Geography connects and engages other communities.

People need the TOOLS to become active citizens.

- Geography provides a suite of conceptual (places, scale) and spatial tools to engage in effective civic participation.

Links

Giant Traveling Maps

<https://www.scgeo.org/giant-maps>

GeoInquiries

<https://www.esri.com/en-us/industries/k-12-education/geoinquiries>

Esri Mapping Software

<https://www.esri.com/en-us/industries/k-12-education/schools-software>

Developing Democratic Citizens Through Geography

MARCH 22, 2025

Jerry T. Mitchell, PhD

Professor and Chair

Department of Geography

University of South Carolina

MITCHELL@SC.EDU