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CLASS XII · GEOGRAPHY (029) · FUNDAMENTALS OF HUMAN GEOGRAPHY · CBSE BOARD EXAMINATION 2027

GEOGRAPHY · CHAPTER 2

The World Population

8 billion and growing

Chapter Practice Booklet · Questions only

10 note blocks + 2 tables | Density · growth · demographic transition | 47 practice questions | Model Answer Booklet

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STUDENT DETAILS

NAME _____

CLASS & SECTION _____

ROLL NO. _____

BOOKLET STARTED ON _____

PRACTICE SCORE ____ / ____

1

READ THIS FIRST

Chapter Notes

The whole chapter in short-note form: where people live and why, how density is measured, how population grows and changes, the demographic transition theory and population control. Revise from here – you should not need the textbook again.

1 Why study population?

- The people of a country are its **real wealth**: they use its resources and decide its policies. Ultimately a country is known by its people.
- We need to know **how many** people there are, **where** they live, **why** population grows, and what its **characteristics** are.
- The world's population passed **8 billion** in 2022. It is **very unevenly distributed**.

> **George B. Cressey** said of Asia that it has **"many places where people are few and few places where people are very many"** – a remark that is true of the whole world.

2 Patterns of distribution

- About **90 per cent** of the world's people live on about **10 per cent** of its land area.
- The **10 most populous countries** have about **60 per cent** of the world's population; most of them are in **Asia**. Today **India** is the most populous country, followed by **China**.
- **Distribution** tells us **where** people live; **density** tells us **how crowded** a place is.

3 Density of population

> **Density of population** = number of people ÷ area of land. It is expressed in **persons per sq km**. Example: 1,000 people living on 10 sq km gives a density of **100 persons per sq km**.

- **Very dense (over 200 per sq km):** the north-eastern part of the **USA**, north-western **Europe**, and **South, South-East and East Asia**.
- **Very sparse (under 1 per sq km):** areas near the **poles**, the **hot and cold deserts** and the **high-rainfall zones near the equator**.
- **Medium (11–50 per sq km):** western **China**, southern **India**, **Norway**, **Sweden**.

4 Factors influencing distribution – geographical

- **Availability of water:** people prefer areas where fresh water is easily available for drinking, bathing, cooking, cattle, crops, industry and navigation – **river valleys** are among the most densely populated areas.
- **Landforms: flat plains and gentle slopes** are preferred – they suit crops, roads and industry. Mountains and hills hinder transport. The **Ganga plains** are among the most densely populated areas; the **Himalayas** are thinly populated.
- **Climate:** extreme climates – very hot or very cold **deserts** – are uncomfortable. Areas of **pleasant climate**, with little seasonal variation, attract people; the **Mediterranean** region has been inhabited since early times. Areas of very heavy rain or harsh climate have few people.
- **Soils: fertile loamy soils** support intensive farming, so areas with them have more people – e.g. the valleys of the **Nile, Ganga, Hwang He and Chang Jiang**.

5 Factors influencing distribution – economic, social and cultural

- **Minerals:** areas with mineral deposits attract industries; mining and industry create jobs. The **Katanga–Zambia copper belt** in Africa is an example.
- **Urbanisation:** cities offer **jobs, education, health care**, better civic amenities and transport. People migrate from villages to cities; large cities keep attracting people.
- **Industrialisation:** industrial belts give jobs to factory workers, transport operators, shopkeepers, bank staff, doctors and teachers. The **Kobe–Osaka** region of Japan is thickly populated because of many industries.
- **Social and cultural factors:** places of **religious or cultural significance** attract people – e.g. **Varanasi, Jerusalem, Vatican City**. People move away from places of **social and political unrest** or war. Governments sometimes give incentives for people to live in sparsely populated areas.

6 Population growth – the terms

Growth of population: the change in the number of people living in a territory during a specific period. It may be **positive** or **negative**, and is shown as an absolute number or a percentage.

- **Growth rate:** the change in population expressed as a **percentage**.
- **Natural growth** = births − deaths in a region between two points of time.
- **Actual growth** = births − deaths + in-migration − out-migration.
- **Positive growth:** when the birth rate is higher than the death rate between two points of time, or when people migrate in.
- **Negative growth:** when the population falls between two points of time – the death rate is higher than the birth rate, or people migrate out.

7 Components of population change – births, deaths, migration

Crude Birth Rate (CBR): number of live births in a year per thousand of population. **CBR = (Bi ÷ P) × 1000**, where Bi = live births in the year and P = mid-year population.

Crude Death Rate (CDR): number of deaths in a year per thousand of population. **CDR = (D ÷ P) × 1000**.

- CDR is affected by the **age and sex structure**, and by social and economic development. Death rates have fallen through better health care and sanitation.
- **Migration:** people move from a **place of origin** to a **place of destination**. The place of origin shows a **decrease**; the destination an **increase**. Migration may be permanent, temporary or seasonal, and from rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban or urban to rural.
- **Immigrants** are people who move **into** a new place; **emigrants** are people who move **out** of a place.

8 Push and pull factors of migration

People move for a better economic and social life.

- **Push factors** make the place of origin less attractive: **unemployment**, poor living conditions, **political turmoil**, unpleasant climate, **natural disasters**, epidemics and socio-economic backwardness.
- **Pull factors** make the destination more attractive: **better jobs** and living conditions, **peace and stability**, security of life and property, and a pleasant climate.

9 Trends in world population growth

- Early population grew **very slowly**. It took more than **a million years** for humans to reach **one billion** (early 19th century); it took only about **12 years** to go from **5 to 6 billion** (1987 → 1999).
- Turning points: **agriculture** (about 8,000–12,000 years ago) allowed larger, settled populations; world **trade** in the 16th–17th centuries; the **Industrial Revolution** (about 1750) – and above all **better medicine and sanitation**, which cut death rates.
- Technology helped people reduce deaths and provide food for more people, so growth became **very fast** after the 18th century – the **population explosion**.
- **Doubling time:** the time a population takes to double at its present growth rate. Growth is **slower in developed countries** and **faster in developing countries**, so developing countries double much sooner.
- **Impact:** a small increase is desirable in a growing economy, but rapid growth causes **shortage of resources**, unemployment and pressure on services; a population **decline** is also a problem – there are too few people to use the resources and keep society running.

10 Demographic transition and population control

Demographic transition theory describes and predicts the future population of an area. Population changes from **high births and high deaths** to **low births and low deaths** as a society moves from **rural, agrarian and illiterate** to **urban, industrial and literate**.

- **Stage I: high fertility and high mortality** – population grows slowly. People are farmers; large families are an asset; life expectancy is low; most are illiterate with little technology. About 200 years ago all countries were in this stage.
- **Stage II:** fertility stays **high** at first and declines with time; mortality **falls** with better sanitation and health care – a **huge increase** in population.
- **Stage III:** both fertility and mortality **decline considerably**; population is stable or grows slowly. People are **urbanised and literate**, have technical know-how and **deliberately control family size**.

Population control: family planning – free availability of contraceptives, tax disincentives and active propaganda. **Thomas Malthus** (1793) argued that population grows faster than food supply, leading to a crash through **famine, disease and war**; **preventive checks** (planned smaller families) are better than these **physical checks**.

Factors influencing the distribution of population

Matching MCQs: place ↔ factor

Factor	Attracts people	Example
Water	river valleys, fresh water	most river valleys are dense
Landforms	flat plains, gentle slopes	Ganga plains dense; Himalayas sparse
Climate	moderate, pleasant climate	Mediterranean region; deserts and poles sparse
Soils	fertile loamy soils	Nile, Ganga, Hwang He, Chang Jiang valleys
Minerals	jobs in mining and industry	Katanga–Zambia copper belt
Urbanisation	jobs, schools, hospitals, amenities	large cities keep growing
Industrialisation	factory and service jobs	Kobe–Osaka region of Japan
Social / cultural	religious and cultural centres; peace	Varanasi, Jerusalem, Vatican City

Demographic transition – three stages

5-mark answers and statement MCQs

Stage	Births	Deaths	Growth	Society
I	high	high	slow	rural, agricultural, illiterate; low life expectancy
II	high, then falling	falling fast	very rapid	better sanitation and health care
III	low	low	stable or slow	urban, literate, family size controlled

Key terms

1- and 2-mark answers

Distribution – the pattern of where people live

Density – people per unit area (persons per sq km)

Population growth – change in the number of people over a period

Growth rate – population change expressed as a percentage

Natural growth – births − deaths

Actual growth – births − deaths + in-migration − out-migration

Negative growth – population falls between two points of time

CBR – live births per 1,000 people per year

CDR – deaths per 1,000 people per year

Immigrant – a person who moves into a new place

Emigrant – a person who moves out of a place

Push factor – condition that drives people out of a place

Pull factor – condition that draws people to a place

Doubling time – years a population takes to double at its growth rate

Demographic transition – shift from high to low births and deaths

Scholars to remember

Match-the-scholar MCQs come from here

Scholar	Remember for
George B. Cressey	Asia: many places with few people, few with very many

Scholar	Remember for
Thomas Malthus	1793: population outgrows food; famine, disease, war

Exam snapshot

What the board asks, and how to prepare

SYLLABUS 2026–27

- Patterns of population distribution and density
- Factors influencing population distribution
- Population growth: components – births, deaths, migration
- Trends in population growth; doubling time
- Demographic transition; population control measures

BOARD WEIGHTAGE

3–5 / 70

Geography theory is 70 marks (practical 30). This chapter was asked in **all 5 papers checked**: three data-based MCQs on the most populous countries (Board 2026, SQP 2024–25), four 1-mark items in SQP 2026–27 (factors, density, Malthus, CBR/CDR) and a **5-mark** answer in Board 2025. Expect **3 to 5 marks**.

MOST ASKED – BOARD 2025–2026 AND SAMPLE PAPERS (5 PAPERS CHECKED)

How often	Topic / question type	Marks	Papers
★★★	Data-based MCQs on the most populous countries / population table	3 × 1	3 of 5
★★☆	Demographic transition; immigrants and emigrants	5	1 of 5
★★☆	Factors of distribution – match place with factor	1	1 of 5
★★☆	Density – meaning and calculation	1	1 of 5
★★☆	Malthus; births, deaths and natural growth	1	1 of 5
★☆☆	Push and pull factors; trends; doubling time	3 / 5	0 of 5

ANSWER-WRITING RULES FOR GEOGRAPHY (CBSE SAMPLE PAPER 2026–27)

1 mark
MCQ · write the letter and the answer text

3 marks
Short answer · 80–100 words · 3 points with examples

3 marks
Source / map-based · read the source, answer each part

5 marks
Long answer · 120–150 words · 5 points

Write in points, underline key words, and give a place, a figure or an example in every point. Draw a small diagram or flow chart where it helps.

MISTAKES THAT COST MARKS

- Writing density as **area ÷ population** – it is **population ÷ area**, in persons per sq km.
- Mixing **natural growth** (births − deaths) and **actual growth** (adds in-migration and subtracts out-migration).
- Mixing **immigrants** (come in) and **emigrants** (go out).
- Writing CBR 'per hundred' – it is **per thousand** people per year.
- Saying deaths fall in **Stage I** – both births and deaths are high in Stage I; deaths fall in **Stage II**.
- Giving pull factors as push factors – **unemployment, unrest, disasters** push; **jobs, peace, security** pull.
- Answering the populous-countries table from memory – **read the figures given** in the table.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

1. **Day 1:** Read the Chapter Notes twice; learn the key terms.
2. **Next day:** Parts A and B. **Then:** Parts C and D – MUST DO questions first.
3. Check every answer against the **Model Answer Booklet**: same points, same keywords, within the word limit.
4. Write every mistake on the My Mistakes page and redo it after 3 days.

A

PART A · NCERT PRACTICE

Textbook Check

Every section of the chapter and every NCERT exercise idea, asked in new words. Model answers for all of these are in the Model Answer Booklet.

Distribution and density

A1. "The population of the world is unevenly distributed." Support the statement with three facts. MUST DO [3]

A2. What is density of population? How is it calculated? Name two very densely populated regions of the world. MUST DO [3]

A3. Explain any three geographical factors that influence the distribution of population. MUST DO [3]

A4. Explain the economic, social and cultural factors that influence the distribution of population. MUST DO [5]

Growth and its components

A5. Distinguish between natural growth and actual growth of population. MUST DO [3]

A6. Define the crude birth rate and the crude death rate. Write the formula for each. [3]

A7. Explain the push and pull factors of migration. MUST DO [3]

A8. Who are immigrants and emigrants? How does migration change the population of the places of origin and destination? [3]

Trends, transition and control

A9. Describe the trends in world population growth. MUST DO [3]

A10. What is doubling time? Why is it shorter in developing countries? [3]

A11. Explain the three stages of the demographic transition theory. MUST DO [5]

A12. What were Malthus's views on population? Name three measures of population control. MUST DO [3]

B

PART B · PAPER 029 STYLE

Objective Practice

The MCQ types of Section A: statements, matching, assertion–reason, short calculations and data-based questions.

ASSERTION–REASON: HOW TO ANSWER

(a) Both A and R are true, and R is the correct explanation of A.
(b) Both A and R are true, but R is not the correct explanation of A.
(c) A is true, but R is false.
(d) A is false, but R is true.

Multiple choice, matching and data

1 mark each

B1. About what share of the world's people live on about 10 per cent of its land area? [1]

(a) 50 per cent **(b)** 60 per cent **(c)** 75 per cent **(d)** 90 per cent

B2. "Asia has many places where people are few and few places where people are very many." This remark was made by: [1]

(a) Thomas Malthus (b) Ellen C. Semple
(c) Griffith Taylor (d) George B. Cressey

B3. A district has 4,50,000 people on 1,500 sq km. Its density is: [1]

(a) 30 persons per sq km (b) 300 persons per sq km
(c) 3,000 persons per sq km (d) 450 persons per sq km

B4. Which region has a density of less than 1 person per sq km? [1]

(a) north-western Europe (b) areas near the poles
(c) southern India (d) north-eastern USA

B5. Match the place with the main factor of its dense population: [1]
(a) Kobe–Osaka (b) Katanga–Zambia belt (c) Varanasi (d) Ganga plains
(i) minerals (ii) religious and cultural importance (iii) flat land and fertile soil (iv) industrialisation

(a) a-iv, b-i, c-ii, d-iii (b) a-i, b-iv, c-ii, d-iii
(c) a-iv, b-ii, c-i, d-iii (d) a-ii, b-i, c-iv, d-iii

B6. Natural growth of population is: [1]

(a) births + in-migration
(b) births − deaths
(c) births − deaths + in-migration − out-migration
(d) in-migration − out-migration

B7. In a town of 50,000 people there were 1,500 live births and 500 deaths in a year. The crude birth rate is: [1]

(a) 15 (b) 20 (c) 30 (d) 10

B8. Which of these is a **pull** factor of migration? [1]

(a) political turmoil (b) epidemics
(c) security of life and property (d) unemployment

B9. People who move into a new place are called: [1]

(a) emigrants (b) refugees (c) settlers (d) immigrants

B10. The theory that population grows faster than food supply, leading to famine, disease and war, was given by: [1]

(a) Thomas Malthus (b) George B. Cressey
(c) Mahbub-ul-Haq (d) Friedrich Ratzel

B11. Read the statements about Stage I of demographic transition: [1]
I. Fertility and mortality are both high. II. Population grows rapidly.
III. Most people are engaged in agriculture. IV. Life expectancy is low.
Which statements are correct?

(a) I, II and III (b) II, III and IV (c) I, III and IV (d) I, II and IV

B12. In which stage of demographic transition does mortality fall while fertility remains high at first? [1]

(a) Stage III (b) Stage I (c) Stage II (d) None of these

B13. Which of these areas has a **medium** density of population (11–50 persons per sq km)? [1]

(a) Sweden (b) Bangladesh
(c) north-western Europe (d) eastern China

B14. *Data described:* a table lists the ten most populous countries: India, China, USA, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Brazil, Bangladesh, Russia, Mexico. How many of these countries lie wholly in Asia? [1]

(a) three (b) four (c) five (d) six

B15. Which continent in the table above has the largest number of the ten countries? [1]

(a) Asia (b) Africa (c) Europe (d) South America

Assertion–Reason

1 mark each

B16. ASSERTION–REASON [1]
Assertion (A): River valleys are among the most densely populated areas of the world.
Reason (R): Fresh water is needed for drinking, farming, industry and navigation.

B17. ASSERTION–REASON [1]
Assertion (A): Population declines in Stage III of demographic transition.
Reason (R): Both fertility and mortality are low in Stage III.

B18. ASSERTION–REASON [1]
Assertion (A): The Himalayas are thinly populated.
Reason (R): Mountains make farming, roads and industry difficult.

B19. ASSERTION–REASON [1]
Assertion (A): Migration changes the population of both the place of origin and the place of destination.
Reason (R): Migrants may be permanent, temporary or seasonal.

B20. ASSERTION–REASON [1]
Assertion (A): Rapid population growth can cause problems for a country.
Reason (R): It puts pressure on resources and jobs.

C

PART C · BOARD PATTERN

Board Pattern Practice

Written-answer questions grouped by topic. ★★★ = asked in 3 or more of the 5 papers checked · ★★ = 1–2 papers · ★ = not asked.

Data on populous countries

★★★ 3 of 5 papers · 3 × 1 mark

C1. Study the list of the ten most populous countries (India, China, USA, Indonesia, Pakistan, Nigeria, Brazil, Bangladesh, Russia, Mexico). Answer: (i) which two are the most populous; (ii) which countries are in Africa and South America; (iii) why most of them are in Asia. MUST DO [3]

Migration and demographic transition

★★☆ 1 of 5 papers · 5 marks

C2. Distinguish between immigrants and emigrants. Explain the demographic transition theory. MUST DO [5]

C3. "Population growth is the result of births, deaths and migration." Explain the three components. [5]

Factors of distribution and density

★★☆ 1 of 5 papers · 1 mark

C4. Explain any five factors that influence the distribution of population in the world. MUST DO [5]

C5. Calculate the density of a state with 2.4 crore people living on 80,000 sq km. What does the figure tell us? [3]

Malthus, birth and death rates

★★☆ 1 of 5 papers · 1 mark

C6. Explain Malthus's theory of population. Do you think it is fully true today? [3]

C7. A country has a CBR of 30 and a CDR of 10. Work out its rate of natural growth and say in which stage of demographic transition it may be. [3]

Growth trends and impact

★☆☆ not asked in the 5 papers · 3 and 5 marks

C8. Explain the impact of population change on a country. [3]

C9. Explain the turning points that led to the rapid growth of world population. [5]

D

PART D · SOURCE / CASE-BASED (Q18–Q19 STYLE)

Case-Based Questions

Each case carries 3 marks (1 + 1 + 1), as in Q18–Q19 of the board paper. The passages and data are written for this booklet. Answer from the passage and your notes.

D1. Case-Based · Two Valleys [3]

Two neighbouring valleys lie in the same hills. The first is broad and flat, with a perennial river, deep loamy soil and a railway line that carries rice and sugar to a busy industrial town at its mouth. Its villages almost touch one another. The second valley is narrow and steep; its stream dries up in summer, landslides cut the road every monsoon, and young people leave each year for jobs in the town. Only a few hamlets remain on its slopes.

(i) Name two geographical factors that explain the crowded first valley. [1]

(ii) What kind of factor makes young people leave the second valley? [1]

(iii) Which economic factor attracts people to the town at the mouth of the valley? [1]

D2. Case-Based · A Country in Transition [3]

Fifty years ago, families in a small country had six or seven children, but many died young of fever and diarrhoea. Then clean water, vaccines and a health centre reached every village. Children survived, but families stayed large for another generation, and the population almost doubled. Today most people live in towns, girls finish college and couples choose to have one or two children. The population now grows very slowly.

(i) Which stage of demographic transition was the country in fifty years ago? [1]

(ii) Why did the population almost double after health care improved? [1]

(iii) Give one feature of the country today that shows Stage III. [1]

E

PART E · REAL BOARD QUESTIONS

Board PYQ Index

Real questions from recent board papers and CBSE sample papers, by topic. Open the paper and attempt the listed questions.

Frequency	Topic	Marks	Where asked (year: paper code, question number)	Practise here
★★★	**Data on the most populous countries**	3 × 1	**2026:** 64/1/3 Q15–17; 64/1/2 Q15–17 · **SQP 2024–25:** Q15–17 (graph of populous countries)	B14–B15, C1
★★☆	**Migrants and demographic transition**	5	**2025:** 64/1/1 Q24 (immigrants/emigrants + demographic transition)	A8, A11, B9, B11–B12, B17, C2, D2
★★☆	**Factors of distribution**	1	**SQP 2026–27:** Q1 (match places with factors)	A3–A4, B5, B16, B18, C4, D1
★★☆	**Density**	1	**SQP 2026–27:** Q3 (density calculation)	A1–A2, B1, B3–B4, B13, C5
★★☆	**Malthus; birth and death rates**	1	**SQP 2026–27:** Q8 (Malthus), Q9 (CBR, CDR, natural growth)	A5–A6, A12, B6–B7, B10, C6–C7
★☆☆	**Push and pull factors; trends; impact**	3 / 5	Not asked in the 5 papers checked.	A7, A9–A10, B8, B19–B20, C3, C8–C9

Papers checked (5): Board 2026 – 64/1/3, 64/1/2 · Board 2025 – 64/1/1 · CBSE Sample Papers 2026–27 and 2024–25. Sets of one code family share most questions. Download official papers from cbse.gov.in → Previous Year Question Papers, and sample papers from cbseacademic.nic.in.

PART F · YOUR RECORD

F My Mistakes

Write down each mistake from this chapter, including your school tests and pre-board papers.

Every wrong answer is a free lesson. Write it here, find the point you missed, and redo the question after three days.

Date	Part & Q No.	What went wrong	Correct point or fact	Redone ✓