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

GEOGRAPHY · CHAPTER 1

Human Geography: Nature and Scope

Chapter Practice Booklet · Questions only

9 note blocks + 2 tables | Determinism · possibilism · neo-determinism | 46 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: what human geography studies, the three ideas about humans and nature (determinism, possibilism, neo-determinism), how the subject changed over time, and its fields and sister subjects. Revise from here – you should not need the textbook again.

1 Geography – one subject, two sides

- Geography is an **integrative** discipline: it studies the **earth as the home of humans**.
- **Physical geography** studies the physical environment – landforms, climate, soils, water, natural vegetation, animals.
- **Human geography** studies the **relationship** between the physical world and the human world, the **spatial distribution** of human phenomena (how they are spread over the earth) and the **social and economic differences** between places.
- The two sides are **inseparable**. Dividing geography into a 'physical versus human' **dualism** is not accepted – one cannot be understood without the other.

2 Definitions to remember

Friedrich Ratzel (Germany): human geography is the **synthetic study of the relationship between human societies and the earth's surface**.

Ellen C. Semple (USA): human geography studies the **changing relationship between the "unresting man" and the "unstable earth"**.

Paul Vidal de la Blache (France): a view that comes from a more **synthetic knowledge** of the **physical laws** governing the earth and of the **relations between the living beings** on it.

Common idea: all three stress the **relationship** between humans and their environment. Semple adds that **both sides keep changing**.

3 Nature of human geography

- It studies the **interrelationship** between the **physical environment** and the **socio-cultural environment** that humans create by interacting with it.
- **Physical environment:** landforms, soils, climate, water, natural vegetation, plants and animals.
- **Cultural (human-made) environment:** houses, villages, cities, roads and railways, industries, farms, ports and things of daily use – built using the resources of the physical environment.
- The physical environment has been greatly **modified** by humans, and humans are in turn **influenced** by it.
- **Body words for land, land words for society:** we speak of the earth's **face**, the **eye** of a storm, the **mouth** of a river, the **snout** of a glacier, the **neck** of an isthmus, the **profile** of a soil – and of regions, villages and towns as **organisms**, and road and rail networks as **arteries of circulation**. This shows how closely nature and humans are linked.

4 Naturalisation of humans – environmental determinism

- In the **early stage**, humans had **very little technology**. They depended on nature for food, shelter and water and **adapted to its dictates**.
- They were **afraid of nature's fury** and **worshipped** it. Their life was shaped by the environment – this is **environmental determinism**: nature determines what humans can do. The 'naturalised human'.
- **Example (textbook story described):** a boy of a forest tribe in central India (the Abujhmarh area) lives by hunting and gathering. His people take only what they need from the forest, follow its seasons and treat it with reverence – their whole way of life follows nature.
- **Scholars linked with determinism:** Friedrich Ratzel and Ellen C. Semple.

5 Humanisation of nature – possibilism

- With time, people understood nature better and developed **efficient technology**. They moved from a state of **necessity** to a state of **freedom**.
- Nature offers **opportunities**; humans choose among them and use them. Human activities create a **cultural landscape** – the imprints of human effort on nature.
- **Imprints:** health resorts on highlands, huge urban sprawls, fields, orchards and pastures in plains and rolling hills, **ports** on coasts, **sea routes** on the oceans and **satellites** in space.

- **Example (textbook story described):** a woman in a cold north European town (Trondheim, Norway) lives comfortably through long, dark, freezing winters – with heated homes, warm clothing, electric light and imported food. Technology lets her overcome the limits of nature.
- This view is **possibilism** (Paul Vidal de la Blache and the French school).

Key point: the level of **technology** shows the level of cultural development – technology loosens the shackles of the environment on humans.

6 Neo-determinism – 'stop and go'

- Put forward by **Griffith Taylor**. Also called **stop and go determinism**.
- A **middle path** between environmental determinism and possibilism: there is neither a situation of **absolute necessity** (determinism) nor one of **absolute freedom** (possibilism).
- Humans can **conquer nature by obeying it**. They must respond to the **red signals** and go ahead with development when nature allows it – like traffic lights.
- Possibilities can be created **within limits** that do not damage the environment. There is **no free run** without accidents.
- Developed countries that 'ran the red light' now face **global warming**, ozone depletion, pollution and receding glaciers.

Link to today: neo-determinism is the root idea of **sustainable development** – use nature, but respect its limits.

7 Human geography through the corridors of time

- Interaction with the environment is as old as humans – but the **subject** of human geography grew from the **Age of Exploration** and colonial expansion.
- Its focus moved from **describing** places, to **regions**, to **uniqueness**, to **mathematical patterns**, to **people's welfare and experience**, and finally to the **local context**. (See the approaches table after the notes.)
- **Quantitative revolution (late 1950s–1960s):** computers and statistics; laws of physics used to map and analyse human phenomena.
- **1970s – three new schools**, because people were unhappy with the **dehumanised** quantitative method:

Welfare / humanistic school: social well-being – housing, health, education.
Radical school: used **Marxian theory** to explain poverty, deprivation and inequality as results of capitalism.
Behavioural school: the **lived experience** and **perception of space** by social groups based on ethnicity, race or religion.

- **1990s – post-modernism:** doubted grand generalisations and universal theories; stressed understanding each **local context**.

8 Fields and sub-fields of human geography

- Human geography is **interdisciplinary**: it links with almost every social science to explain human elements on the earth's surface.
- **Six main fields:** social geography, urban geography, political geography, population geography, settlement geography and economic geography.
- Each field has **sub-fields** and a **sister discipline** – e.g. electoral geography ↔ **psephology**; medical geography ↔ **epidemiology**; population geography ↔ **demography**; cultural geography ↔ **anthropology**. (Full table after the notes.)
- As knowledge grows, new sub-fields keep appearing.

9 Why it matters – exam angle

- **3-mark favourites:** neo-determinism; naturalisation of humans vs humanisation of nature; definitions; the three 1970s schools.
- **1-mark favourites:** match scholar ↔ idea; approach ↔ period; field ↔ sister discipline; assertion–reason on determinism and possibilism.
- **5-mark:** 'Explain the nature of human geography' or 'Compare environmental determinism and possibilism'.
- **Answer tip:** always give an **example** – a forest tribe (determinism), a modern cold-country city (possibilism), traffic lights (neo-determinism).

Approaches in human geography

Match-the-period MCQs come from here

Period	Approach	Broad features
Early colonial period	Exploration and description	imperial and trade interests led to exploring new areas; encyclopaedic description of places
Later colonial period	Regional analysis	detailed description of all aspects of a region; every region seen as part of a whole – the earth
1930s, inter-war period	Areal differentiation	what makes a region unique – how and why it differs from others
Late 1950s – late 1960s	Spatial organisation	computers and statistics; laws of physics used to find mappable patterns (quantitative revolution)
1970s	Humanistic, radical and behavioural schools	reaction against dehumanised quantitative work; geography made relevant to social and political reality
1990s	Post-modernism	grand generalisations questioned; importance of each local context

Fields, sub-fields and sister disciplines

Matching MCQs

Field	Sub-fields	Sister discipline(s)
Social geography	behavioural · social well-being · leisure · cultural · gender · historical · medical	psychology · welfare economics · sociology · anthropology · women's studies · history · epidemiology
Urban geography	–	urban studies and planning
Political geography	electoral · military	political science · psephology · military science
Population geography	–	demography
Settlement geography	rural · urban	urban and rural planning
Economic geography	resource · agricultural · industrial · marketing · tourism · international trade	resource economics · agricultural sciences · industrial economics · business studies, commerce · tourism and travel management · international trade

Key terms

1- and 2-mark answers

Human geography – study of the relationship between humans and their physical environment

Physical environment – landforms, climate, soils, water, plants and animals

Cultural landscape – the imprints of human activity on nature

Environmental determinism – nature decides how humans live

Possibilism – nature offers choices; humans use them with technology

Neo-determinism – middle path: develop within nature's limits (Griffith Taylor)

Naturalisation of humans – early humans adapting to and fearing nature

Humanisation of nature – nature bearing the marks of human effort

Dualism – splitting geography into physical vs human – not accepted

Quantitative revolution – use of statistics and computers in the 1950s–60s

Areal differentiation – the study of what makes a region unique

Post-modernism – focus on local context, not grand theories

Psephology – the study of elections – sister of electoral geography

Epidemiology – the study of diseases – sister of medical geography

Scholars to remember

Match-the-scholar MCQs come from here

Scholar	Remember for
Friedrich Ratzel	synthetic study of societies and the earth's surface; determinism
Vidal de la Blache	physical laws + relations of living beings; possibilism

Ellen C. Semple	‘unresting man’ and ‘unstable earth’; determinism	**Griffith Taylor**	neo-determinism – ‘stop and go’

Exam snapshot

What the board asks, and how to prepare

SYLLABUS 2026–27

- Human geography: nature and scope
- Naturalisation of humans and humanisation of nature
- Determinism, possibilism and neo-determinism
- Human geography through the corridors of time; schools of thought
- Fields and sub-fields of human geography

BOARD WEIGHTAGE

3 / 70

Geography theory is 70 marks (practical 30). This chapter gave a **3-mark short answer (Q20 or Q22) in all 5 papers checked** – on the relationship of humans and nature, possibilism or neo-determinism. Expect **3 marks**, sometimes with a 1-mark MCQ.

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

How often	Topic / question type	Marks	Papers
★★★	A 3-mark answer from this chapter (Q20 / Q22)	3	5 of 5
★★★	Nature of human geography – humans and nature intertwined; body metaphors	3	3 of 5
★★☆	Possibilism – humanisation of nature, with example	3	2 of 5
★★☆	Neo-determinism (Griffith Taylor) vs the other two views	3	2 of 5
★☆☆	Approaches over time; humanistic, radical, behavioural schools	1	0 of 5
★☆☆	Fields, sub-fields and sister disciplines	1	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 that neo-determinism was given by **Ratzel** – it was **Griffith Taylor**.
- Mixing up **naturalisation of humans** (early humans shaped by nature) and **humanisation of nature** (nature shaped by humans).
- Calling neo-determinism 'total freedom' – it is the **middle path**: go ahead only when nature gives the green signal.
- Linking the **radical school** with perception – radical = **Marxian**, behavioural = **perception and lived experience**, humanistic = **welfare**.
- Wrong period for the quantitative revolution – it is the **late 1950s to late 1960s** (spatial organisation).
- Matching electoral geography with political science only – its sister discipline is **psephology**.
- Giving no example – add the forest tribe, the cold-country city or the traffic lights to every answer.

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.

PART A · NCERT PRACTICE

A 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.

Meaning and nature

A1. Define human geography in your own words, using the ideas of any two geographers. [3]

A2. Why is geography called an integrative discipline? Why is a ‘physical versus human’ dualism not accepted? [3]

A3. Distinguish between the physical environment and the cultural environment, with two examples of each. [3] MUST DO

A4. Explain with examples how we describe the earth with words for the human body, and human society with words for the earth. [3] MUST DO

Humans and nature – three views

A5. What is meant by the ‘naturalisation of humans’? Explain with an example. MUST DO [3]

A6. What is meant by the ‘humanisation of nature’? Explain with an example. MUST DO [3]

A7. Explain the concept of neo-determinism. Why is it called ‘stop and go determinism’? MUST DO [3]

A8. Compare environmental determinism and possibilism under five heads. MUST DO [5]

Through time, schools and fields

A9. Name the approach in human geography for each period: early colonial, later colonial, inter-war, late 1950s–60s, 1970s, 1990s. Explain any one. [3]

A10. Distinguish between the welfare, radical and behavioural schools of human geography. MUST DO [3]

A11. Name any five fields of human geography and give one sister discipline for each. [5]

PART B · PAPER 029 STYLE

B Objective Practice

The MCQ types of Section A: statements, matching, assertion–reason and short situations.

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 and matching

1 mark each

B1. Who defined human geography as the study of the changing relationship between the ‘unresting man’ and the ‘unstable earth’? [1]

(a) Friedrich Ratzel

(b) Ellen C. Semple

(c) Vidal de la Blache

(d) Griffith Taylor

B2. The concept of neo-determinism was given by: [1]

(a) Griffith Taylor (b) Friedrich Ratzel
(c) Ellen C. Semple (d) Vidal de la Blache

B3. Which of the following is part of the cultural environment? [1]

(a) Soil (b) Natural vegetation
(c) Landforms (d) Ports

B4. The phrase 'snout of a glacier' is an example of: [1]

(a) describing nature with words for the human body
(b) the quantitative revolution
(c) describing society with words for nature
(d) areal differentiation

B5. Road and rail networks are described as: [1]

(a) organisms (b) arteries of circulation
(c) faces of the earth (d) cultural hearths

B6. Read the statements about the naturalisation of humans: [1]
I. Technology was very simple. II. Humans feared and worshipped nature.
III. Humans created huge urban sprawls. IV. Humans adapted to the dictates of nature.
Which statements are correct?

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

B7. Which of the following is **not** an imprint of the humanisation of nature? [1]

(a) Health resorts on highlands (b) Satellites in space
(c) Sea routes across oceans (d) Hunting and gathering in forests

B8. Neo-determinism is compared to: [1]

(a) a compass (b) traffic lights (c) a ladder (d) a mirror

B9. Match the period with the approach: [1]
(a) Early colonial (b) 1930s, inter-war (c) Late 1950s–60s (d) 1990s
(i) Spatial organisation (ii) Post-modernism (iii) Exploration and description (iv) Areal differentiation

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

B10. Which school used Marxian theory to explain poverty and inequality? [1]

(a) Welfare school (b) Behavioural school
(c) Radical school (d) Humanistic school

B11. The use of computers and statistical tools in human geography in the late 1950s–60s is known as: [1]

(a) post-modernism (b) regional analysis
(c) the quantitative revolution (d) areal differentiation

B12. Match the sub-field with its sister discipline: [1]
(a) Electoral geography (b) Medical geography (c) Population geography (d) Cultural geography
(i) Demography (ii) Anthropology (iii) Psephology (iv) Epidemiology

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

B13. Which approach stressed the lived experience and perception of space by social groups? [1]

(a) Radical school **(b)** Welfare school
(c) Regional analysis **(d)** Behavioural school

B14. A geographer studies why one district of Kerala differs from its neighbours in land use and lifestyle. This is closest to: [1]

(a) areal differentiation **(b)** exploration and description
(c) spatial organisation **(d)** post-modernism

B15. Geography of tourism is a sub-field of: [1]

(a) social geography **(b)** political geography
(c) economic geography **(d)** settlement geography

Assertion–Reason

1 mark each

B16. ASSERTION–REASON [1]
Assertion (A): In the early stages of development, humans adapted to the dictates of nature.
Reason (R): The level of technology was very low.

B17. ASSERTION–REASON [1]
Assertion (A): Neo-determinism allows humans unlimited freedom to use nature.
Reason (R): Griffith Taylor called it ‘stop and go determinism’.

B18. ASSERTION–REASON [1]
Assertion (A): Nature bears the imprints of human endeavour in developed societies.
Reason (R): Post-modernism rejects grand generalisations.

B19. ASSERTION–REASON [1]
Assertion (A): Physical and human geography are studied together.
Reason (R): Human beings and nature are inseparably intertwined.

B20. ASSERTION–REASON [1]
Assertion (A): The quantitative revolution was criticised in the 1970s.
Reason (R): It was seen as a dehumanised way of doing geography.

C

PART C · BOARD PATTERN

Board Pattern Practice

Written-answer questions grouped by topic. ★★★ = asked in 3 or more of the 5 papers checked · ★★ = 2 papers · ★ = 0–1 paper.

Nature of human geography – humans and nature

★★★ 3 of 5 papers · 3 marks

C1. “Nature and humans are inseparably intertwined.” Analyse the statement with examples. MUST DO [3]

C2. Explain the relationship between the physical environment and human beings. MUST DO [3]

C3. "Human geography is the synthetic study of the relationship between human societies and the earth's surface." Explain. [3]

Possibilism and humanisation of nature

★★☆ 2 of 5 papers · 3 marks

C4. "Humans make use of the opportunities provided by nature." Analyse the statement. MUST DO [3]

C5. Explain how technology changes the relationship between humans and nature. Give two examples. [3]

Neo-determinism

★★☆ 2 of 5 papers · 3 marks

C6. Define neo-determinism. How is it different from environmental determinism and possibilism? MUST DO [3]

C7. Why is neo-determinism important for the world today? Explain with examples. [5]

Approaches, schools and fields

★☆☆ 0 of 5 papers · 1 and 3 marks

C8. How did human geography change from the 1950s to the 1990s? Explain three stages. [3]

C9. "Human geography is interdisciplinary." Justify with five examples of its links with other subjects. [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 are written for this booklet. Answer from the passage and your notes.

D1. Case-Based · Two Lives, Two Worlds [3]

Deep in a forest of central India, a young boy wakes at dawn and follows his elders to collect honey, roots and leaves. His family grows a little grain on a patch they clear and leave after a few years. They never take more than the forest can give back, and before the rains they offer prayers to the spirits of the hills. Thousands of kilometres away, in a northern port city where winter nights last most of the day, a young woman leaves her heated flat, takes a lit electric tram to her office and eats fruit grown in another continent. Snow and darkness hardly change her routine.

(i) Which view of the human–nature relationship does the boy's life show? [1]

(ii) What allows the woman to live comfortably in a harsh climate? [1]

(iii) Which idea suggests a balance between these two ways of living? [1]

D2. Case-Based · The Traffic Signal [3]

A geographer once compared the relationship of people and the earth to a busy crossing. A driver who never moves is safe but gets nowhere; a driver who ignores every light reaches the next crossing quickly – or not at all. Countries that cut forests, burned coal without limit and filled rivers with waste moved fast for a while. Today they face hotter summers, shrinking glaciers and polluted air. The geographer argued that progress is possible only if we learn to read nature's signals.

(i) Name the geographer whose idea is described here. [1]

(ii) What does 'ignoring every light' stand for? [1]

(iii) Give one present-day problem caused by ignoring nature's signals. [1]

PART E · REAL BOARD QUESTIONS

E 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
★★★	**Nature of human geography; humans and nature**	3	**2026:** 64/1/3 Q20 (physical environment and humans); 64/1/2 Q20 (societies and the earth's surface) · **2025:** 64/1/1 Q20(a) (nature and humans intertwined)	A1–A4, B3–B5, B19, C1–C3
★★☆	**Possibilism – humanisation of nature**	3	**2025:** 64/1/1 Q20(b) · **SQP 2024–25:** Q20 (humanisation of nature, with example)	A6, A8, B7, B18, C4–C5, D1
★★☆	**Neo-determinism**	3	**SQP 2026–27:** Q22 (1 + 2) · **SQP 2024–25:** Q20 (OR choice)	A7, B2, B8, B17, C6–C7, D2
★☆☆	**Naturalisation of humans; determinism**	1–3	Asked inside the questions above; learn it for the comparison.	A5, A8, B6, B16, D1
★☆☆	**Approaches, schools, fields**	1	Not asked in the 5 papers checked; possible 1-mark matching.	A9–A11, B9–B15, B20, 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 ✓