A Vocabulary List for AP Human Geography
Martha Sharma
Retired teacher
Hilton Head, South Carolina

Unit I. Geography: Its Nature and Perspectives—Basic Vocabulary and Concepts
Note: The following concepts transcend all units in AP Human Geography; they are central to all geographic thinking and analysis and could even be considered central to any definition of geography.

Basic Concepts
Changing attributes of place (built landscape, sequent occupance)
Cultural attributes (cultural landscape)
Density (arithmetic, physiological)
Diffusion (hearth, relocation, expansion, hierarchical, contagious, stimulus)
Direction (absolute, relative)
Dispersion/concentration (dispersed/scattered, clustered/agglomerated)
Distance (absolute, relative)
Distribution
Environmental determinism
Location (absolute, relative, site, situation, place name)
Pattern (linear, centralized, random)
Physical attributes (natural landscape)
Possibilism
Region (formal/uniform, functional/nodal, perceptual/vernacular)
Scale (implied degree of generalization)
Size
Spatial (of or pertaining to space on or near Earth's surface)
Spatial interaction (accessibility, connectivity, network, distance decay, friction of
    distance, time-space compression)

Geographic Tools
Distortion
Geographic Information System (GIS)
Global Positioning System (GPS)
Grid (North and South Poles, latitude, parallel, equator, longitude, meridian, prime
    meridian, international date line)
Map (Maps are the tool most uniquely identified with geography; the ability to use and
    interpret maps is an essential geographic skill.)

Map scale (distance on a map relative to distance on Earth)

Map types (thematic, statistical, cartogram, dot, choropleth, isoline)

Mental map

Model (a simplified abstraction of reality, structured to clarify causal relationships): Geographers use models (e.g., Demographic Transition, Epidemiological Transition, Gravity, Von Thünen, Weber, Stages of Growth [Rostow], Concentric Circle [Burgess], Sector [Hoyt], Multiple Nuclei, Central Place [Christaller], and so on) to explain patterns, make informed decisions, and predict future behaviors.

Projection

Remote sensing

Time zones