



Terms and Definitions referenced in the “Skills Matrix”

Definitions of the module topics as well as the skills identified in the matrix are provided in the table below. These definitions are taken verbatim or derived from either:

- (LI) - the Texas Education Agency’s *Lighthouse Initiative for Social Studies Classrooms*
<http://www.tealighthouse.org/socialstudies/index.php>
- (TEKS) - the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 19, Part II Chapter 113. Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies
<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter113/index.html>
- (TTI) - TAGE Training Institute, Summer 2013, *Teaching Geography Concepts* handbook
- (GFL) – National Geography Standards, 2nd edition, *Geography for Life*

Module Topics	Definition
Spatial Skills	Specifically, geospatial skills related to thinking geographically and solving geographic problems. Emphasis on making and interpreting political, thematic, aerial, topographical maps; using maps to explore patterns, processes, and interrelationships (TEK, GFL).
Places and Regions	Places are locations characterized by both physical and human properties, but defined and invested with meaning or significance by humans. Places are an intersection of an array of processes that cohere and dissolve over time (GFL, p. 35). Regions, similarly, are areas united by similar traits and identified by an imaginary boundary (TTI). They are the means by which humans grapple with the complexity of the Earth’s features and processes (GFL, p. 39).
Physical Systems	The physical environment is the foundation for all human activities. Recognizing how physical systems function will influence how people live and adapt to their environments (GFL, p.43).
Human Systems	Socio-spatial processes that explain the distribution of goods, ideas, and people in relation to the physical processes (wind, weather, water, tectonics) that affect humankind (TTI).
Environment & Society	Positive and negative aspects of the ways in which human activity impacts the physical environment and vice versa (TTI). Exploring technologies of human adaptation is one useful entry point into this topic.

Matrix Verbs	Definition
Analyze	Break something into its parts, describe the parts, and show how the parts relate to one another (LI, p. 32; GFL p. 11).
Apply/Use geographic tools	Demonstrate an ability to interpret and construct maps and map components and other geographic data to solve problems, demonstrate concepts, simulate processes, and illustrate cases (TEKS).
Compare	Describe similarities and differences between two or more things (LI, p. 32; GFL, p. 11).

Create thematics maps/ Translate geographic data/draw sketch maps	All fall under GFL definition of “Construct” – to display information in a diagrammatic or logical form (p. 11). Demonstrate an ability to synthesize different types of information and construct or assemble a generalized depiction of that information (TEKS). Sketch maps help students see global patterns, make comparisons within and between societies, and develop a spatial perspective that will give them a mental map of the world (LI, p. 25).
Describe	Verbally illustrate something in detail (LI, p. 32; GFL, p. 11).
Explain	Interpret or describe the meaning or significance of something (LI, p.26). To give a detailed account in terms of causes or reasons (GFL, p. 11).
Identify	To recognize something by name or to classify or catalog something with other items of similar appearance or function (GFL, p.11) Relates to comprehension, more than to location, and a student's ability to categorize attributes and recognize unifying themes that define something (TEKS).
Interpret	Explain or describe the meaning or significance of something (LI, p. 32).
Locate	Pinpoint a region, city, or any absolute or relative location using maps, even mental maps (TEKS).
Pose & Answer geographic questions	Where is it located? Why is it there? What is significant about its location? How is its location related to the location of other people, places, and environments? (TSI)
Understand	Demonstrate comprehension by an ability to summarize the main components of an idea, argument, process, or problem (LI, p.26).

Matrix Verbs	Related terms
Analyze	interpret, differentiate, compare, contrast, scrutinize, categorize, probe, investigate, discover, inquire, detect (LI, p.26)
Apply/use geographic tools	exhibit, solve, interview, simulate, employ, use, demonstrate, dramatize, practice, illustrate, operate, calculate, show, experiment (LI, p.26)
Compare	classify, arrange, group, organize, examine, survey, dissect, inventory, question, test, distinguish, diagram, inspect (LI, p.26)
Create thematic maps/ Translate geographic data/ Draw Sketch Maps	Synthesize, construct, assemble (TEKS). Compare, pattern, spatial perspective, mental map (LI, p. 25)
Describe	express, report, retell, locate (LI, p.26)
Explain	restate, summarize, discuss, describe, recognize, identify, locate, review, translate (LI, p.26)
Identify	classify, differentiate, examine, inspect (LI, p.26)
Interpret	Explain, describe (LI, p. 32)
Locate	Pinpoint, identify, situate (TEKS)
Pose & Answer geographic questions	Where is it located? Why is it there? What is the significance of the location? (GFL, p.96)
Understand	restate, summarize, discuss, describe, recognize, explain, identify, locate, review, translate (LI, p.26)

Helpful Resources:

Instructional Strategies

- Texas Alliance for Geographic Education. *World Geography Teaching Strategies*. San Marcos, Texas: Texas State University, 2010. <http://gato-docs.its.txstate.edu/texas-alliance-for-geographic-education/Resources/Resources/World-Geography-Teaching-Strategies/World%20Geography%20Teaching%20Strategies.pdf>
- (TTI) - TAGE Training Institute, Summer 2013, *Teaching Geography Concepts* handbook <http://www.geo.txstate.edu/tage/teaching-resources/handbooks.html>
- Texas Education Agency's *Lighthouse Initiative for Social Studies Classrooms* <http://www.tealighthouse.org/socialstudies/index.php>

Learning Goals

- A Road Map for 21st Century Geography Education http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/program/road-map-project/?ar_a=1

Standards

- Geography for Life: National Geography Standards, Second Edition http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/national-geography-standards/?ar_a=1
- Texas College and Career Readiness Standards <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/collegereadiness/crs.pdf>
- Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Social Studies <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter113/index.html>