Why?

Possible Essential Questions

1. How do the characteristics of a region influence a population and its culture?
2. What characteristics of a location influence economic prosperity and /or industrial growth?
3. How do people change their environment, and what are the consequences?
4. How can we use geographic tools to acquire and analyze information about geographic systems?

Enduring Understanding

Human and physical geographic characteristics have influenced the development of cultures.

Native Americans before Columbus, Western Europeans, and West Africans developed unique cultures based on the geographic characteristics of their respective regions.

Today, geographic characteristics continue to influence the development of cultures in Maryland and the United States. However, due to advances in technology, human characteristics tend to have a greater influence on culture.

What?

Maryland State Department of Education Outcomes and Standards

The student will be able to: [italics = not directly assessed on MSPAP, bold = MSDE glossary word, [brackets] = MCPS notes]

Geography
- *explain the purposes of and the differences among maps, globes, aerial photographs, and satellite images*
- construct and interpret maps using **map elements** including a title, cardinal and intermediate directions, compass rose, border, longitude and latitude, **legend/key**, author, date, and **scale** (MLO 3.1)
- identify and locate **physical** and **human characteristics** of **places** and explain how those characteristics have affected people living there (MLO 3.2)
- describe the relationship between **physical characteristics** of a **place** and the location of human activities (MLO 3.3)
- describe similarities and differences of **regions** in Maryland and the United States and describe how the **regions** have changed over time (MLO 3.4)
- *explain how geographic characteristics influence **settlement patterns** and affect people living in a given area*
- explain the impact of **geographic characteristics** on the settlement, growth, and prosperity of **places** in Maryland and the United States (MLO 3.5)
- *describe major kinds of economic activity in Maryland and the United States and explain the factors influencing their location and growth*
- identify ways and reasons why people adapt to and modify the natural **environment** with technology, and analyze consequences of the modifications (MLO 3.8)

History
- analyze the social, economic, and political characteristics of societies native to North America (MLO 2.1)
- *describe the social, economic, and political characteristics of Western European society that led to the exploration of the Americas*
- *examine the social, economic, and political characteristics of Western African societies*

Economics
- explain how changes in technology (factories, machinery, transportation, communication, new technology) impact Maryland's economy (MLO 4.5)

Peoples of the Nation and World
- *describe how **cultures** have developed and changed*
- analyze ways in which diverse groups of people adapt to the **environment** and modify **culture** over time (MLO 6.3)

Skills
- Apply and organize information specific to social studies disciplines by reading, asking questions, and observing. (MLO 1.2)
- Interpret and organize primary and secondary sources of information including pictures, graphics, maps, atlases, artifacts, timelines, political cartoons, videotapes, journals, and government documents. (MLO 1.3)

Overview

Fourth and fifth grade social studies combine a traditional chronological study of early U.S. history with an examination of the students' world today. Each unit begins with a study of Maryland today through the social studies disciplines of geography, economics, anthropology (culture), or political systems, and focuses on concepts relevant to students' lives. The concepts of the discipline and contemporary topics are then tied back to a historical/chronological study of a specific period in early United States or Maryland History.
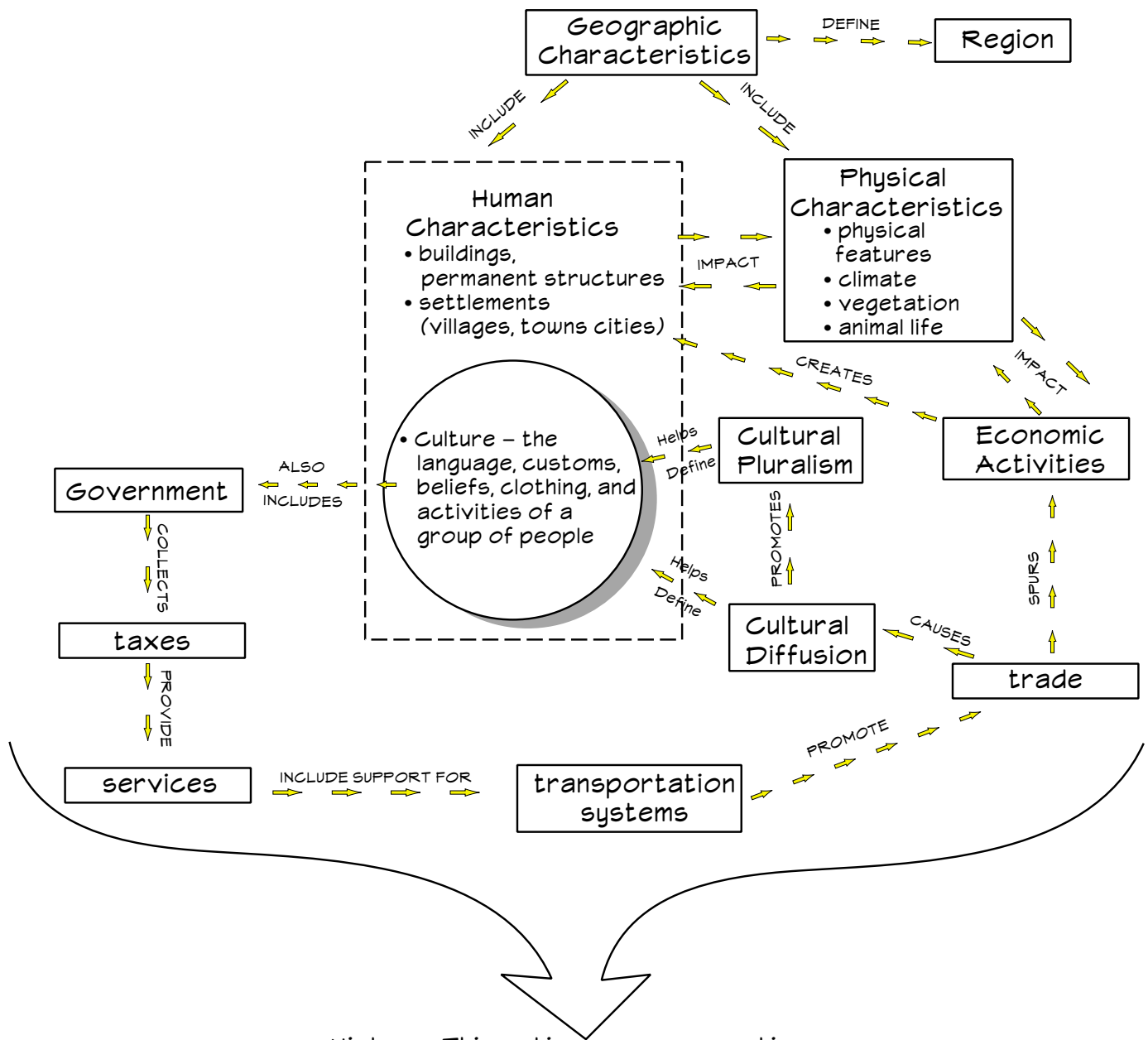
The first unit of fourth grade launches the contemporary/historical sequence through a study of the effects of geography on the people of Maryland today compared to Native Americans before Columbus. Students begin with a basic study of the regional geography of Maryland and North America. This study leads into at comparative examination of how regional geographic characteristics impact the development of Native American cultures in Pre-Columbian times.

The unit concludes by setting the historical stage for the next unit. Following a similar approach as was used in the study of Native Americans, students explore the cultural conditions of West Africa and the societies of Europe prior to colonization. The unit assessment requires students to draw conclusions about the impact of geography on these cultures.

Concept Map – The Impact of Geography: Defining Three Worlds

Geographic Characteristics — DEFINE → Region

Geographic Characteristics — INCLUDE → Human Characteristics

Geographic Characteristics — INCLUDE → Physical Characteristics

Human Characteristics
• buildings, permanent structures
• settlements (villages, towns cities)
• Culture – the language, customs, beliefs, clothing, and activities of a group of people

Physical Characteristics
• physical features
• climate
• vegetation
• animal life

Human Characteristics ← IMPACT → Physical Characteristics

Physical Characteristics — CREATES → Cultural Pluralism

Physical Characteristics — IMPACT → Economic Activities

Culture — ALSO INCLUDES → Government

Cultural Pluralism — Helps Define → Culture

Cultural Diffusion — Helps Define → Culture

Cultural Diffusion — PROMOTES → Cultural Pluralism

Economic Activities ← SPURS ← trade

trade — CAUSES → Cultural Diffusion

Government — COLLECTS → taxes

taxes — PROVIDE → services

services — INCLUDE SUPPORT FOR → transportation systems

transportation systems — PROMOTE → trade

History: This entire process continues through time, redefining culture.
• The historical record provides an opaque window on cultures of the past.
• We know more about those cultures that left traces of their culture either through artifacts or primary sources such as writing.

Cultural Diffusion is the spread and transmission of cultural traits from one region to another
Cultural Pluralism is the existence of many cultures in a common society

.