

Summary: Getting to Know Florida

What Is Geography?

Geography teaches us about places. It also teaches us about people and things that live in those places. Geographers are people who study geography. Geographers ask four questions when they study a place. Where is it? What is it like there? Why is it there? How do people live there?

Maps help geographers to know where a place is. For example, a map shows that Florida is a state in the southeastern United States. The map also shows that Florida is a peninsula. Geographers learn about the beaches, swamps, and hills that make up Florida's environment. They also learn about the plants and animals that live there.

This tells geographers what Florida is like. Then geographers learn why Florida looks the way it does. They want to know why plants and animals live in Florida. Finally, geographers study how people live in Florida. They find out what people eat and where they build their homes. They study how people change the land where they live.

Florida's Location

Geographers use many ways to tell where a place is. One way is to divide the earth into hemispheres. Geographers use imaginary lines to divide the earth in half. The equator is the imaginary line around the middle of the earth. It divides the earth into Northern and Southern Hemispheres. Another imaginary line goes from the North Pole to the South Pole. It divides the earth into Eastern and Western Hemispheres.

There are many different ways to tell someone where Florida is located. For example, you could say it is in the Northern Hemisphere. Florida is on the continent of North America. It is the farthest southeast state in the United States. Florida touches Georgia and Alabama. It is between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico.

Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

geography *noun*, the study of people, places, and the environment

environment *noun*, the water, land, and air that surround us

peninsula *noun*, a piece of land that is surrounded on three sides by water

hemisphere *noun*, any half of the earth's surface

After You Read

REVIEW What are the four questions geographers ask? Highlight the four questions.

REVIEW What are some different ways to tell where Florida is located? Draw a box around the paragraph that tells where Florida is located.