**Geography Basics**

**What is Geography? It is a way of writing, drawing or describing the earth.**

**One way to look at the world:**

**Continents**

**Countries**

**States (provinces and territories)**

**Counties**

**Cities**

**I. Continents**

**A. Definition**

**1. One of the main land masses of Earth**

**B. There are seven**

**1. North America**

**2. South America**

**3. Europe**

**4. Asia**

**5. Africa**

**6. Australia**

**7. Antarctica**

**II. Countries**

**A. Approximately 194**

**B. United Nations members, Taiwan and Vatican City**

**III. States (provinces or territories)**

**A. Not all countries have states, provinces or territories**

**B. The U.S. has 50 states and 5 inhabited territories**

**IV. Counties**

**A. How a state politically or financially divides its land in order to manage it**

**V. Cities**

**A. Definition**

**1. A large town with a sizable population**

**Reading a Map**

**I. Types of Maps**

**A. Physical Maps:** show the physical features of a place such as mountains, rivers or plains.

**B. Political Maps:** show the boundaries of political units such as counties, states or countries.

**C. Historical Maps:** illustrate events or activities that occurred in the past.

**II. Map Vocabulary (from textbook page 7)**

**A. Lines:** indicate boundaries, roads, waterways, etc.

**B. Symbols:** pictures thatrepresent such things as cities or events

**C. Labels:** words that explain items or activities on a map

**D. Compass Rose:** shows north, south, east and west

**E. Scale:** shows the ratio between a unit of length on the map versus a unit of distance on the earth

**F. Colors:** show a variety of information

**G. Legend or Key:** list that explains the symbols, lines or colors on a map

**H. Longitude:** imaginary north-south lines on a globe

**I. Latitude:** imaginary east-west lines on a globe

**J. Hemisphere:** half the globe (northern, southern, eastern or western)

**Five Themes of Geography**

**I. Location**

**A.** Tells where places are on the Earth:

**1. Relative Location:** where some place is compared to other things (for example, the school is next to the grocery store)

**2. Absolute Location:** where some place is exactly (for example, the school is at 123 Main St. or Boston is at 42 north latitude and 71 west longitude)

**II. Place**

**A.** Describes a location’s physical features

(for example, San Francisco is hilly)

**III. Human-Environment Interaction**

**A.** Explains how people interact with their surroundings(for example, people cut trails through the woods as they moved west)

**IV. Movement**

**A.** Explains how people, goods and ideas get from one place to another (for example, immigration is one way that food, music and religion are spread from one country to another)

**V. Region**

**A.** Defines a place by unifying characteristics (for example, the Salt Lake City and Denver are both in a mountainous region because of the Rocky Mountains)