



**ncge**  
National Council for  
Geographic Education

# Three for Three

Week 1, Unit 1 Thinking Geographically

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A SUPPLEMENT TO THE WEEKLY APHG BELL RINGERS SERIES

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Ken and I are excited about a new year of helping you help your students to think geographically! My goal in the Three for Threes is to provide your students with stimuli tied directly to CED topics while they practice using the FRQ verbs to master the five course skills. In training my students to think geographically, I focus on Charles Gritzner's definition as outlined in an article published by the *Journal of Geography*: **What is where? Why is it there? Why do we care?**

If you want to post the pdf in your LMS without the “ideas for slides” page, you can use something like the Chrome extension *Smallpdf* to remove the pages you don't want to post.

If you have any suggestions as to how I can make the Three for Threes more useful for you and your students, or if you have any questions, please feel free to email me at [laura.kmetz@gmail.com](mailto:laura.kmetz@gmail.com). Here's to another year of helping our students develop their ability to think critically and globally!

# 1.1 Introduction to Maps

## The Unusually Popular Summer Travel Spots for Each State



1. What patterns do you notice?
2. What do you think explains one of the patterns you noticed?
3. What questions do you have related to your observations?
4. Maps can generally be either reference, showing locations of places, or thematic, displaying information about a topic. Is this map a reference or thematic map? Explain how you know.

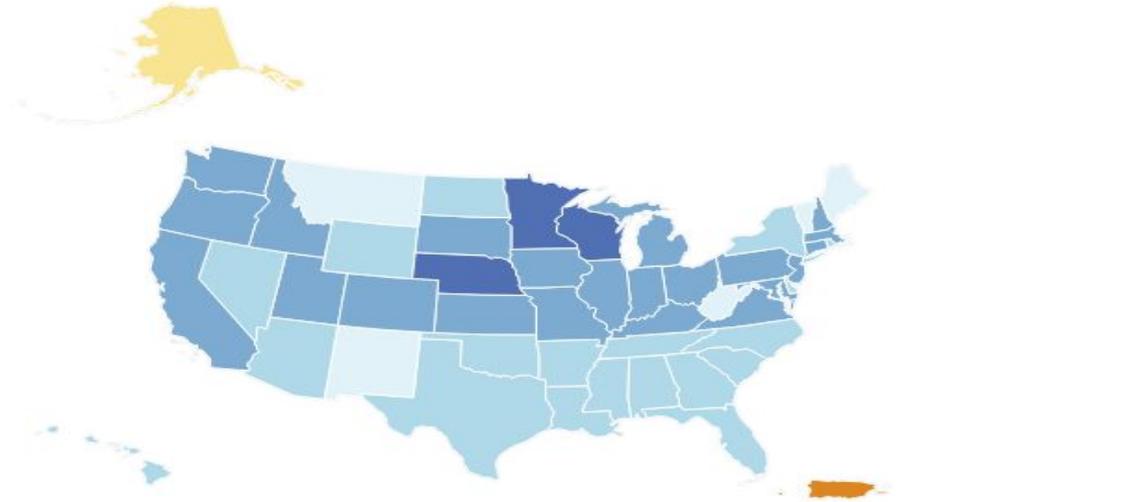
# 1.2 Geographic Data/1.3 The Power of Geographic Data

## 2020 Census Self-Response by State

This map features self-response rates from households that responded to the 2020 Census online, by mail, or by phone. Rates can be viewed in [rankings here](#).

National  
Self-Response  
**63.2%**

Alaska  
Self-Response  
**49.8%**

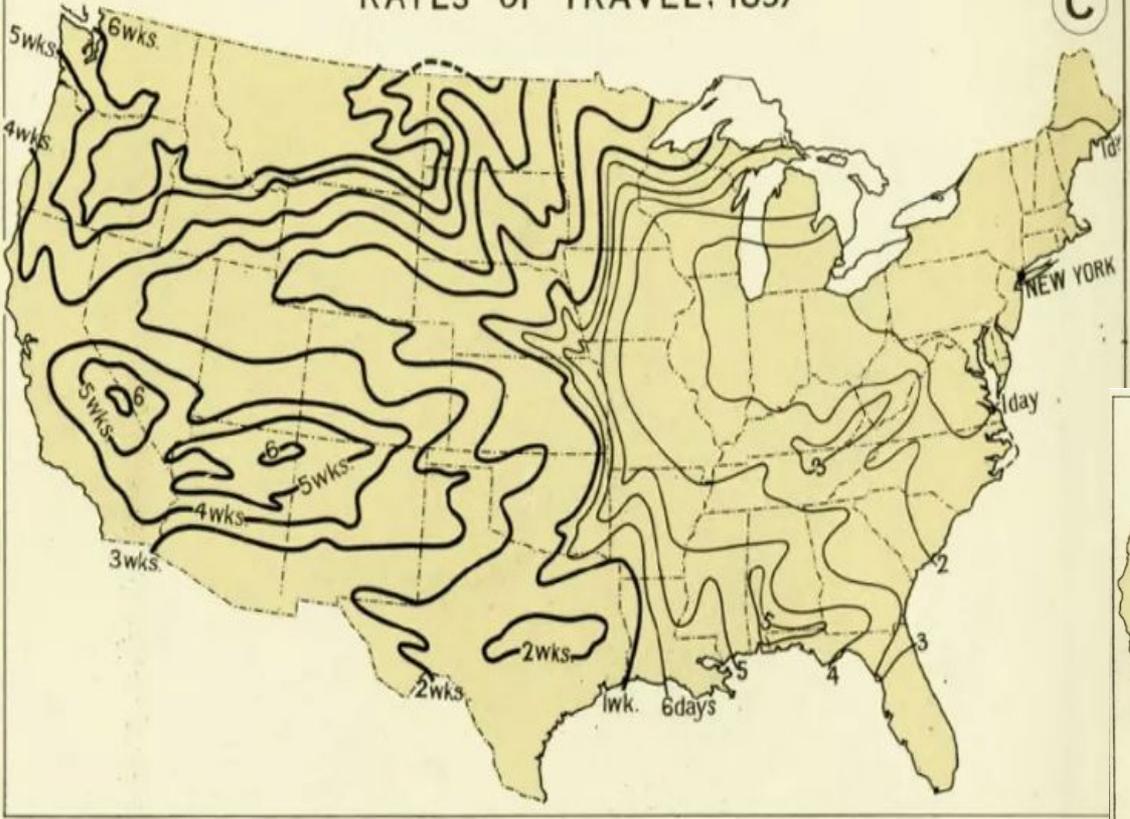


1. Identify one of the states with the highest self-response rates to the 2020 census.
2. *People can choose to respond to the census by phone or online. Certain populations, such as indigenous populations, have a lower self-response rates that others. Explain why Alaska has the lowest self-response rates of any state in the US.*

# 1.4 Spatial Concepts

RATES OF TRAVEL, 1857

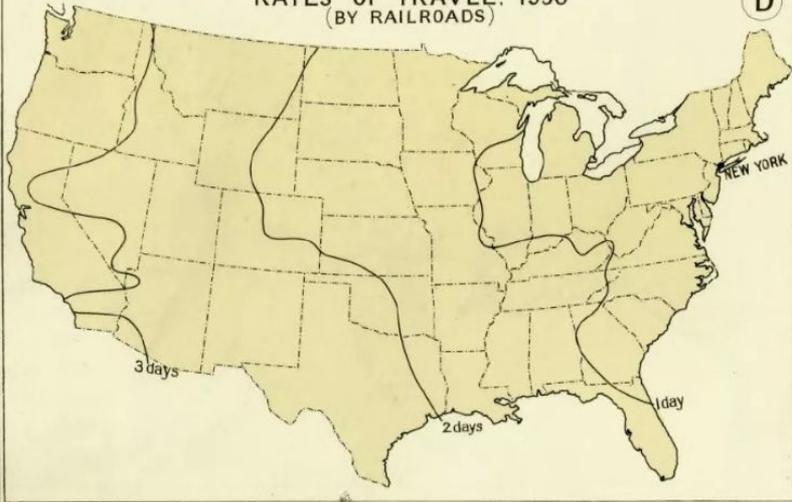
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1. Describe how the spatial pattern in rates of travel changed between 1857 and 1930.
2. Explain to what degree you think this pattern was reflected in other regions of the world around the same time.

RATES OF TRAVEL, 1930  
(BY RAILROADS)

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## TEACHING NOTES

**SLIDE 1:** This map is from 2017 but is a fun one to use at this time of year and to help students to begin thinking geographically. I strongly suggest you read the article from which the map was taken (link below) so that you can help guide the discussion and answer students' questions. In general, the patterns in the map are explained by migration, so this is a great way to preview unit 2 content. The article contains additional data by state, so you may want to find info for your state if you choose not to send your students to the site. Begin by asking students what they notice, what they think, and what they wonder. Answers will vary for #1-3. Suggested possible answer to #4: thematic; actual locations aren't labeled; the map displays info related to a particular topic. Other things you can discuss is the source (New York Times) and its credibility as well as the methodology--what, exactly, qualifies as "unusually" popular? (explained in article)

**SLIDE 2:** Students must understand the census due to its significance as the source for lots of data related to the population. NPR has several good podcast episodes devoted to it; a good one is Throughline's "A Race to Know" at <https://www.npr.org/2020/04/01/825227253/a-race-to-know>. This slide, with data as of 8/6/20, introduces students to two FRQ verbs, and you can use it to teach (or review) choropleth maps and thematic (vs reference) maps and to introduce the concept of scale (subnational scale of analysis because the data is aggregated by state; how would the data change if it were aggregated at even smaller scales?). Suggested answers: 1) Nebraska, Minnesota, Wisconsin; 2) Alaska has a relatively low population living in a large state with relatively large, as compared to other states, indigenous populations, who are less likely historically to participate in the census. (You can even go to the census website and find data for tribal lands.) Outreach efforts to motivate people to participate in the census are typically less successful in areas with more dispersed populations. ("A Race to Know" goes into detail as to why indigenous peoples and other marginalized populations are less likely to participate, and there's great imatery about their "doing the right thing" while giving side eye to the government. It's worth a listen!)

**SLIDE 3:** This slide is focused mostly on time-space compression (the idea that advances in transportation & communication have expedited the movement of people, goods, & ideas); challenge students to apply other vocab. from 1.A.1. And keep teaching those map types! This map is isoline and thematic. Help students understand the pov of the map, which is the length of time it took in the given year to travel to a particular destination from NYC. Ask students why NYC is the reference (most populated city in the US for most of its history). suggested answers: 1) The time it took to travel from NYC to the west decreased from 4-6 weeks in 1857 to 3-4 days by 1930. It decreased so significantly because of the completion of the transcontinental railroad. (Students will be tempted to say things like *decreased*. They will not be successful on the exam and will not earn college credit with this type of thinking. Challenge them to be as thoughtful and detailed as possible.) 2) *This question is meant to challenge students to begin to think about what caused time-space compression in the US and how those same conditions might have existed in the rest of the world. It also introduces them to a question that asks them to evaluate to what degree a particular concept is relevant or applicable in a given context.* Completion of the transcontinental railroad decreased how long it would take to travel from the east coast to the west coast in the US. Other industrialized countries, such as Great Britain, France, and Germany, experienced this time-space compression due to similar advances in transportation, which increased the speed of travel, but none of them are as large in size as the US, so the time it takes to travel from one end of the country to the other end wouldn't be as long.

### SOURCES:

slide 1: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/08/03/sunday-review/summer-vacation-travel-destinations.html>

slide 2:

[https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html?cid=20423:%2Bcensus%20%2Bmap;sem.ga:p;dm:en:&utm\\_source=sem.ga&utm\\_medium=p&utm\\_campaign=dm:en&utm\\_content=20423&utm\\_term=%2Bcensus%20%2Bmap](https://2020census.gov/en/response-rates.html?cid=20423:%2Bcensus%20%2Bmap;sem.ga:p;dm:en:&utm_source=sem.ga&utm_medium=p&utm_campaign=dm:en&utm_content=20423&utm_term=%2Bcensus%20%2Bmap)

slide 3: <https://www.vox.com/2015/3/11/8187033/maps-travel-times>

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