

Lesson

1

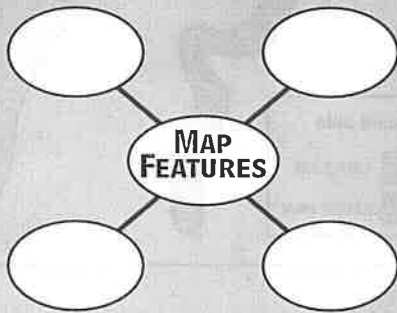
Reading Population Density Maps

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

To read and analyze information on population density from maps

READING STRATEGY

Create a diagram like the one below. In each of the outer ovals, write an example of a feature you would find on a typical population density map.



TERMS TO KNOW

population density, population density map

Think about where you live. Do many other people live nearby? If you were to count all the people who live within half a mile of you in all directions, how many would there be? Ten? Four hundred? Two thousand? Ten thousand?

Human population is not spread evenly over the surface of the earth. Some parts of the earth are home to only a few people, living very far apart. In other places, such as New York City, a great many people live very close together.


Population Density Maps

Population density is the number of people living in a unit area of land. Maps can show where on the earth's surface clusters of people live. This kind of map is called a **population density map**. A population density map uses shading or colors to show how many people live in each square mile or square kilometer of a given area. Population density maps use lighter shading or colors for areas of low density, or areas where few people live. Darker shading or colors are used for areas of high density, or areas where many people live. The legend tells you what each shading or color on the map represents.

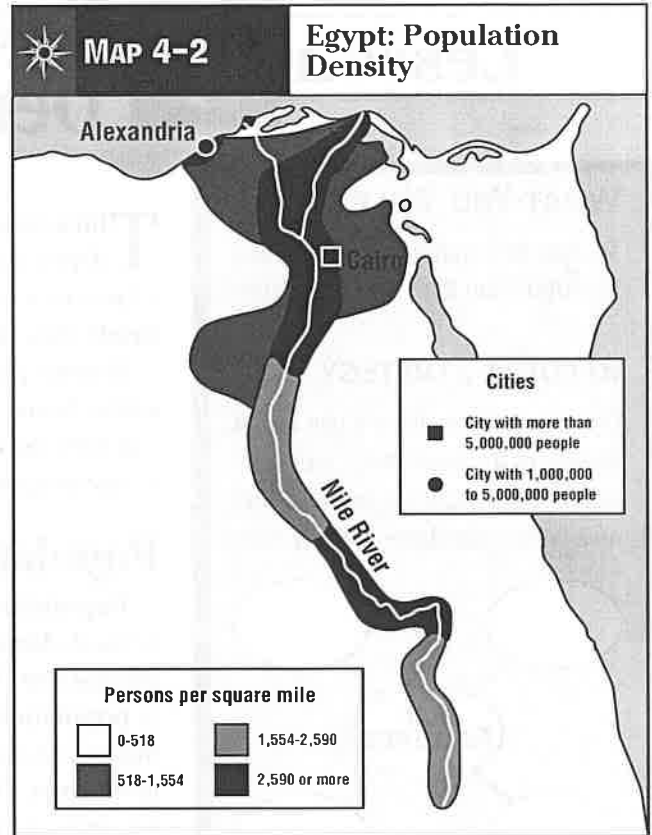
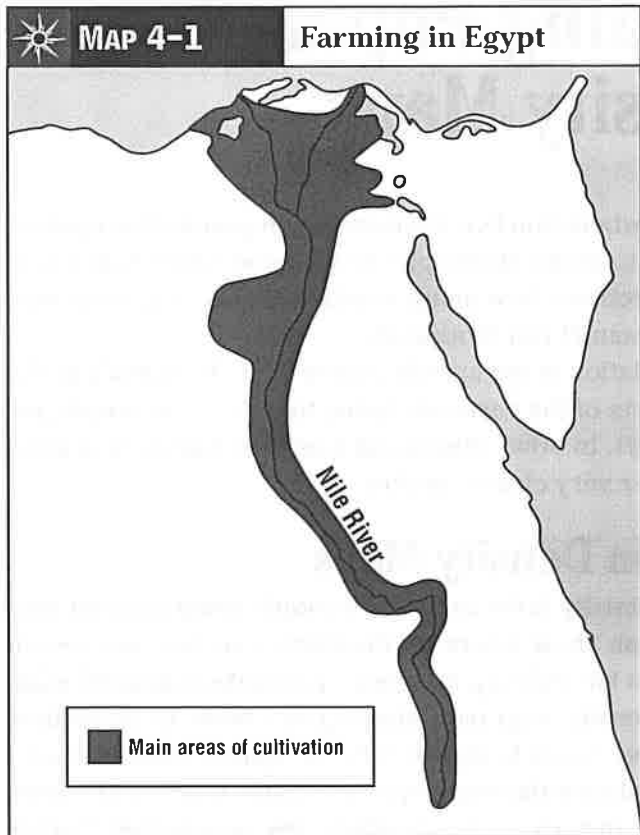
Cities that are shown by dots or squares also represent different population sizes. For example, an open circle indicates that a city's population is between 500,000 and 1,000,000 people. A dot may represent a city with a population of 1,000,000 to 5,000,000 people. A square can show that a city has a population of over 5,000,000 people. Population density maps usually have a second map legend to show city information.

Comparing Population Density Maps

People tend to live closer together in places where there are more resources to support life. For example, look at Maps 4-1 and 4-2 of Egypt. Map 4-1 shows major farming areas in Egypt. As you can see, farming takes place along the Nile River.

Now look at Map 4-2. What is the title of the map? The legend shows you the persons per square mile represented by each category of shading. How many people per square mile live in areas with this shading?  Where are the large cities located?

Compare the two maps of Egypt. What conclusion can you draw about the importance of agriculture to the people of Egypt? What conclusion can you draw about the importance of the Nile River to the lives of the Egyptian people?



Using Your Skills

A PRACTICING MAP SKILLS

Use Map 4-3: East Asia: Population Density on page 122 to answer the questions.

1. What part of East Asia has the highest population density (the greatest number of people per square mile)? _____
2. What happens to population density in China as one travels from east to west? _____
3. China has more people than any other country. Are there parts of China where no people live? How do you know?

4. How many people per square mile live in the area around the city of
 - a. Wuhan? _____
 - b. Ulaanbaatar? _____
 - c. Guangzho? _____

5. Look back at Map 2-2: East Asia: Elevation on page 65. Compare it to the population density map of East Asia. What conclusion can you draw about the relationship between elevation and population density in East Asia?

6. Which Chinese cities have populations of more than 5 million people?

7. What do the locations of the cities listed in question 6 have in common?

8. Which cities in the region have populations of 500,000 to 1,000,000 people? _____

