



International Geography Championships

2026 Battery Examination - Part 1 High School and Middle School Division

Instructions – Mark your answers on the scantron provided. Correct answers are worth 2 points. Incorrect answers are worth –1 point. Questions left blank are worth 0 points.

Questions 1-10 are about maps and cartography.

1. What does the term 'legend' mean when it appears on a map?
 - A. a guide explaining what symbols and colors on the map represent
 - B. a list of the distances between major cities
 - C. the title given to an important historical map
 - D. a set of rules for reading compass directions
2. The symbol printed on many maps to show directions like north and south is known by what term?
 - A. isocline
 - B. scale bar
 - C. graticule
 - D. compass rose
3. A geographer wanting to show the location of mountain ranges and rivers in a country would most likely use which of these?
 - A. choropleth map
 - B. physical map
 - C. transit map
 - D. road map
4. A political map is designed primarily to show which of these things?
 - A. how to get from place to place on a subway or tram
 - B. a route an airplane might take to fly between countries
 - C. boundaries of units like countries, states, or counties
 - D. comparisons of the size of populations of many nations
5. The term 'thematic map' describes which of these?
 - A. a map focused on a single topic such as climate or population
 - B. a map showing ocean currents, tides, and water depth
 - C. a map of a city showing all the parks, bus stops, schools, and businesses
 - D. a map used for navigating roads and highways

6. What are the small pictures and shapes on a map that stand for real-world features called?
 - A. glossary and index
 - B. map symbols
 - C. contour values
 - D. coordinates
7. Which of these is best shown on an isoline map, which connects points of equal value with lines?
 - A. political boundaries
 - B. the shortest route between two cities
 - C. population growth over time
 - D. values like temperature or elevation across an area
8. Which type of map projection is designed to show all landmasses at their correct size relative to each other?
 - A. conformal projection
 - B. azimuthal projection
 - C. equal-area projection
 - D. oblique projection
9. Which of these is true of the Robinson projection?
 - A. it makes countries near the poles look much larger than they are
 - B. it shows all ocean distances with complete accuracy
 - C. it is widely used because it balances size, shape, distance, and direction
 - D. it is used mainly for navigating ships across oceans
10. A person trying to plan a hike on the Appalachian Trail would find which of these maps most useful?
 - A. elevation map
 - B. a globe
 - C. highway map
 - D. dot map

Questions 11-20 are about glaciers and glacial landforms.

11. When a glacier retreats, it means the glacier is doing which of the following?
 - A. physically moving in reverse up the mountain
 - B. becoming thicker as it gains more ice
 - C. splitting into two separate glaciers
 - D. melting faster than new snow accumulates, causing its front edge to move backward
12. Which of these countries is NOT known for having notable fjords along its coastline?
 - A. Egypt
 - B. Norway
 - C. New Zealand
 - D. Chile
13. The world's largest ice sheet, covering about 98 percent of the continent beneath it, is found in which of these places?
 - A. Greenland
 - B. Canada
 - C. Antarctica
 - D. Siberia

14. Which of these is NOT a process by which glaciers erode the landscape?

- A. abrasion of bedrock by embedded rocks
- B. plucking of rock fragments from the ground
- C. evaporation of bedrock minerals
- D. gouging of river valleys

15. The ridge of rock and sediment deposited at the farthest point a glacier has advanced is called which of these?

- A. lateral moraine
- B. terminal moraine
- C. recessional ridge
- D. push moraine

16. A long, winding ridge of sand and gravel deposited by a stream flowing beneath a glacier is known as which of these?

- A. esker
- B. kame terrace
- C. cirque
- D. fluvioglacial delta

17. A shallow lake or pond that forms when a buried block of glacial ice melts is called which of these?

- A. kettle lake
- B. dammed lake
- C. proglacial lake
- D. lagoon

18. A valley with a flat floor and steep, nearly vertical sides carved by a glacier is described as which type of valley?

- A. B-shaped valley
- B. U-shaped valley
- C. delta
- D. rift valley

19. A large boulder that has been transported far from its place of origin by a glacier is known by what name?

- A. bedrock outcrop
- B. a nunatak
- C. ice sheet
- D. glacial erratic

20. The flat plain of sorted sand and gravel deposited by meltwater streams beyond a glacier's terminus is called what?

- A. a floodplain
- B. a moraine field
- C. an outwash plain
- D. a glacial lake plain

Questions 21-30 are about political geography.

21. Redistricting is the process of redrawing electoral boundaries to reflect which of these?

- A. changes in population as measured by a census
- B. the wishes of the current political party in power
- C. the geographic size of a state
- D. the number of registered voters in each party

22. In political geography, a nation is best described as which of the following?

- A. a country with an elected government
- B. any territory with clearly marked borders
- C. a state that controls its own military
- D. a group of people sharing a common identity, culture, or history

23. A failed state is one that has lost the ability to do which of these?

- A. win international sporting competitions
- B. provide basic government services and maintain order
- C. attract foreign investment
- D. build large military bases

24. Which of these is NOT required to be a recognized state?

- A. having a defined territory
- B. being a member of the United Nations
- C. having a permanent population
- D. having a functioning government

25. A government system in which elected representatives make decisions on behalf of citizens is called what?

- A. a republic
- B. a dictatorship
- C. an oligarchy
- D. a confederation

26. A theocracy is a government in which political power is held by which of these?

- A. a small group of military officers
- B. elected representatives of the people
- C. religious leaders or institutions
- D. a single royal family

27. A buffer zone between two countries or factions generally serves what purpose?

- A. a meeting point for trade negotiations
- B. to provide military bases for the larger of the two powers
- C. to reduce direct contact and potential conflict between them
- D. a neutral financial and banking center

28. Which of these is NOT a characteristic of a democracy?

- A. citizens vote to choose their leaders
- B. there are protections for individual rights and freedoms
- C. multiple political parties are allowed to compete
- D. a single leader holds power indefinitely with no elections

29. A satellite state is one that is formally independent but in practice does which of these?

- A. follows the political and military direction of a more powerful patron state
- B. provides military bases to multiple foreign powers simultaneously
- C. operates under direct occupation by a foreign military force
- D. has surrendered its seat in international organizations to another country

30. In American electoral geography, the concept of a 'swing state' refers to which of these?

- A. a state that always votes for the same party and is therefore ignored by campaigns
- B. a state whose outcome in an election is uncertain because voters are roughly equally divided between parties
- C. a state whose large population gives it a disproportionate share of electoral votes
- D. a state that has recently changed its electoral boundaries through gerrymandering

Questions 31-40 are about coastal landforms.

31. Which of these best describes a coral reef?

- A. a ridge of sand and pebbles deposited parallel to a coastline
- B. an underwater structure built up by tiny animals that produce limestone
- C. a flat rocky shelf left behind when cliffs are eroded
- D. a long thin island formed from sediment

32. The Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest coral reef system, is located off the coast of which country?

- A. Brazil
- B. Indonesia
- C. Australia
- D. the Philippines

33. The term delta refers to which type of coastal feature?

- A. a fan-shaped deposit of sediment at a river mouth where the river flows into the sea
- B. a broad shallow bay partially blocked by a sand ridge
- C. a tidal flat exposed between the high and low tide lines
- D. a triangular headland jutting into the sea between two bays

34. The term sea stack describes which of these coastal landforms?

- A. an isolated pillar of rock left standing after a sea arch collapses
- B. a low platform of rock uncovered at low tide
- C. a narrow arm of sand extending from the coast into the sea
- D. a rocky ridge built up by coral organisms underwater

35. Which of the following best describes a sea cliff?

- A. a flat platform of rock exposed at low tide
- B. a raised mound of sand blown by wind above the high tide line
- C. a long narrow ridge of sand deposited across a bay mouth
- D. a steep rock face formed where waves erode the base of coastal land

36. The White Cliffs of Dover in England are famous coastal cliffs made of which type of rock?

- A. pumice
- B. chalk
- C. limestone
- D. obsidian

37. Coastal deposition happens when waves lose energy and do which of these?

- A. drop the sediment they are carrying onto the shore
- B. erode the base of cliffs more rapidly
- C. increase in height and break with greater force
- D. change direction and bend around a headland

38. What is the term for the process by which waves move sediment along a coastline in a zigzag path?

- A. wave refraction
- B. coastal erosion
- C. longshore drift
- D. sediment transfer

39. Which of these is a long narrow island running parallel to the mainland coast, usually separated by a shallow lagoon?

- A. cay
- B. barrier island
- C. tombolo
- D. oxbow

40. A spit forms when a ridge of sand or shingle extends beyond which type of feature?

- A. a river mouth in a delta
- B. the edge of a coral reef
- C. an offshore barrier island
- D. a bend or curve in the coastline

Questions 41-50 are about languages.

41. English belongs to which branch of the Indo-European language family?

- A. Slavic
- B. Celtic
- C. Germanic
- D. Baltic

42. Tamil and Telugu are languages belonging to which family, found mainly in southern India?

- A. Dravidian
- B. Indo-European
- C. Sino-Tibetan
- D. Austronesian

43. Guaraní is a co-official language alongside Spanish in which South American country?

- A. Uruguay
- B. Bolivia
- C. Argentina
- D. Paraguay

44. Proto-Indo-European is the name for which of these?

- A. the first written language of ancient Rome
- B. the ancient ancestor language from which most European and South Asian languages descended
- C. a modern constructed language used by scholars
- D. the oldest surviving written text in the world

45. The main difference between a dialect and a language is that a dialect is which of these?

- A. a regional variety of a language with its own accent or vocabulary
- B. a completely separate language from a different family
- C. a language used only for religious purposes
- D. a form of writing rather than speaking

46. A language is considered endangered when which of these things is happening?

- A. it is being spoken in more countries than before
- B. it is gaining many new loanwords from other languages
- C. it is being written down for the first time
- D. fewer and fewer people speak it and it risks dying out

47. A creole language is best described as which of these?

- A. a fully developed language that grew from a pidgin and became a native tongue
- B. a simplified trade language with no native speakers
- C. a language used only for writing and formal occasions
- D. a language that has borrowed words from many other languages

48. Tok Pisin, an English-based creole, is an official language of which Pacific nation?

- A. Fiji
- B. Vanuatu
- C. Papua New Guinea
- D. Solomon Islands

49. Which of these is NOT a result of contact between different language groups?

- A. pidgin
- B. language isolate
- C. creole
- D. loanword

50. A logographic writing system, like Chinese characters, represents which of these?

- A. individual sounds or letters
- B. words or morphemes rather than individual sounds
- C. syllables only
- D. numbers and mathematical concepts

Questions 51-60 are about oceans.

51. Which of these is the largest ocean on Earth?

- A. Pacific Ocean
- B. Atlantic Ocean
- C. Indian Ocean
- D. Southern Ocean

52. El Niño is a climate event caused by the warming of ocean waters in which area?

- A. the northern Atlantic Ocean
- B. the Indian Ocean near Australia
- C. the Arctic Ocean near Greenland
- D. the central and eastern Pacific Ocean

53. The photic zone is the part of the ocean where which of these occurs?

- A. water is too deep and cold for any life to exist
- B. ocean currents are strongest and fastest
- C. the ocean floor is closest to the surface
- D. sunlight penetrates and allows photosynthesis

54. The thermohaline circulation, sometimes called the ocean conveyor belt, is driven by differences in which two factors?

- A. wind speed and wind direction
- B. temperature and salinity
- C. depth and tidal force
- D. sunlight and pressure

55. Upwelling is the process by which cold, nutrient-rich water does which of the following?

- A. sinks from the surface to the ocean floor
- B. flows horizontally along the ocean surface
- C. rises from the ocean depths to the surface
- D. evaporates from the ocean surface into the atmosphere

56. Which of these is NOT a common cause of a tsunami?

- A. strong surface winds
- B. underwater earthquake
- C. underwater volcanic eruption
- D. underwater landslide

57. An ocean trench forms where two tectonic plates do which of the following?

- A. move apart and allow magma to rise between them
- B. collide with one plate sinking beneath the other
- C. slide sideways past each other along a fault line
- D. rise above the ocean surface to form islands

58. A seamount is best described as which of these?

- A. a flat plain on the deepest part of the ocean floor
- B. an underwater volcanic mountain that does not reach the ocean surface
- C. a crack in the ocean floor releasing hot water and minerals
- D. a shallow ridge of sediment deposited by ocean currents

59. A hydrothermal vent is a crack in the ocean floor that releases which of these?

- A. superheated water rich in minerals
- B. cold freshwater from underground rivers
- C. volcanic ash and smoke into the water
- D. oxygen bubbles from chemical reactions

60. Bathymetry is the scientific measurement of which of these?

- A. ocean temperature
- B. water salinity
- C. ocean depth
- D. ocean current speed

Questions 61-70 are about population and demographics.

61. Which of the following best describes the total fertility rate?
- A. the number of births per 1,000 people in one year
 - B. the average number of children a woman is expected to have in her lifetime
 - C. the ratio of male to female births in a population
 - D. the percentage of women of childbearing age in a country

62. The replacement level total fertility rate for most developed nations is approximately which of these numbers?
- A. 1.0
 - B. 2.1
 - C. 3.5
 - D. 4.0

63. When a country's total fertility rate falls below replacement level, which of these is a likely long-term result?
- A. a shrinking and aging population over time
 - B. rapid population growth and overcrowding
 - C. a large young workforce driving economic growth
 - D. a sharp increase in immigration restrictions

64. Arithmetic population density is calculated by dividing the total population by what other number?
- A. the amount of farmable land
 - B. the number of cities
 - C. the total land area
 - D. the country's GDP

65. The crude death rate measures which of the following?
- A. the number of deaths from natural causes in a country
 - B. the percentage of the population that dies each decade
 - C. the average age at which people die in a country
 - D. the number of deaths per 1,000 people per year

66. The rate of natural increase for a population is calculated as which of these?
- A. the birth rate minus the death rate
 - B. the birth rate plus the immigration rate
 - C. the total population divided by the land area
 - D. the death rate plus the emigration rate

67. Dependency ratio measures the proportion of which groups relative to the working-age population?
- A. only retired people over age 65
 - B. only children under age 15
 - C. the young and the elderly combined
 - D. immigrants and recent arrivals

68. An expanding population pyramid with a wide base and narrowing tiers would most likely describe which type of country?
- A. a wealthy country with very low birth and death rates
 - B. a rapidly developing country with a high birth rate
 - C. a country whose population has been shrinking for decades
 - D. a post-industrial country with an aging workforce

69. Which of these is NOT typically associated with high total fertility rates in a country?

- A. limited access to contraception
- B. cultural or religious norms encouraging large families
- C. high rates of child mortality requiring more births
- D. high levels of female education and economic independence

70. Most of the world's largest population concentrations are found in which type of climate zone?

- A. tropical zones near the equator
- B. arid zones in the subtropics
- C. polar zones near the Arctic and Antarctic
- D. temperate zones with moderate climates

Questions 71-80 are about mountains.

71. Mountain valleys and passes have historically concentrated human settlement because they offer which of these advantages?

- A. flat terrain that allows large-scale industrial farming
- B. connection to lowland cities and closer relations with nearby countries
- C. shelter from wind, access to water, and viable routes for trade and movement
- D. access to coastal fishing resources found only in highland watersheds

72. The Inca Empire developed highly sophisticated terraced agriculture in the Andes primarily to achieve which of these goals?

- A. create flat, fertile growing surfaces on steep slopes while controlling irrigation and erosion
- B. build defensive walls that would slow the advance of enemy armies
- C. mark territorial boundaries between different Inca administrative regions
- D. honor mountain deities through ritual landscaping of the hillsides

73. A chinook wind on the eastern side of the Rockies or a foehn on the Alps causes which of these conditions?

- A. heavy snowfall on the sheltered side of the range
- B. rapid warming and dramatic drop in humidity on the leeward slopes
- C. dense fog in mountain valleys from rising cold air
- D. violent thunderstorms on the sheltered plains below the peaks

74. Which of these factors prevents trees from growing above the tree line?

- A. soil is too thin and rocky to anchor tree roots
- B. ultraviolet radiation at altitude is too intense for photosynthesis
- C. winds are too strong to allow vertical plant growth
- D. temperatures are too cold and growing seasons too short for tree survival

75. Which of these is NOT a well-established way in which a major mountain range affects regional climate?

- A. reducing oceanic salinity on the adjacent coastline
- B. blocking cold air masses from advancing across a plain
- C. forcing precipitation on windward slopes
- D. creating arid rain shadow zones on leeward sides

76. Which of these best describes the formation of the Appalachian Mountains in the US?

- A. ancient fold mountains heavily eroded over hundreds of millions of years
- B. fault-block mountains formed by recent tectonic rifting
- C. dome mountains formed by a large magma intrusion beneath the crust
- D. volcanic mountains formed by successive lava flows

77. The Himalayas, one of the best-known examples of fold mountains, formed when which of these geological events occurred?

- A. the Pacific Plate subducted beneath the Asian Plate
- B. the Indian Plate collided with the Eurasian Plate
- C. a large magma dome pushed up the crust from below
- D. glacial erosion carved deep valleys into an ancient plateau

78. The Mount Whitney in California is an example of which type of mountain formation, caused by the uplift of large areas of crust along fault lines?

- A. shield mountain
- B. dome mountain
- C. fault-block mountain
- D. erosional mountain

79. Orographic precipitation occurs when moist air is forced upward by a mountain and does which of these?

- A. warms and evaporates all moisture as it rises
- B. creates a warm dry wind on the side facing the storm
- C. disperses horizontally across the mountain summit
- D. cools, condenses, and releases precipitation on the windward side

80. The rain shadow effect describes which of these weather patterns on the leeward side of a mountain?

- A. wetter conditions because air is forced upward and cools
- B. colder temperatures because the peak blocks sunlight
- C. drier conditions because descending air warms and loses moisture
- D. stronger winds because air accelerates around the mountain

Questions 81 to 100 refer to Image 1 in the resource section at the end of the exam.

81. Number 8 on the map shows a body of water named for what US state?

- A. Maine
- B. California
- C. Idaho
- D. New York

82. The body of water at number 3 on the map is named for what English explorer who sighted it in 1610?

- A. Henry Hudson
- B. Afonso de Albuquerque
- C. Fabian von Bellingshausen
- D. Sebastian Cabot

83. What largest freshwater lake by surface area in the world is shown at number 16 on the map?

- A. Lake Erie
- B. Lake Huron
- C. Lake Champlain
- D. Lake Superior

84. Which Russian lake, containing just over 20% of the fresh surface water in the world, is larger by volume than the one shown at number 16?

- A. Lake Lucerne
- B. Lake Baikal
- C. Lake Como
- D. Lake Victoria

85. What highest mountain in North America is shown at number 11 on the map?

- A. Pike's Peak
- B. Mount Washington
- C. Mount Mitchell
- D. Denali (Mount McKinley)

86. Which of these is true of the area in which number 11 is located?

- A. it is a Canadian province
- B. it is a US state that is also an exclave
- C. it is a territory of the US but not a state
- D. it is a Russian territory

87. What river that forms much of the border between the US state of Texas and Mexico is shown at number 17 on the map?

- A. Arkansas
- B. MacKenzie
- C. Rio Grande
- D. Delaware

88. What major North American river has its mouth at number 7 on the map?

- A. Mississippi
- B. Potomac
- C. Hudson
- D. East

89. The river shown at number 7 empties into what body of water?

- A. Gulf of Panama
- B. Gulf of St. Lawrence
- C. Gulf of Mexico
- D. Davis Strait

90. The strait at number 6 on the map is named for what US state directly to its north?

- A. Washington
- B. Oregon
- C. Illinois
- D. Florida

91. Which of these nations is separated from the US by the strait at number 6?

- A. Anguilla
- B. Aruba
- C. Bermuda
- D. Cuba

92. The island at number 10 shares its name with what major western Canadian city?

- A. Vancouver
- B. Toronto
- C. Ottawa
- D. Montreal

93. What major North American fault line is shown at number 9 on the map?

- A. Húsavík-Flatey Fault
- B. Alpine Fault
- C. San Andreas Fault
- D. Sagaing Fault

94. What two tectonic plates meet at the fault shown at number 9?

- A. Cocos and Nazca
- B. African and South American
- C. North American and Pacific
- D. Australian and Antarctic

95. The Bering Sea is shown at what number on the map?

- A. 2
- B. 1
- C. 4
- D. 5

96. Which of these is true of the area shown at 14 on the map?

- A. it is part of the United States
- B. it is an independent nation
- C. it is a territory of Russia
- D. it is an autonomous territory of Denmark

97. The Mid-Atlantic Ridge passes closest to what number on the map?

- A. 13
- B. 15
- C. 16
- D. 17

98. Number 12 on the map shows what 'autonomous okrug' of Russia?

- A. Chechnya
- B. Chukotka
- C. Dagestan
- D. Ingushetia

99. What bay, often studied by geographers and oceanographers, is located at number 5 on the map?

- A. Galveston Bay
- B. Chesapeake Bay
- C. the Bay of Fundy
- D. Baffin Bay

100. The bay shown at number 5 is often studied because it has one of the most extreme examples of which of the following in the world due to its funnel-shaped basin?

- A. tides
- B. wind speeds
- C. salt content of its water
- D. rainfall

Image 1 (Questions 81-100)

