Crowded or Growing?

Read geographic patterns at world and regional scales.

WG.4.1 "Using maps, establish world patterns of population distribution, density, and growth. Relate population growth rates to health statistics, food supply, or measure of well-being..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline clues about where people live densely or sparsely, and circle statements about population growth. Write 1 beside the southeastern region of Brazil and 2 beside the northern region to track their contrast.

Two Ways to Read Population Patterns

1 On maps, people cluster in South and East Asia near coasts and rivers. Deserts, high mountains, and cold interiors generally hold fewer people. Density counts people per square kilometer, not how quickly a population changes. The table compares two countries and two Brazilian regions. A countrywide average can hide major regional contrasts.

APPROXIMATE POPULATION DENSITY, 2022

Place	People per square kilometer
Bangladesh	1,300
Mongolia	2
Southeastern Brazil	92
Northern Brazil	5

2 Bangladesh lies on a river delta beside the Bay of Bengal, where water and farmland support dense settlement. Landlocked Mongolia includes vast dry grasslands and the Gobi Desert, so its national density is far lower. Within Brazil, the southeastern region includes large cities such as São Paulo, while the northern region contains much of the Amazon rainforest.

3 Growth rate describes how quickly the number of people changes, not how closely they live together. Bangladesh has remained densely settled even as its growth rate has slowed in recent decades. Improved child survival may raise growth at first; over time, access to health care and smaller families can slow it. Food shortages may also affect deaths or migration.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Compare the densities of Bangladesh and Mongolia. What geographic features in the passage help explain the difference?

2. How do the two Brazilian regions show why a countrywide density can hide a pattern?

3. How does Bangladesh show that high density does not always mean fast growth?

4. According to the passage, how can changes in health affect growth at first and later on?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a country with a coastal plain, a mountain interior, and new clinics opening in both regions. Write four sentences predicting where density would be higher, explaining why, and describing two ways the clinics could affect growth over time. Make clear that density and growth are different measures.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline clues about where people live densely or sparsely, and circle statements about population growth. Write 1 beside the southeastern region of Brazil and 2 beside the northern region to track their contrast. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Compare the densities of Bangladesh and Mongolia. What geographic features in the passage help explain the difference?	**Bangladesh has about 1,300 people per square kilometer, compared with Mongolia's 2. Bangladesh has a river delta with water and farmland; Mongolia has vast dry grasslands and desert.**
2	How do the two Brazilian regions show why a countrywide density can hide a pattern?	**Southeastern Brazil has about 92 people per square kilometer, while northern Brazil has about 5. One figure for all of Brazil would conceal that regional contrast.**
3	How does Bangladesh show that high density does not always mean fast growth?	**Bangladesh remains densely settled, at about 1,300 people per square kilometer, although its growth rate has slowed in recent decades.**
4	According to the passage, how can changes in health affect growth at first and later on?	**Improved child survival may raise growth at first. Over time, access to health care and smaller families can slow growth.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The coastal plain would have higher population density because its farms and ports could draw residents. The mountain interior would be less dense because steep terrain could make farming and travel harder. At first, new clinics could reduce child deaths, increasing population growth. Later, clinics could improve access to family planning, slowing growth even if the coast remains crowded.

Accept other geographic reasons for the predicted density pattern if they are plausible. For the open task, look for an explanation that distinguishes how closely people live from how quickly their number changes.