Where People Settle

Use state population data and place clues to make a geographic claim.

4.C.2.1 "Use geographic tools to acquire and process information from a spatial perspective. Use and describe various elements of maps (e.g., key/legend, scale…"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the two largest density numbers in the table, then underline two clues in the passage about places where people live. Use your marks to help you compare the states.

Four States, Different Patterns

1 Imagine looking down at the United States from a plane. Homes may look packed together in one place and far apart in another. Population density tells how many people live in each square mile, on average. The table gives rounded 2020 population densities for four states in different parts of the country.

POPULATION DENSITY IN 2020, ROUNDED

State	People per square mile
New Jersey	1,263
Florida	401
Kansas	36
Nevada	28

2 New Jersey is in the Northeast, near the Atlantic Ocean and several large cities. Florida is in the Southeast, with a long coastline and many cities. Kansas lies in the central Great Plains, where wide areas are used for farming. Nevada is in the West, and much of its land is dry.

3 A state average does not mean people are spread evenly across the state. Las Vegas has many residents, even though Nevada has a low state average. Water, jobs, roads, and the shape of the land can all affect where people settle. Compare the table with the place clues before you make a claim.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which state in the table has the highest population density? In which part of the country is it?

2. How many more people per square mile does Florida have than Kansas?

3. A classmate says Nevada's low state average means no city there has many residents. What clue in the passage shows why that claim is not correct?

4. Which has a lower population density, Kansas or Nevada? Name one physical feature in the passage that might affect where people settle in that state.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write three sentences for a museum label comparing New Jersey and Florida. Include each state's density and part of the country, then explain why a state average might hide a crowded city.

ANSWER KEY

Where People Settle

GRADE 4 · 4.C.2.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the two largest density numbers in the table, then underline two clues in the passage about places where people live. Use your marks to help you compare the states. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which state in the table has the highest population density? In which part of the country is it?	**New Jersey has the highest density. It is in the Northeast.**
2	How many more people per square mile does Florida have than Kansas?	**Florida has 365 more people per square mile than Kansas.**
3	A classmate says Nevada's low state average means no city there has many residents. What clue in the passage shows why that claim is not correct?	**Las Vegas has many residents, even though Nevada's state average is low.**
4	Which has a lower population density, Kansas or Nevada? Name one physical feature in the passage that might affect where people settle in that state.	**Nevada has a lower density. Much of its land is dry, which might affect settlement.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

New Jersey is in the Northeast and has about 1,263 people per square mile. Florida is in the Southeast and has about 401 people per square mile, so New Jersey's density is higher. A city in either state could be more crowded than the state average suggests because people are not spread evenly across a state.

Accept rounded densities from the table. For the open task, accept any accurate explanation that a state average does not describe every place within the state.