

Lesson Title	The “W’s” of Geography
Author:	Adapted from lessons presented in workshops of the Georgia Geographic Alliance
Grade Level(s)	Middle/High School
Essential Question	What are the main ideas of a news article? What are the human-environmental interactions of the place under discussion?
Hook	Have several pre-selected news articles from recent newspapers, news magazines, or on-line news sources. The articles should relate to geography topics currently under discussion, or “hot topics” in the news. Ask the students, “What do these articles have to do with you?” “Would they affect anyone you know?” Students may initially think that the articles are not related to them at all – or perhaps they’re of vital interest to them. Tell students, “We’re going to examine these articles as geographers. We’ll use the “W’s” that we use in literature studies, but we’ll add an important one – “Who cares?”
Teaching Strategies	Place the students in groups of 3 or 4. Give them an article (or let them choose from your assortment). Tell students that they are to read and discuss the article to thoroughly answer these questions: (1) <u>Who</u> is the article about? (2) <u>What</u> geographic theme or issue is most obvious in this article? (location, place, physical systems, human systems, human-environmental interaction, or the uses of geography) (3) <u>When</u> did the events of the article take place? Are they on-going? Are they likely to re-occur? (4) <u>Where</u> is the location of the story – state, country, and continent? What is its relative location to where we are? What are physical or political features nearby that may have a bearing on the article or be affected by it? (5) <u>Who</u> cares? Who is directly affected by the events or situation described? What environmental areas or adversely or positively impacted? Are humans affected in any way by the environment under discussion? Should I (we) care about this article? Why?
Summarizer	Ask one student from each group to present the findings of the group. They should summarize the article by sharing their answers to the questions. After the “who cares?” question, open the questions to a large group discussion for other ideas on human-environmental interactions.
Materials	Articles from current newspapers, news magazines, or on-line news sources. Enough for groups of three or four to have at least one article each.