

Chapter 1: A World of People

Think about the people you know. How are they different from one another? Is one person always laughing and joking? Is another shy and quiet? There are probably many differences you can think of among your friends, your family, and other people you know.

The people you know are just a few of the many people on Earth. In this chapter, you will learn how people are both different and the same all over the world.



Earth is home to many different people.

The Home We All Share

Today, Earth is the home of more than 6 billion people. Like the people you know, people around the world are different from one another in some ways. For example, they speak different languages.

- Look at the pictures of people on this page. What differences can you see among some of Earth's people?

People around the world are also the same in many ways. For example, all people need fresh water and certain kinds of food to stay healthy. They also need clothes to wear and places to live. Perhaps most important, people need other people. They need one another to learn and to teach, and to protect one another from danger.

To meet these many needs, people form groups called **communities**. A community can be as small as a tiny village or as large as a big city. You live in a community. By living and working together in communities, people can do things they could not do alone.

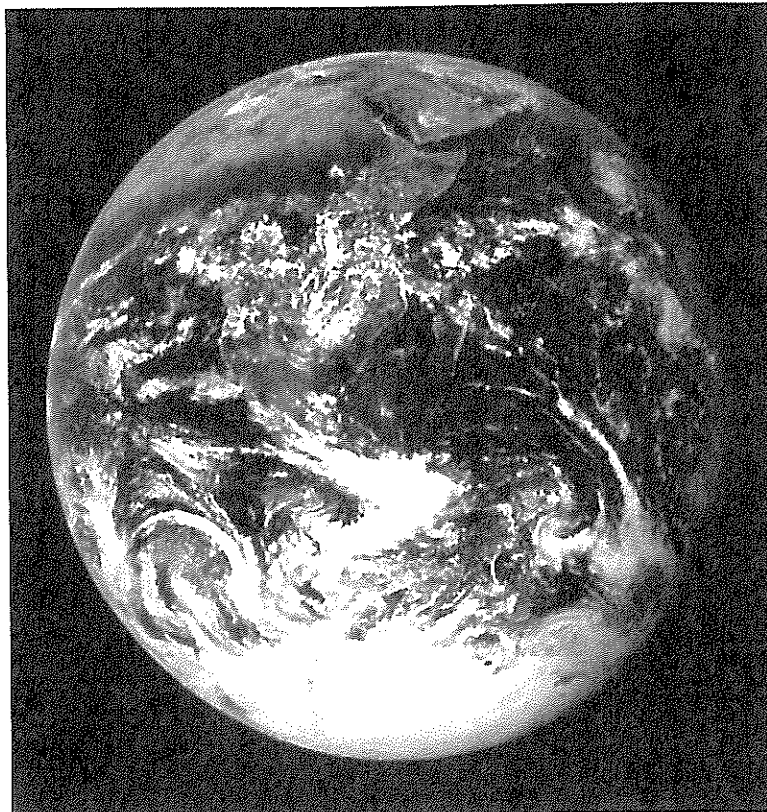
People and Places

People have formed communities in many different places on Earth. One reason people decide to live in a certain place is that the **natural environment** is good. The natural environment includes all the natural things that exist in a place. For example, mountains, deserts, seas, and rivers are part of what we call the natural environment. Weather, plants, and animals are also part of the natural environment.

Thousands of years ago, people formed communities near rivers so they could use the water to grow food. People also needed to be near rivers so they could get drinking water easily.

We have learned a lot about these early communities through the work of **archaeologists**. Archaeologists are people who study how humans lived long ago. Archaeologists study **artifacts**—objects used and left by people long ago.

➤ List two other reasons people might want to live near a lake or a river.



From space, Earth looks like a beautiful blue ball. When you look at Earth from space, you can see clouds, land, and water.

Different Ways of Life

The natural environment helps people decide how they will live in a place. For example, if the weather is usually cold, people will wear heavy clothes to keep warm. If they live near the ocean, they might learn how to use a boat. How does the natural environment of your community affect how you live?

➤ Look at the picture below. List one way the natural environment affects how these people live.



A community's way of life is called its **culture**. Culture includes how people dress and act. It also includes the foods they eat, the languages they speak, and the kinds of buildings they live and work in. Culture includes their religion and the holidays they celebrate.

One important part of a community's culture is its **economy**. The economy of a community is the way people make, buy, and sell things. How do the adults in your family earn their living? Their jobs are a part of your community's economy.

Another important part of a community's culture is its **government**. The government of a people is the way they choose their leaders and make their laws.