

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS GEOGRAPHY?

HOW DOES GEOGRAPHY
CONNECT US TO OUR WORLD?

LEARNING GOALS

As you work through this chapter, you will

- learn why geography is an important subject to study
- explore the concepts of geographic thinking
- describe the geographic inquiry process
- consider how to use geographic spatial tools

What places do you love? Where are they? How would you describe those places to a friend? How would you describe those places to a complete stranger? Why might the descriptions be different?

Each of these questions is geographical. They ask about the relationship between the physical environment and you, a person who lives on the planet. Geography is an exciting subject to study because it helps us make connections to the world around us.

Geography is the study of *where*. Everything we see, do, or think is connected. The job of the geographer is to connect “what” with “where.” In this photo, Norwegian Polar Institute researchers are using a laser device to measure areas of a glacier that are melting. These researchers are part of a team researching ice, climate, and ecosystems in the Arctic Ocean. Expeditions like this do research to determine if the Arctic is changing, how it is changing, and what these changes mean for the planet. Have you ever thought about how different places are connected?

