What is Geography?

Using the provided documents as evidence, answer the following questions, making sure you provide a comprehensive, sophisticated answer.

1. What is Human Geography? (Your ideas only)

2. What is Human Geography? (Use evidence from the attached documents to construct an answer)

3. How do geographers’ views of geography differ, and how are they similar?

Document #1

Geography is dedicated to the description and analysis of constantly changing facts and situations. It looks for the relationship governing change, for the elements of stability and the factors of diversity.... Geography emphasizes people, their ways of life, their divisions, and their endeavors to solve their problems and to adapt the regional environmental conditions to their ways and means...

Document #2

Geography the study that deals with the material and human phenomena in the space accessible to human beings and their instruments especially the patterns of, and variations in, their distribution in that space, on all scales, in the past or present.

Human geography is concerned with human activities (of individuals and groups) and organizations in so far as these relate to the interaction (past or present) of people with their environments created by human beings themselves. And the consequences of these interrelationships.

Physical geography is concerned with the physical characteristics and processes of the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere and lithosphere.
Geography has been called “the mother of all sciences” and the “science of places.” However you describe geography, it involves the examination of the physical and cultural factors that interact to make up the diversity of the earth.

Is this scope broad? Yes, it is. Almost anything can fall into the realm of geographic study. If you want to learn about the earth, its peoples, and why they two interact as they do, you have the makings of a geographer.

Geography is a spatial discipline, which means that geographers are concerned not only with what something is but also with the way it is distributed in space. Although geographers don’t yet have the medical expertise to develop a cure for cancer, for example, they can still study the distribution of cancer cases and suggest possible causes based on that spatial distribution.

My favorite definition of geography is “anything that can be mapped.” I use this definition again later in this book because it gets at the heart of geography. If something can be mapped, it has a spatial component. Maps are the tools of geographers: If something can be mapped, its geography.

What is geography? Geography is the study of where things are located on Earth’s surface and the reasons for the location. The word geography, invented by the ancient Greek scholar Eratosthenes, is based on two Greek words. Geo means “Earth,” and graphy means “to write.” Geographers ask two simple questions: where and why. Where are people and activities located across Earth’s surface? Why are they located in particular places?

Recent world events lend a sense of urgency to geographic inquiry. Geography’s spatial perspectives help to relate economic changes in Europe, the Middle East, and other regions to the spatial distributions of cultural features such as languages and religions, demographic patterns such as population growth and migration, and natural resources such as energy and food supply.

Geography is both a physical and a social science. When geography concentrates on the distribution of physical features, such as climate, soil, and vegetation, it is a natural science. When it studies cultural features, such as language, industries, and cities, geography is a social science. This division is reflected in some colleges, where physical geography courses may carry natural science credit and human and cultural geography courses social science credit.
What is Geography?

Document #5
Ptolemy, Greek scholar
_Geographia_.
Alexandria.
c. AD 127-150

Geography is a representation of the whole known world together with the phenomena which are contained therein.

In Geography one must contemplate the extent of the entire Earth, as well as its shape, and its position under the heavens...the length of its days and nights, the stars which are fixed overhead, the stars which move above the horizon, and the stars which never rise above the horizon at all...

It is the great and exquisite accomplishment of mathematics to show all these things to human intelligence.

Document #6
Hanson, Susan. Ten

...This example illustrates how a geographic turn of mind, in posing different questions (what some have referred to as the “why of where”), leads us to consider different explanations. Something about the geographic turn of mind wants to see the big picture, is not content with unrelated fragments, and wants to grasp how the pieces fit together in place. The map can provide this synthesizing framework—a touchstone of geography. Show any geographer a map, and she is immediately immersed in relationships and connections—connections between people and the environment, connections between and among places, connections between people and places. These are core concerns of geography.

Document #7
De Blij, Harm. Why

...geography deals with the natural as well as the human world. It is, therefore, not just a “social” science. Geographers do research on glaciations and coastlines, on desert dunes and limestone caves, on weather and climate, even on plants and animals. We also study human activities, from city planning to boundary making, from wine growing to churchgoing. To me, that’s the best part of geography: there’s almost nothing in this wide, wonderful world of ours that can’t be studied geographically...

...Geography tends to come up with unexpected linkages—between climate change and historical events, between natural phenomena and political developments, between environment and behavior—that are unmatched in other fields. And geography tends also to look at the here and now, and perceptively into the future.

Document #8
Gersmehl, Phil. Teaching Geography.

The subject we call geography emerged because people need ways to organize, teach and learn what is appropriate in a give place. Geography tells you how to dress—for the climate, the company, or the culture. Like a language guide or a book of etiquette, it can deal with topics that are trivial or extremely important, depending on what specific content is chosen and how it is taught.