Population Geography

Characteristics of Human Populations
Human populations around the world differ by densities, distributions, ethnicities, languages, religions, and other factors. Imagine traveling to China and then to Northern Canada. How might the populations vary in these areas?
How do Geographers Compare Populations?

- Birth and Death Rates
- Age Distribution
- Male/Female Distribution
- Life Expectancy
- Infant Mortality
- Urban/Rural
- Gross Domestic Product
- Ethnicity
- Language
- Religion
- Level of Education
Birth and Death Rates

Birth and death rates refer to how many people are born and how many people die. Developing countries have high death rates and birth rates.
Birth and Death Rates

Birth rates are higher in developing countries for the following reasons:
1. No birth control
2. Religious restrictions
3. Economic factors
4. The role of women in society
Birth and Death Rates

Death rates are higher in developing countries for the following reasons:
1. No access to medical care
2. Poor nutrition
Age Distribution

Age distribution refers to the number of young people compared to older people in a given population.
Developed countries, such as the United States, Canada, and most of Europe have an aging population. This happens when people are having fewer children and living longer. This translates to a shortage of laborers.
**Stage 1 - expanding**

- **Age**
  - Males (%)
  - Females (%)
- High birth rate; rapid fall in each upward age group due to high death rates; short life expectancy.

**Stage 2 - expanding**

- **Age**
  - Males (%)
  - Females (%)
- High birth rate; fall in death rate as more living in middle age; slightly longer life expectancy.

**Stage 3 - stationary**

- **Age**
  - Males (%)
  - Females (%)
- Declining birth rate; low death rate; more people living to old age.

**Stage 4 - contracting**

- **Age**
  - Males (%)
  - Females (%)
- Low birth rate; low death rate; higher dependency ratio; longer life expectancy.
Male/Female Distribution

This is self explanatory. Some areas have an imbalanced male/female distribution. A good example is when settlers first came to Jamestown. For many years the colony had more males than females.
Male/Female Distribution

- China has a one child policy. Families are restricted to having one child or they face penalties imposed by the government. This led to female infanticide or the killing of girl infants.
Life Expectancy

Life expectancy is how long a person will live. Life expectancy is longer in developed countries, mainly due to better medical care. Statistically, women live longer than men.
Infant Mortality

Infant mortality is the number of babies that die at birth. This number is usually per every 1,000 people in a population.
Infant Mortality

- Infant mortality is very high in developing countries. For instance, some African countries have an infant mortality rate that is over 10%.
Urban/Rural Ratio

The urban/rural ratio is the number of people who live in the countryside versus the city. Countries like Japan, Singapore, and Korea have many more people who live in large cities than the countryside.
Urban/Rural Ratio

✧ Over the last 100 years people have been migrating to large cities in the United States. Our population is becoming more urban.
GDP is the total of all goods and services produced in a country in one year. Developing countries and poor populations have a low GDP.
Ethnicity

Ethnicity was defined during the unit on culture. Obviously, different populations around the world have different ethnic compositions.
Ethnicity

The ethnicity of the United States is relatively diverse because the United States is composed of immigrants while Japan has a homogeneous population.
Language

- Different populations speak different languages. English and Spanish are the two most spoken languages in the United States, but countries like Nigeria have over 200 spoken languages.
Two different populations may follow different religions. Protestant Christianity is the largest religion in the United States while Hinduism is the main religion in India.
Education

- The level of education differs between populations. Developing countries normally have poor education systems or children do not have the opportunity to go to school.