



The world is vast and its geography cannot be memorized. *Understanding World Regional Geography* gives students opportunities to personalize and integrate course material by applying geographic concepts, interacting with dynamic Esri webmaps, and thinking creatively and critically.

The college student in the center of this photo is studying abroad in Seoul, South Korea. The experience of visiting another country and engaging with the Korean students will change the way she sees her world and perhaps her place in it. Each of us has a set of perceptions about peoples, places, cultures, and regions. We can refine and deepen our understanding of the world by reading cultural and physical landscapes, asking interesting geographic questions, applying geographic concepts, and making connections with what we already know.

On the cover, a teacher and her students in an informal school sit outside, perched beneath the mountains of the Karakoram Range in the village of Gulmit in northern Pakistan. The literacy rate for Pakistani girls is somewhere between 12 and 62 percent, depending on the source you read and how literacy is defined. In rural areas, the chance for girls to attend a formal school is low, and education is generally provided by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). To understand why Pakistani girls achieve low levels of education, we need to think through political, social, and cultural contexts and analyze the roles poverty and violence play in compounding problems.

People and places change over time. Instead of trying to memorize each place in the world, we encourage students to think. What you will learn in your world regional geography course will change in your lifetime, as the world continues to evolve. The goal of *Understanding World Regional Geography* is to teach you to think geographically so you can continue to learn about and understand the world we call home.

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