Thinking like a Geographer
What does it mean to think “spatially”?
Two examples of spatial analysis
Models help us see how things are organized spatially.

Ok, maybe not these models.
What is a model?
Maps as models
Having a good mental map

Mental maps help us understand and navigate our surroundings. They also reflect the amount and extent of geographic knowledge and spatial awareness that we possess.
7 minute exercise:

Pretend that a friend is visiting you from out of town for the first time. Draw a map from memory Pleasanton that will help your friend get around.
Share your mental map with your elbow partner(s)

Step 1: Introduce yourself if you don’t already know each other!

Step 2: Discuss...

- What similarities are there on each map?
- What are some of the differences?
- Which places or features are illustrated on the map?
- From what you know about this area, what is included or excluded on the maps?
- What assumptions are made in each map?
- At what scale is the map drawn?
- What is simplified? What is distorted?
What does your mental map show?

- Demonstrates your geographic knowledge

- Highlights the way in which you relate to your local environment. - what you included and what was left out are a reflection of your human-environmental interactions.

- Reveals something about your artistic, creative, and cartographic abilities.
I CAN ONLY SHOW YOU THE WAY TO MY HOUSE IF YOU DRIVE ME BACK TO SCHOOL FIRST.

THERE'S MY HOUSE!
Tonight’s homework: *Why Geography?* Article

Let’s talk about note taking... the Cornell way!
# Thinking like a Geographer

**What does it mean to think spatially?**

Spatial analysis looks at the way things are organized in space. This includes where things are located and how they are distributed (clustered, dispersed...)

**How is a map a model?**

A model is “a graphical, mathematical, physical, or verbal representation or simplified version of a concept, phenomenon, relationship, structure, system, or an aspect of the real world.” Maps serve as a model because they take a complicated world and simplify it to highlight or communicate some idea or information.

**Mental Maps**

Mental maps are psychological tools that we use to understand, relate to, and navigate through the environment in which we live, work, and play. They are unique to the individual.

In this class we will aspire to understand more about the world in which we live. In order to do that, we need to understand how the world is organized (i.e. where people, cities, resources, etc. are located), and we need to develop mental maps. Paper/digital maps are one tool that can help us analyze and understand the world, and they can help us form a mental map.