

GeoWizard 2026-2027

1. **DESCRIPTION:** Participants will be assessed on their understanding of global geographic and cultural features.
2. **A TEAM OF UP TO:** 2 **APPROXIMATE TIME:** 50 minutes
3. **EVENT PARAMETERS:**
 - 3.1. Each team will need to bring a pen. No notes of any form are allowed. Competitors may bring unannotated copies of the official rules if they desire.
4. **THE COMPETITION:**
 - a. Contestants will complete a written test and/or timed stations.
 - b. Any reasonable location on Earth is fair game. For example, the middle of the Pacific Ocean would not be a valid location to expect competitors to identify.
 - i. While that is an extreme example, the provided clues in the image must be able to lead the competitor to the highest scoring ring, granted that they have the knowledge and analysis skills.
 1. A less extreme example would be expecting fairly precise identification of non significant location buildings within cities that are not quite well known. As this is subjective, a heuristic one can employ to determine obscurity would be the presence of an English Wikipedia article about the building.
 - ii. Relative to the map size the rings should not be too large. While this is subjective, the provided sample question in section 6 provides a good baseline.
 - c. All photos must come with a compass in order to aid the competitors in orientation.
 - d. Images of locations must come with at least two reasonable clues to allow for definitive identification. Reasonable clues may include language, geographical structures and characteristics like mountains and landscape, flags, architecture, regionally specific cultural objects, road markings, non-obscure botanical characteristics (like characteristic trees and flowers), non-obscure infrastructure characteristics (subjective but every clue cannot just be bollards for example), topography, and explicit references to the location.
 - i. At least one of the two minimum clues must be from the underlined list above.
 - ii. An example of an explicit reference to the location is provided below; the “.nz” on the sign indicates New Zealand.



- e. At least 20% of the points of the exam should be allocated to identifying the location of geolocating pictures selected from the provided list of geographically and culturally significant locations below. Event supervisors are encouraged to have higher expectations for pinpointing the location if the image is from the provided list of significant locations below. Additionally, it should be explicitly communicated that the location is on the list.
- f. At least another 30% of the points of the exam must be allocated to identifying the location of geolocating pictures selected from throughout the world, excluding those in the list below. Effort should be made to distribute the pictures throughout the different continents and

- among different countries. Additionally, it should be explicitly communicated that the location is not on the list.
- g. Sections may emphasize specific locations by asking competitors to identify the location of a photo from a specific, zoomed in map. For example, a section could emphasize identifying where in Italy a series of photos are based on clues and provide a map of Italy for the competitors to mark their answers.
 - h. Non location identification questions may emphasize geographically and culturally significant locations or linguistic properties from major languages around the world from the provided lists below. Obscure/trivial information should be avoided with regards to these questions.
 - i. Questions about significant locations may cover geographical qualities, societal significance, historical significance, cultural aspects, architectural qualities, etc.
 - ii. Linguistic properties may include grammar, alphabet systems, usage of loanwords, phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, etc.
 - i. Non location identification questions may also emphasize broad overarching trends in geography and architecture. Obscure/trivial information should be avoided with regards to these questions.
 - j. At least 30% of the points of the exam must be allocated to non location identification questions, parameters for which are outlined in k. and l.
 - k. The remaining 20% of the exam should be distributed among the three question types as the ES decides suits their needs.
 - l. Selected clues for photo identification may rely on road markings, license plate qualities, power lines characteristics, architecture, language, and more.
 - m. Location identification questions may also have competitors employ photo analysis skills such as shadow direction, sun hemisphere, etc. (to elaborate on what “photo analysis” actually entails, this could involve applying a general understanding of geography and earth science to the features in the photo, arbitrage between seemingly contradictory clues (but as 7.f. discusses, proper analysis of the clues overall should not be misleading))

5. **SCORING:**

- 5.1. Highest score wins.
- 5.2. Location identification questions should be scored through a sliding scale based upon the distance from the exact location.
- 5.3. Location identification of photos should be in the form of dotting the answer on a blank map; in order to determine the quality of the answer, stencils on transparent plastic such as sheet protectors for rings/shapes of answer quality can be overlaid on the competitor’s responses to determine the points to be allocated in a quick manner.
- 5.4. Points will be awarded for the quality and accuracy of responses.
- 5.5. Selected questions may be used as tiebreakers.

6. SAMPLE QUESTIONS:



1. Dot with your pen on the provided blank map on this page where you believe the location to be. Next to the dot, write the question number of the corresponding photo.



A sample key has been provided for the photo. The number of rings/shapes of answer quality and point distribution is up to the discretion of what the event supervisor believes to be reasonable and fitting

with their standards for the specific question. In the given example, within the red circle may correspond to 5 points, within the orange 3 points, and the yellow 1 point.

2. Briefly explain why Tagalog has a lot of Spanish loanwords and word roots.
3. Explain how hiragana, katakana, and kanji are used in tandem to construct the Japanese language.
4. Explain some of the key differences between Spanish and Austrian architecture.
5. Briefly describe the ancient lake hypothesis regarding the Borobudur Buddhist monument.

7. **NOTES FOR EVENT SUPERVISORS:**

- a. As a reminder, test writers should take care in selecting photos to provide sufficient clues for a prepared competitor to identify the location.
- b. Prior to running the event, have the stenciled keys prepared or some other methodology to allow for rapid grading.
- c. Some of the places in the significant locations list will be difficult to provide adequate identification photos for due to not being accessible on Google Street View and therefore difficult to provide a compass for. If and only if this is the circumstance, an image of the location without a compass may be provided; ES's must find an image with suitably fair clues in this situation.
- d. Event supervisors may not make use of unreasonable clues which are overly dependent upon memorization or meta geography techniques not in the spirit of the competition when selecting images, such as camera and Google car peculiarities, seasonal coverage, regional telephone number codes, obscure flags (such as city/provincial flags), and other obscure metrics.
- e. Event supervisors may provide multiple images of the same location if desired. For example, if one angle of a location has a use of regional language, and another has a geographical structure, both images could be provided in conjunction for the minimum two clues.
- f. Event supervisors may not intentionally mislead competitors; images and clues should be in good-faith.

8. **SUGGESTED RESOURCES**

- a. <https://www.geoguessr.com/>
- b. <https://geohints.com/>
- c. <https://www.plonkit.net/>
- d. <https://fabiencler.github.io/geoguessr-tips/>
- e. <https://geotips.net/>
- f. https://www.reddit.com/r/geoguessr/comments/7efwsx/central_location_for_all_helpful_posts/
- g. <https://www.scribblemaps.com/maps/view/Landscape-and-Vegetation-Guide-for-GeoGuessr/UIZwTHRDGL>
- h. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/>

9. **LANGUAGES LIST**

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| i. Mandarin Chinese | t. Korean |
| j. Spanish | u. Tamil |
| k. English | v. Egyptian Arabic |
| l. Hindi | w. German |
| m. Bengali | x. French |
| n. Portuguese | y. Indonesian |
| o. Russian | z. Italian |
| p. Japanese | aa. Iranian Persian |
| q. Vietnamese | bb. Cantonese |
| r. Turkish | cc. Tagalog |
| s. Telugu | |

Note: this languages list defines which languages non-identification linguistic questions can cover as mentioned in section 4.h. Language clues for identification questions are in no way restricted to this list.

10. GEOGRAPHICALLY AND CULTURALLY SIGNIFICANT LOCATIONS LIST

North & Central America

North America

- 10.1. Grand Canyon, USA
- 10.2. Yellowstone National Park, USA
- 10.3. Olympic National Park, USA
- 10.4. Cahokia Mounds, USA
- 10.5. Great Smoky Mountains, USA
- 10.6. Everglades, USA
- 10.7. Denali, USA
- 10.8. 'Iolani Palace, USA
- 10.9. Pearl Harbor, USA
- 10.10. Hollywood, USA
- 10.11. Silicon Valley, USA
- 10.12. Harlem, USA
- 10.13. Gettysburg National Military Park, USA
- 10.14. Banff National Park, Canada
- 10.15. L'Anse aux Meadows, Canada
- 10.16. Dinosaur Provincial Park, Canada
- 10.17. Teotihuacan, Mexico
- 10.18. Chichén Itzá, Mexico

Central America

- 10.19. Blue Hole, Belize
- 10.20. Tikal, Guatemala
- 10.21. Old Havana, Cuba
- 10.22. Panama Canal, Panama

South America

- 10.23. Ciudad Perdida, Colombia
- 10.24. Colombian coffee growing axis, Colombia
- 10.25. Cartagena, Colombia
- 10.26. Tepuis, Venezuela
- 10.27. Orinoco Delta, Venezuela
- 10.28. Christ the Redeemer, Brazil
- 10.29. Amazon Rainforest
- 10.30. Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia
- 10.31. Tiwanaku, Bolivia
- 10.32. Atacama Desert, Chile
- 10.33. Pantanal, Brazil & Bolivia & Paraguay
- 10.34. Jesuit Missions of La Santísima Trinidad de Paraná and Jesús de Tavarangue, Paraguay
- 10.35. Perito Moreno Glacier, Argentina
- 10.36. Rapa Nui National Park, Chile
- 10.37. Torres del Paine National Park, Chile
- 10.38. Iguazu Falls, Argentina & Brazil
- 10.39. Galápagos Islands, Ecuador
- 10.40. Machu Picchu, Peru
- 10.41. Nazca Lines, Peru

Europe

- 10.42. Roskilde Cathedral, Denmark
- 10.43. Þingvellir (Thingvellir) National Park, Iceland
- 10.44. Suomenlinna Fortress, Finland
- 10.45. Geirangerfjord, Norway
- 10.46. Göta Canal, Sweden
- 10.47. Visby, Sweden
- 10.48. Decorated Farmhouses of Halsingland, Sweden
- 10.49. Stonehenge, England
- 10.50. Hadrian's Wall, England
- 10.51. Hertfordshire, England

- 10.52. Oxford, England
- 10.53. Neuschwanstein Castle, Germany
- 10.54. Berlin Wall, Germany
- 10.55. Solnhofen Limestone, Germany
- 10.56. Semmering Railway, Austria
- 10.57. Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland
- 10.58. Skellig Michael, Ireland
- 10.59. Palace of Versailles, France
- 10.60. Louvre Museum, France
- 10.61. Lascaux, France
- 10.62. Chartres Cathedral, France
- 10.63. Belém Tower, Portugal
- 10.64. Monastery of Batalha, Portugal
- 10.65. Montserrat, Spain
- 10.66. Sagrada Familia, Spain
- 10.67. Alhambra, Spain
- 10.68. Grand-Place, Belgium
- 10.69. Meteora, Greece
- 10.70. Delphi, Greece
- 10.71. Acropolis of Athens, Greece
- 10.72. Santorini, Greece
- 10.73. Mount Athos, Greece
- 10.74. Grand Canal (Venice), Italy
- 10.75. Mount Etna, Italy
- 10.76. Colosseum, Italy
- 10.77. Vatican City
- 10.78. Budapest, Hungary
- 10.79. Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 10.80. Auschwitz-Birkenau, Poland
- 10.81. Chernobyl, Ukraine
- 10.82. Dubrovnik, Croatia
- 10.83. Plitvice Lakes National Park, Croatia
- 10.84. Kutná Hora, Czech Republic
- 10.85. Prague, Czech Republic
- 10.86. Lavaux, Switzerland
- 10.87. Geneva, Switzerland
- 10.88. Transylvania, Romania
- 10.89. Kremlin and Red Square, Russia
- 10.90. Saint Petersburg, Russia
- 10.91. Lake Baikal, Russia

Africa

- 10.92. Sahara Desert
- 10.93. Nile River
- 10.94. Pyramids of Giza, Egypt
- 10.95. Timgad, Algeria
- 10.96. Medina of Fez, Morocco
- 10.97. Great Mosque of Djenné, Mali
- 10.98. Timbuktu, Mali
- 10.99. Benin Moat, Nigeria
- 10.100. Agadez, Niger
- 10.101. Asante Traditional Buildings, Ghana
- 10.102. Cape Coast Castle, Ghana
- 10.103. Congo Basin
- 10.104. Mount Nyiragongo, Democratic Republic of Congo
- 10.105. Lake Tanganyika, Burundi
- 10.106. Nyungwe Forest National Park, Rwanda
- 10.107. Kigali Genocide Memorial, Rwanda
- 10.108. Lalibela Churches, Ethiopia
- 10.109. Ambohimanga, Madagascar

- 10.110. Bwindi Impenetrable Forest, Uganda & Kenya
- 10.111. Serengeti National Park, Tanzania
- 10.112. Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania
- 10.113. Ngorongoro Crater, Tanzania
- 10.114. Victoria Falls, Zambia
- 10.115. Table Mountain, South Africa
- 10.116. Cape of Good Hope, South Africa
- 10.117. Robben Island, South Africa
- 10.118. Cradle of Humankind, South Africa
- 10.119. Sossusvlei, Namibia

Asia

- 10.120. Jerusalem
- 10.121. Persepolis, Iran
- 10.122. Masuleh Village, Iran
- 10.123. Yazd, Iran
- 10.124. Dead Sea, Jordan
- 10.125. Petra, Jordan
- 10.126. Mecca, Saudi Arabia
- 10.127. Hagia Sophia, Turkey
- 10.128. Cappadocia, Turkey
- 10.129. Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, UAE
- 10.130. Burj Khalifa, UAE
- 10.131. Mount Everest, Nepal & China
- 10.132. Makli Necropolis, Pakistan
- 10.133. Rohtas Fort, Pakistan
- 10.134. Taj Mahal, India
- 10.135. Kerala Backwaters, India
- 10.136. Monuments at Mahabalipuram, India
- 10.137. Meenakshi Temple, India
- 10.138. Rani ki Vav, India
- 10.139. Red Fort, India
- 10.140. The Ganges, India & Bangladesh
- 10.141. Sonargaon Historical City, Bangladesh
- 10.142. Mosque City of Bagerhat, Bangladesh
- 10.143. Jiufen, Taiwan
- 10.144. Taipei 101, Taiwan
- 10.145. Kenting National Park, Taiwan
- 10.146. Orkhon Valley, Mongolia
- 10.147. Gobi Desert, Mongolia & China
- 10.148. Great Wall of China, China
- 10.149. The Forbidden City, China
- 10.150. Three Gorges Dam, China
- 10.151. Qinshihuang Mausoleum, China
- 10.152. Giant Wild Goose Pagoda, China
- 10.153. Wulingyuan Scenic Area, China
- 10.154. Huangshan, China
- 10.155. Korean Demilitarized Zone, Korean Peninsula
- 10.156. Changdeokgung, South Korea
- 10.157. Jeju Island, South Korea
- 10.158. Himeji Castle, Japan
- 10.159. Historic Villages of Shirakawa-gō and Gokayama, Japan
- 10.160. Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, Japan
- 10.161. Mount Fuji, Japan
- 10.162. Shibuya, Japan
- 10.163. Gion, Japan
- 10.164. Angkor Wat, Cambodia
- 10.165. Plain of Jars, Laos
- 10.166. Pha That Luang, Laos
- 10.167. Komodo National Park, Indonesia
- 10.168. Raja Ampat Islands, Indonesia
- 10.169. Borobudur, Indonesia
- 10.170. Prambanan, Indonesia
- 10.171. Besakih Temple, Indonesia
- 10.172. Tana Toraja Regency, Indonesia
- 10.173. Mayon Volcano, Philippines
- 10.174. Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Philippines

- 10.175. Banaue Rice Terraces, Philippines
- 10.176. Intramuros, Philippines
- 10.177. Singapore
- 10.178. Phang Nga Bay, Thailand
- 10.179. Sukhothai Historical Park, Thailand
- 10.180. Grand Palace, Thailand
- 10.181. Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca, Malaysia
- 10.182. Bagan, Myanmar
- 10.183. Ha Long Bay, Vietnam
- 10.184. Imperial City of Huế, Vietnam
- 10.185. Củ Chi tunnels, Vietnam
- 10.186. Sơn Mỹ Memorial, Vietnam

Oceania

- 10.187. Great Barrier Reef, Australia
- 10.188. Sydney Harbour Bridge, Australia
- 10.189. Sydney Opera House, Australia
- 10.190. Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, Australia
- 10.191. Uluru (Ayers Rock), Australia
- 10.192. Tongariro National Park, New Zealand
- 10.193. Hobbiton Movie Set, New Zealand
- 10.194. Bora Bora, French Polynesia
- 10.195. Rarotonga, Cook Islands
- 10.196. Bikini Atoll, Marshall Islands