

Geographic Conditions and Connections

Today, we will focus on the difference
between a geographic **condition**
and a geographic **connection**

(and why the difference is important).

You will investigate
a real place,
at a real time in history.

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a real place,
at a real time in history.

You can try to figure out
where in the world this is.

We are keeping its identity secret, for now,
in order to focus on a more important question.

Here is the big question:

How do people decide
where to locate a town?

You should think about
how you are making a decision,
not just
what decision you are making.

You are on a ship, going across the ocean,
about a century after Columbus.

Here is a map of the area where you are going.

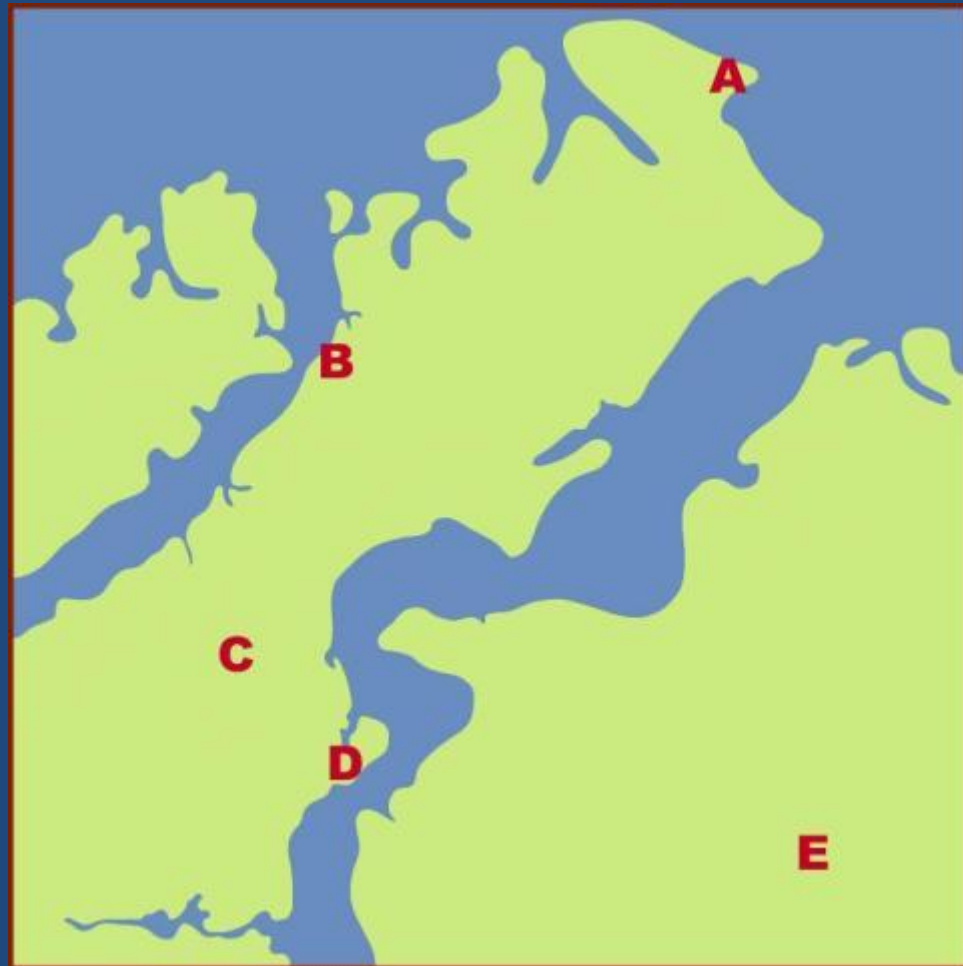


You do **not**
have a cell phone !

The mapmaker followed
the general rule in choosing colors:
"make the water blue and the land green"

(Many maps use that rule, even though we all know
that all land is not green, and all water is not blue!)

Your scouts suggest these five places as possible locations for your new town.
Which one would you vote for? Why?



Asking you to vote after looking at a simple map highlights a basic issue about democracy:

Advantage ?

Disadvantage ?

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Disadvantage ?:

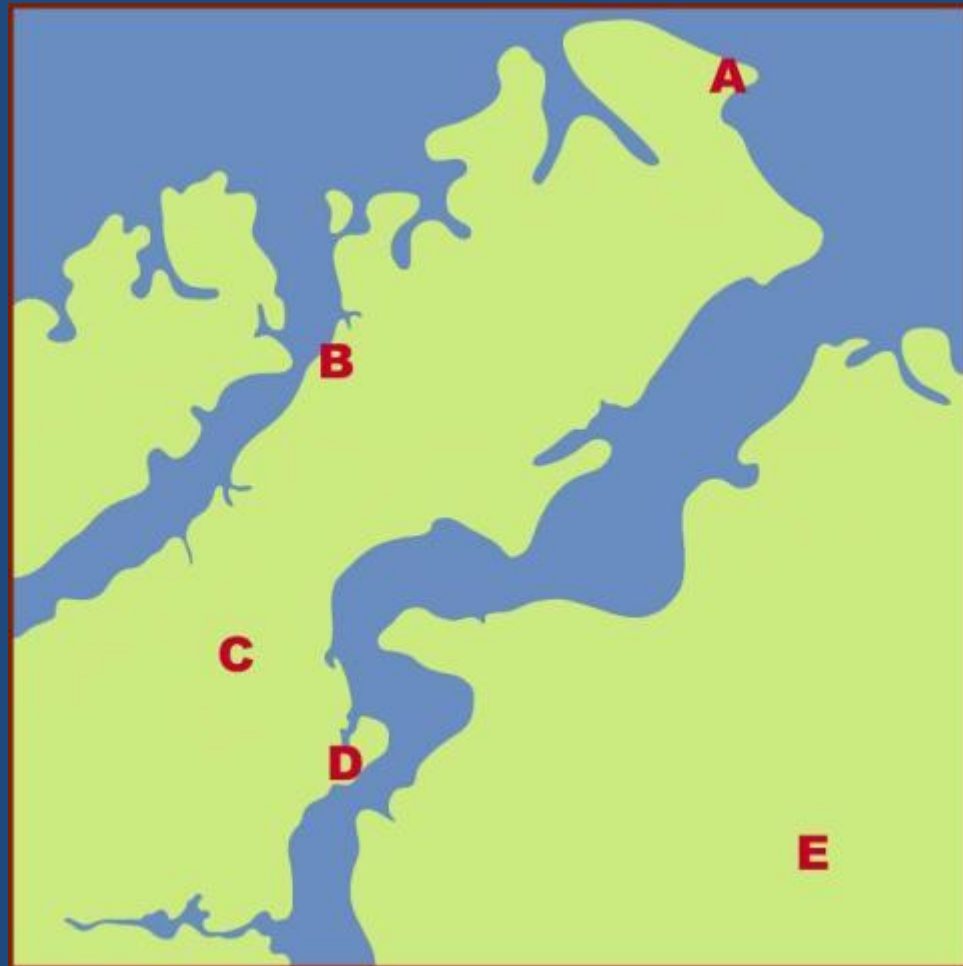
Asking you to vote after looking at a simple map highlights a basic issue about democracy:

Advantage: people cannot blame anyone else when they get what they voted for.

Disadvantage: it takes time and effort to gain the knowledge needed to cast an informed vote.

Here is that map again,
with your five choices on it.

What else would you like to know?



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with your five choices on it.

What else would you like to know?



For one thing, it might help to know
how big this area is.

The map is about 33 miles wide.
How long would it take
to walk that far?

5 miles

Here is that map again,
with your five choices on it.

What else would you like to know?



For one thing, it might help to know
how big this area is.

The map is about 33 miles wide.
How long would it take
to walk that far?

About two days,
through the kind
of hilly forest
your scouts say
is growing
in this area.

Before we go any farther,
maybe we should make sure
that we all know what is meant
by the concept of "location."

To a geographer,
the idea of location
has two parts:

The **Conditions** right there
in a specific place,

Bears

Cold

To a geographer,
the idea of location
has two parts:

Iron ore

Low

Hills

The **Conditions**

in a specific place,

Trees

Sandy ~~Rainy~~

To a geographer,
the idea of location
has two parts:

The **Conditions**

in a specific place,

Can you name a kind of place condition
that did not flash on the screen?

Canal Road

To a geographer,
the idea of location
has two parts:

Far from
camp

The **Conditions**

Treaty in a specific place,

Trade

The **Connections**

Upstream with other places

Can you name
any kind of connection
that did not flash
on the screen?

To a geographer,
the idea of location
has two parts:

The **Conditions**
in a specific place,

The **Connections**
with other places

To make sure you understand the distinction,
here is a quick review.

- Place 3 items under the Condition column.
- Place 3 items under the Connection column.

Geographic
Condition

Fertile soil

Geographic
Connection

Close to town

Level land for house

Part of NATO

Good well water

Upstream from swamp

Reviewing **Conditions**:

- Place 3 items under the Condition column.
- Place 3 items under the Connection column.

Geographic
Condition

Geographic
Connection

Fertile soil

Level land for house

Good well water

Reviewing **Connections**:

- Place 3 items under the Condition column.
- Place 3 items under the Connection column.

**Geographic
Condition**

**Geographic
Connection**

Close to town

Part of NATO

Upstream from swamp

Reviewing Conditions and Connections:

- Place 3 items under the Condition column.
- Place 3 items under the Connection column.

Geographic Condition

Fertile soil

Level land for house

Good well water

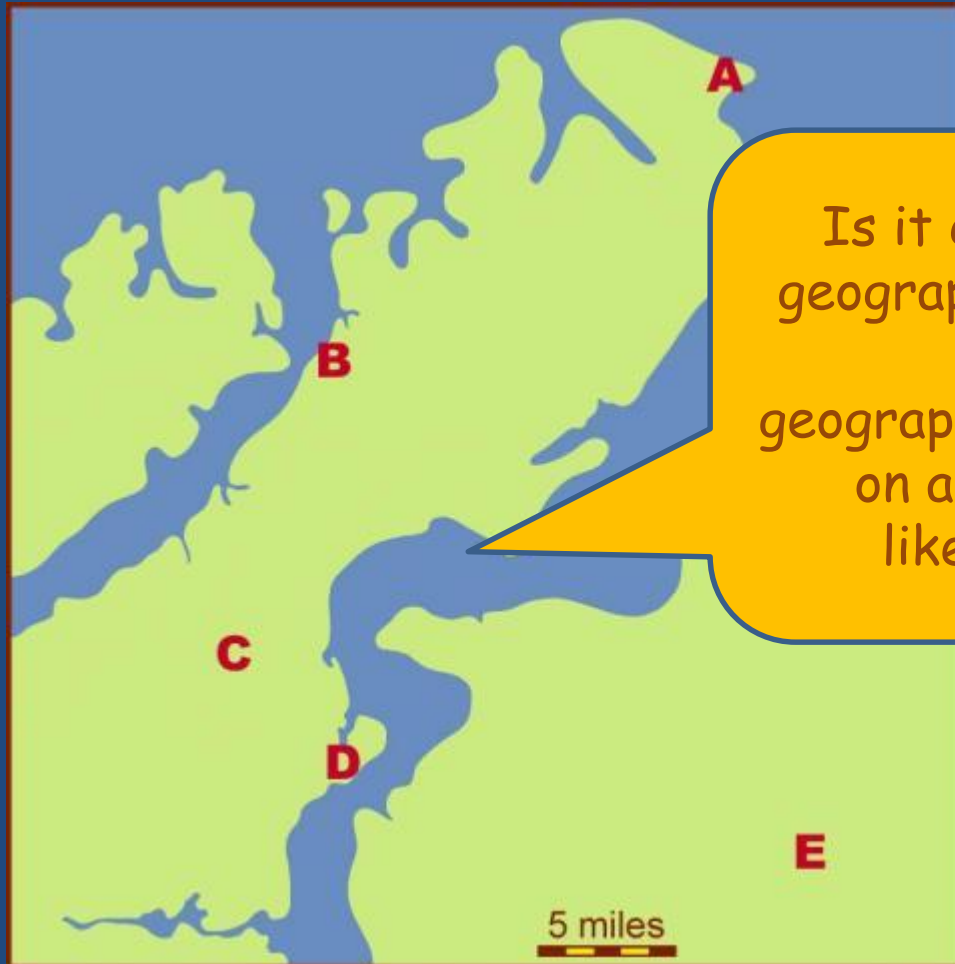
Geographic Connection

Close to town

Part of NATO

Upstream from swamp

Here is that simple map again,
with the five suggested locations for your town.



Is it easier to see
geographic conditions
or
geographic connections
on a simple map
like this one?

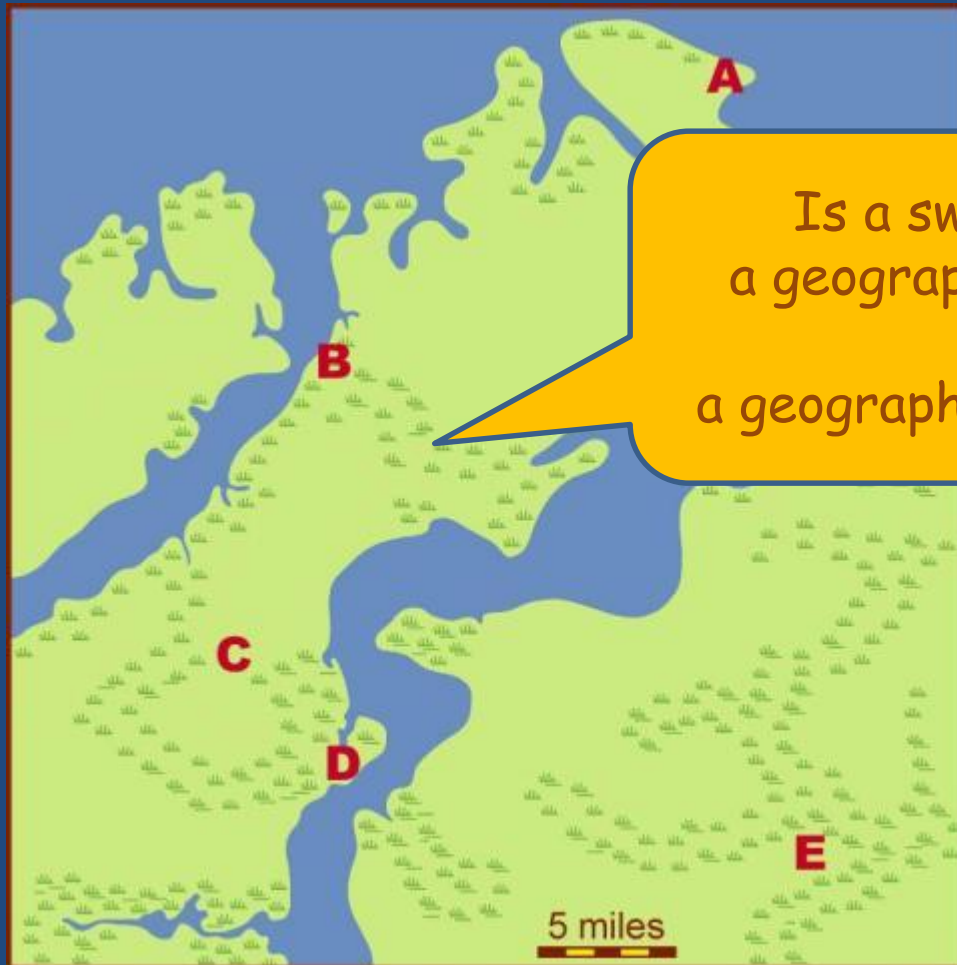
400 years ago, a key geographic connection was the possibility of unfriendly neighbors. With that in mind, which location would you choose ?



The map now includes symbols that show swampy areas. Swamps can make it hard to travel, farm, or build houses.

Definition:

Swamps
(also called marshes or bogs)
are areas of shallow water.
They are often filled
with cattails, reeds,
and other water weeds

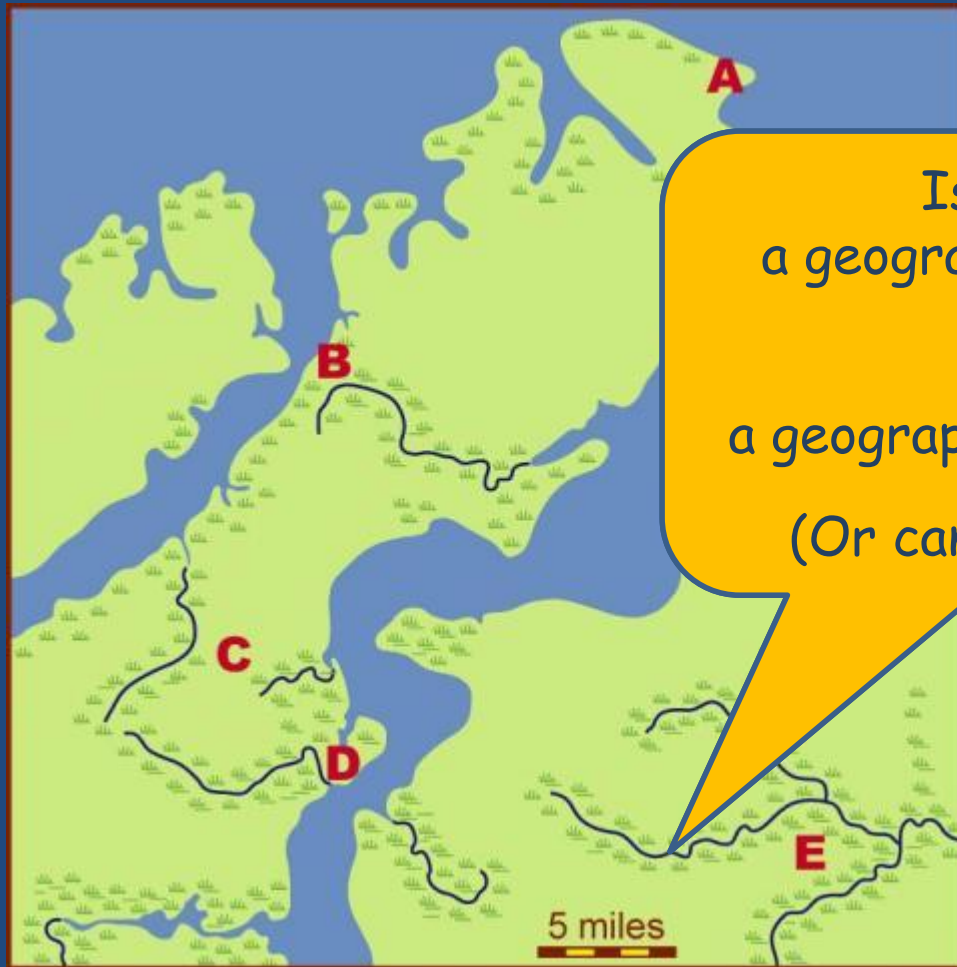


Is a swampy area
a geographic condition
or
a geographic connection?

Now that you know what areas have swampy conditions, which lettered place would you choose for your town?



The map now has blue lines that show **creeks and rivers**.
Notice that rivers flow in low areas,
which are often swampy in rainy climates.



Is a river
a geographic condition
or
a geographic connection?
(Or can it be both?)

Now that you know where the rivers are, which place would you vote for as a town location?



The map now has a color to identify **saltwater marshes**. Unlike freshwater swamps near rivers, marshes near oceans often have salty water. You can't drink salty water!

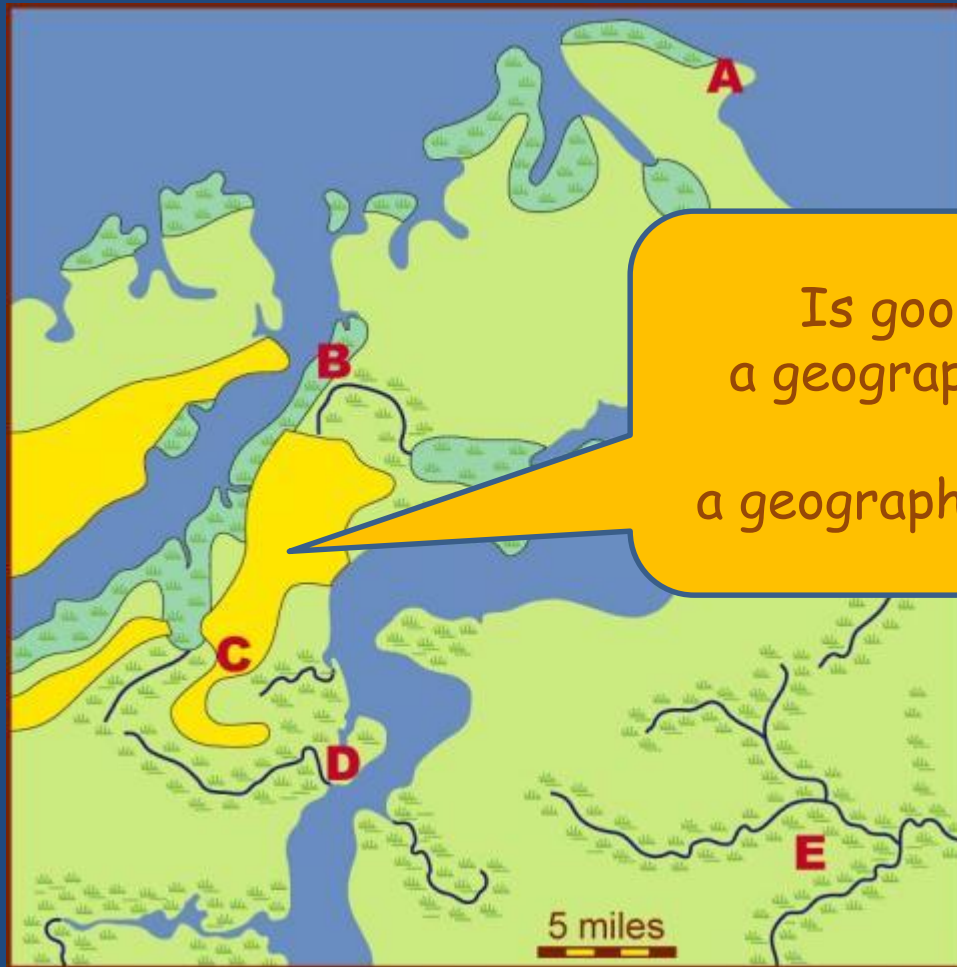


Is salty well water
a geographic condition
or
a geographic connection?

Now that you know about the quality of the water, which place would you choose for your town?

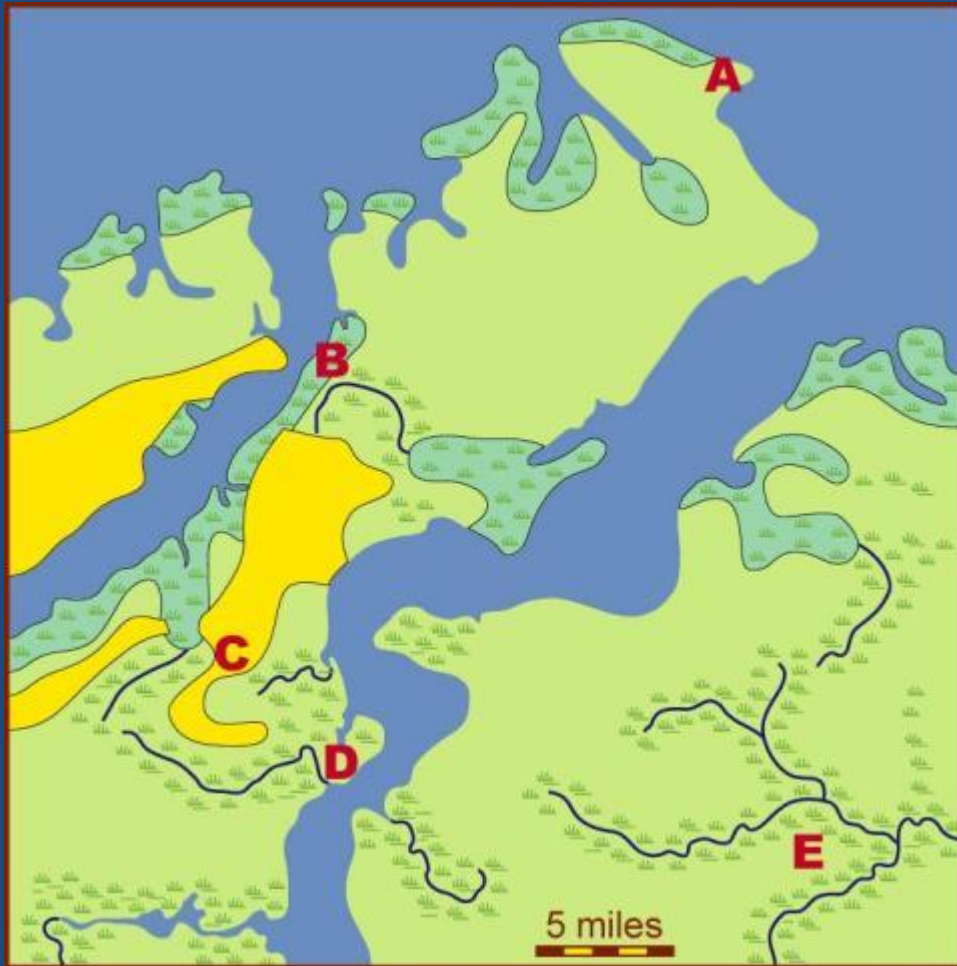


The map now uses a yellow color to show **good cropland**. Good cropland has fertile soil that is easy to work. It also tends to be good for roads and buildings.



Is good cropland
a geographic condition
or
a geographic connection?

Now that you know about the quality of the land, which place would you choose for your town?



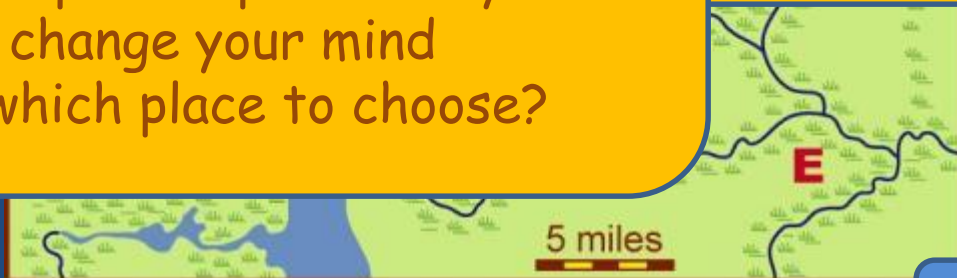
Which lettered place has the best conditions?
Which place has the best connections?



Now we will look at some photos taken at each location.

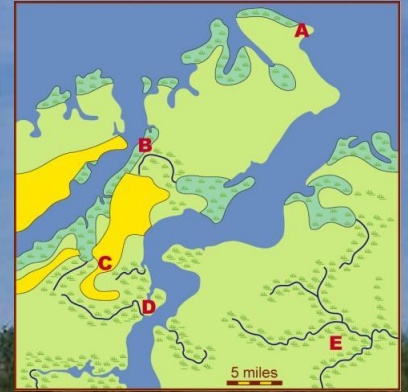
Do these photos persuade you to change your mind about which place to choose?

How do you find a balance between conditions and connections in choosing a location for a settlement?

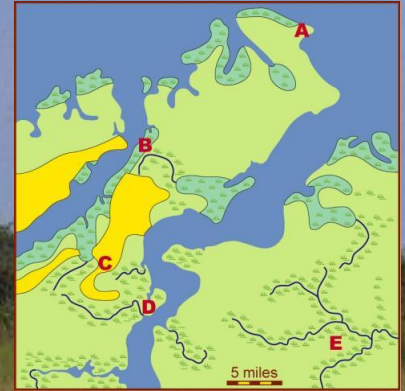


Photos taken by Melinda Dickinson,
Michigan Geographic Alliance

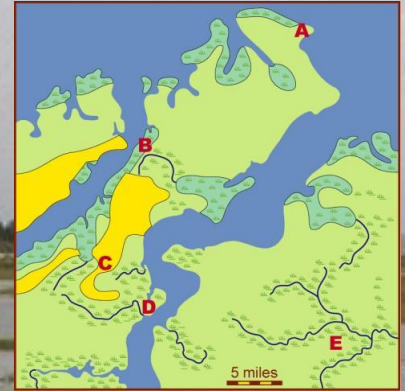
Location A



Location A



Location B



Location B



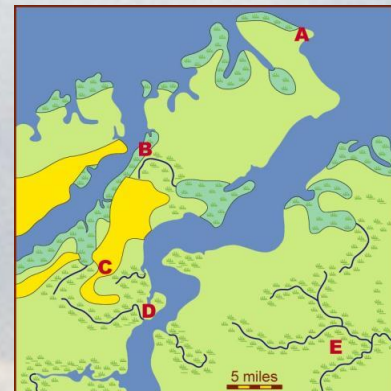
Location C



Location C



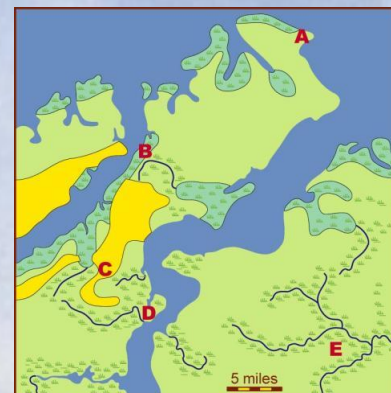
Location D



Location D



Location E



Location E



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Now that you have seen photos of the places,
which one would you choose for your town?

