

# Ferris Bueller's Geographic Day Off



## The Cast

FERRIS BUELLER Matthew Broderick  
CAMERON Alan Ruck  
SLOANE Mia Sara  
ED ROONEY Jeffrey Jones  
JEANNIE BUELLER Jennifer Grey

## AP Human Geography

*Summer Assignment*

Mr. Curt Fritts

cmfritts@henrico.k12.va.us

Directed by John Hughes. Running time: 103 minutes. 1996.

## The Story

A sweet, warm-hearted comedy about a teenager who skips school so he can help his best friend win some self-respect. The therapy he has in mind includes a day's visit to Chicago, and after we've seen the Sears Tower, the Art Institute, the Board of Trade, a parade down Dearborn Street, architectural landmarks, a Gold Coast lunch and a game at Wrigley Field, we have to concede that the city and state film offices have done their jobs: "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" works as a travelogue.

Ferris is a bright high school senior from the North Shore who fakes an illness so he can spend a day in town with his girlfriend, Sloane and his best friend, Cameron. At first, it seems as if skipping school is all he has in mind—especially after he talks Cameron into borrowing his dad's restored red Ferrari, a car the father loves more than Cameron himself. The rest of the movie is a lighthearted excursion through the Loop, including a German-American Day parade in which Ferris leaps aboard a float, grabs a microphone and starts singing "Twist and Shout" while the marching band backs him up. The teens fake their way into a fancy restaurant for lunch, spend some time gawking at the masterpieces in the Art Institute, and go out to Wrigley Field, where, of course, they are late and have to take box seats far back in the left-field corner. (The movie gets that detail right; it would be too much to hope that they could arrive in the third inning and find seats in the bleachers.)

There is one great, dizzying moment when the teens visit the top of the Sears Tower and lean forward and press their foreheads against the glass, and look straight down at the tiny cars and little specks of life far below, and begin to talk about their lives. And that introduces, subtly, the buried theme of the movie, which is that Ferris wants to help Cameron gain self-respect in the face of his father's materialism.

Ferris is, in fact, a bit of a philosopher. "Life goes by pretty fast," he says, "if you don't stop and look around, you might miss it."

He's sensitive to the hurt inside his friend's heart, as Cameron explains how his dad has cherished and restored the red Ferrari and given it a place of honor in his life--a place denied to Cameron.

By Roger Ebert



# Ferris Bueller's Day Off

## The Five Themes of Geography

### WHAT IS GEOGRAPHY?

#### Ferris Bueller's Day Off!

There are numerous definitions of geography, but geography is not just the memorization of place names on a map. There are definitions of the field of geography in every social studies or geography textbook, and students often try to grasp at a definition such as: "geography is the study of . . . landscapes, mountains, maps, climates, rivers, and people." However, while a definition of the field certainly includes maps and mountains and regions and people, it is essential for you to understand geography's unique way of understanding the world; you must discover your own unique method of defining the essence of geography, and learn to apply the tools of analysis that characterize the study of human geography in an entertaining and stimulating manner.

In the film Ferris Bueller's Day Off, Ferris and his friends will skip school, and in the process leads his friends through a travelogue of the city of Chicago. Through discussions, map exercises, and a final report and debate, Ferris and yourself will showcase the definition of human geography and demonstrate the five major themes of geography.

Geography is concerned with where and why things are located as they are. It is concerned with the patterns of phenomena and the processes that created them. Therefore there is no special or specific subject matter which it studies, but rather its subject matter is Earth, described and explained using the spatial perspective. History is somewhat similar because its subject matter is Earth in the historical perspective. The 1986 Guidelines for Geographic Education and the "Five Themes of Geography."

#### **Location**

- - Relative Location
- - Absolute Location

#### **Interactions**

- - Humans adapt to the environment
- - Humans modify the environment
- - Humans depend on the environment

#### **Regions**

- - Formal
- - Functional
- - Perceptual (vernacular)

#### **Place**

- - Human Characteristics
- - Physical Characteristics

#### **Movement**

- - People
- - Goods
- - Ideas

## **Objectives:**

Geoscholars will:

- ✚ Assign relative and absolute location.
- ✚ Determine the significant characteristics of "place."
- ✚ Describe a region in terms of culture, physical features, trade, industry.
- ✚ List reasons why movement and trade are key events in the study of geography.
- ✚ Understand that human actions modify the physical environment be able to explain significant human environment interactions.
- ✚ Use mental maps to organize information about people, places and environments in a spatial context.
- ✚ Analyze the spatial organization of people, places and environments on the Earth's surface.
- ✚ Describe the physical and human characteristics of places.
- ✚ Gain an awareness of the characteristics, distribution, and movement of human populations on Earth's surface.
- ✚ Recognize the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface
- ✚ Engage in the process of defending a position.

## **Procedure:**

### **Part 1: Watch *Ferris Bueller's Day Off***

If you haven't seen it already, this is a REALLY fun film that almost everyone can relate to. It is recommended that you watch this film slowly, use the "Pause" button a lot, and take thorough notes. You should be following the adventures of Ferris on your map. You will have to go online to discover the absolute location of some of the places depicted in the scenes of the movie. Keep in mind that there are several different maps with different scales and intended users. *Using the internet as a tool to research the film is highly encouraged.*

### **Part 2: Map The Day Off**

In the film, Ferris and his friends will spend the day in Chicago. It is your job to track where and when Ferris is during the course of the day with the expectation that you will be able to conclusively prove whether or not Ferris could have done all the things he does in the film in real life.

A map depicting the travels of Ferris will help to shape and bolster the paper's validity and reliability. The map must highlight the route Ferris and his friends take throughout his day off. The map must be attached to the final paper. (Note: you may use more than one map; you could use multiple scales to show the greater Chicago area as well as downtown Chicago)

### **Part 3: Closure Activity: Write A Paper**

Consider the following question: Was the trip physically possible within the amount of time given? After acquainting yourself with the movie, noting pertinent facts and evidence from the film, and highlighting your maps of Chicago, you should be able to complete your arguments about the viability of Ferris' day trip. You must be prepared to present your evidence, and identify thematic relationships to the themes of geography (example: Where is Ferris' home and school? How do you know that? Why are suburbs built? Why would Chicago have a German day? Where did these immigrants come from and why?), and you must be able to back up your arguments with evidence from the film.

The paper's grade will be based on your effort and ability to recognize, analyze, and use the tools of geographic analysis on the film. Submit a type-written paper of no more than five pages dealing with two critical issues:

1. Explain whether or not Ferris could have completed his trip in the time allotted. Give a complete timeline of the days' events, and highlight three events/reasons why Ferris could/could not complete his excursion in one day. All opinions must be completely backed up with facts and figures. Graphs, charts, and other illustrations may be included - but are not required.
2. Explain the five key geographical concepts of location, place, interaction, movement, and region using actual examples from the film. Use one example for each concept, and be complete in the breadth of your explanation. Be sure to use the "geographic jargon" found in the attached diagram. Watch this to familiarize yourself with the themes and terminology: <https://youtu.be/eGZubrBmDm0>

Additional Elements - The font of the paper should be Times New Roman (size 12), with double-spacing, and no more than 1" margins. Each paper must include a cover page with a title and at least one graphic, and a works cited page.

<b>Map</b>	
<b>Organization</b>	10 points
<b>Accuracy</b>	10 points
<b>Effort/Appearance/Creativity</b>	5 points
	<b>Total 25 Points</b>

<b>Ferris Bueller's Day Analysis Paper</b>	
<b>Ferris' Timeline</b>	10 points
<b>3 Events/Reasons</b>	10 points
<b>Facts/Figures/Argumentation</b>	10 points
<b>5 Themes Description</b>	10 points
<b>Examples</b>	10 points
<b>Use of Geography Jargon/Terminology</b>	10 points
<b>Overall Effort/Presentation/Quality</b>	10 points
<b>Follow Directions</b>	5 points
	<b>Total 75 Points</b>
	<b>Project Overall Total 100 Points</b>