

# The Manchester Mapping Exercise

*Instructor Cover Sheet — Do Not Distribute*

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## Activity Overview

This 50-minute activity asks cadets to apply Engels' spatial analysis of industrial Manchester to a contemporary city using Google Maps satellite view and Street View. Each group works on one assigned city, examines specific locations, and produces an analytical claim about whether that city supports, complicates, or challenges Engels' argument.

The activity directly supports essay task two (connecting Engels' observations to a contemporary urban environment) and provides written documentation for grading purposes.

## Timing (50-minute block)

**5 min** — Introduction and group assignments

**25 min** — Group work (mapping, discussion, worksheet)

**15 min** — Report-outs (3 min per group)

**5 min** — Closing synthesis

## Group Assignments by Section Size

Section Size	Number of Groups	City Assignments
10–12 cadets	3 groups (3–4 each)	Detroit, Atlanta, Johannesburg
17–19 cadets	5 groups (3–4 each)	Detroit, Baltimore, Atlanta, Cleveland, Johannesburg

## Facilitation Notes

Assign groups rather than letting cadets self-select — this prevents close friends from arriving at the same essay material. Have cadets count off so the assignments feel arbitrary.

At the 15-minute mark of group work, walk around and ask each group which Engels passage they're working from. Groups that can't name a passage are drifting; redirect them.

During report-outs, capture names and claims for your discussion log. If groups push back on each other's analysis, that material is gold for the essay's task three (responding to a class disagreement) — note it carefully.

Closing synthesis questions to choose from: (1) Did anyone find a case where the spatial pattern looks completely different from Manchester, and what does that suggest? (2) When the layout is similar, is it for the same reasons Engels identified or different ones? (3) What does it mean that we can find Manchester-like patterns 180 years later in entirely different political and economic systems?

## Materials Needed

- Cadet handout (next page) — one per cadet
- Group worksheets (one per group, by city)
- Phones or laptops with internet access for Google Maps
- Projector for report-outs (recommended, not required)

# The Manchester Mapping Exercise

## Cadet Handout

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### The Premise

Engels is unusually precise about geography. He tells you which streets run where, what is hidden behind what, where the river sits in relation to the housing, and how the layout of Manchester physically separates classes. He is making an argument: industrial capitalism produces a particular spatial logic, and that logic is not accidental.

Today, you will take that analytical lens and apply it to a contemporary city. Working in your assigned group, you will use Google Maps (satellite view and Street View) to examine specific locations and ask: does what we see today support, complicate, or challenge what Engels argued in 1845?

### The Three Passages

Each group must engage with at least one of the following three passages from Engels. Your worksheet will ask you to identify which passage you focused on.

#### Passage 1: The Hidden Slums Behind Commercial Frontages

*“The town itself is peculiarly built, so that a person may live in it for years, and go in and out daily without coming into contact with a working people’s quarter or even with workers, that is, so long as he confines himself to his business or to pleasure walks... and the finest part of the arrangements is this, that the members of this money aristocracy can take the shortest road through the middle of all the labouring districts to their places of business, without ever seeing that they are in the midst of grim misery that lurks to the right and the left. For the thoroughfares leading from the Exchange in all directions out of the city are lined, on both sides, with an almost unbroken series of shops, and are so kept in the hands of the middle and lower bourgeoisie, which, out of self-interest, cares for a decent and cleanly external appearance and can care for it.” (Engels, 85-86)*

#### Passage 2: Little Ireland and the River Irk

*“350,000 working people in Manchester and its environs live, almost all of them, in wretched, damp, filthy cottages, that the streets which surround them are usually in the most miserable and filthy condition, laid out without the slightest reference to ventilation, with reference solely to the profit secured by the contractor. In a word, we must confess that in the working men’s dwellings of Manchester, no cleanliness, no convenience, and consequently no comfortable family life is possible; that in such dwellings only a physically degenerate race, robbed of all humanity, degraded, reduced morally and physically to bestiality, could feel comfortable and at home.” (Engels, 100).*

#### Passage 3: The Courts, Alleys, and Hidden Passages

*“These courts were built in this way from the beginning, and communicate with the streets by means of covered passages. If the totally planless construction is injurious to the health of the workers by preventing ventilation, this method of shutting them up in courts surrounded on all sides by buildings is far more so. The air simply cannot escape; the chimneys of the houses are the sole drains for the imprisoned atmosphere of the courts, and they serve the purpose only so long as fire is kept burning. Moreover, the houses surrounding such courts are usually built back to back, having the rear wall in common.” (Engels, 94).*

## What Your Group Will Do

1. Read the three passages together. Identify the specific spatial claim Engels is making in each — not just “things were bad” but the precise argument about how the city is laid out and why that matters.
2. On your worksheet, you will see your assigned city and several specific starting points. Open Google Maps. Switch to satellite view. Look for spatial patterns that parallel or contrast with what Engels describes — highways as boundaries, industrial zones adjacent to housing, commercial frontages that mask conditions behind them, neighborhoods physically separated from one another.
3. Drop into Street View at two or three intersections. What does the lived environment look like at street level? What does the boundary between neighborhoods actually look like to a person walking it?
4. Complete the worksheet. You will need to identify which Engels passage you focused on, describe what you observed in your assigned city, and make an analytical claim about whether your case supports, complicates, or challenges Engels’ argument.
5. Prepare a 3-minute report-out for the class. Designate one group member to present, but be ready as a group to answer questions.

## A Reminder About Your Essay

*The work you do today will be the basis for the essay task two. Keep your worksheet — you will need to refer to your specific city, your specific observations, and your specific analytical claim when you write. Listen carefully during report-outs as well. The arguments your classmates make today are exactly the kind of material the essay asks you to engage with by name.*

# Group Worksheet: Detroit

*The Manchester Mapping Exercise*

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**Group Members:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section / Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Suggested starting points in Detroit:**

*Use Google Maps (satellite view and Street View) to examine the following locations. You are not limited to these — they are a starting point.*

- **8 Mile Road (the boundary between Detroit and Ferndale/Oak Park)** — A famously stark dividing line. Compare housing density, vacant lots, and commercial activity on either side.
- **Delray neighborhood (southwest Detroit, near the Marathon refinery and the Gordie Howe Bridge construction)** — A residential neighborhood pressed up against heavy industry. Look at the proximity of housing to industrial facilities.
- **Indian Village vs. surrounding blocks (east side, near Mack Ave.)** — A preserved enclave of large historic homes, a few blocks from severe disinvestment. Compare the visual environment from one block to the next.

**Context for your analysis:** Detroit's spatial pattern was shaped by deindustrialization, racial segregation (including federal redlining and the construction of I-375 through the Black Bottom neighborhood), and white flight after 1967.

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**Task 1:** Which of the three Engels passages from the cadet handout did your group focus on, and what specific spatial claim is Engels making in that passage? (One or two sentences.)

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**Task 2:** Identify the specific location(s) in Detroit that you examined. Note street names, neighborhoods, or intersections. Describe what you observed in satellite view and at street level.

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**Task 3:** Make an analytical claim. Does what you observed in Detroit support Engels' argument that industrial capitalism produces a particular spatial logic, complicate it, or challenge it? Be specific. (Three or four sentences.)

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**Report-Out Preparation (3 minutes)**

*Before the report-out, designate one group member to (a) name the Engels passage, (b) describe your Detroit case, and (c) state your analytical claim. The whole group should be ready to respond to questions.*

# Group Worksheet: Baltimore

*The Manchester Mapping Exercise*

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**Group Members:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section / Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Suggested starting points in Baltimore:**

*Use Google Maps (satellite view and Street View) to examine the following locations. You are not limited to these — they are a starting point.*

- **Sandtown-Winchester (West Baltimore, near where Freddie Gray was arrested)** — Examine vacant row houses, the density of housing, and the presence or absence of green space and commercial activity.
- **The Inner Harbor and surrounding tourist district** — A redeveloped commercial waterfront. Look at how it relates spatially to the neighborhoods just blocks inland.
- **The Jones Falls Expressway corridor (I-83)** — A highway cut through the city. Look at what it physically separates and how the neighborhoods on either side compare.

**Context for your analysis:** Baltimore's spatial pattern was shaped by formal segregation ordinances (the 1910 West Ordinance was the first racial zoning law in the U.S.), federal redlining, and deindustrialization following the decline of Bethlehem Steel and the port.

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**Task 1:** Which of the three Engels passages from the cadet handout did your group focus on, and what specific spatial claim is Engels making in that passage? (One or two sentences.)

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**Task 2:** Identify the specific location(s) in Baltimore that you examined. Note street names, neighborhoods, or intersections. Describe what you observed in satellite view and at street level.

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**Task 3:** Make an analytical claim. Does what you observed in Baltimore support Engels' argument that industrial capitalism produces a particular spatial logic, complicate it, or challenge it? Be specific. (Three or four sentences.)

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**Report-Out Preparation (3 minutes)**

*Before the report-out, designate one group member to (a) name the Engels passage, (b) describe your Baltimore case, and (c) state your analytical claim. The whole group should be ready to respond to questions.*

# Group Worksheet: Atlanta

*The Manchester Mapping Exercise*

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**Group Members:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section / Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Suggested starting points in Atlanta:**

*Use Google Maps (satellite view and Street View) to examine the following locations. You are not limited to these — they are a starting point.*

- **The I-20 corridor (the dividing line between historically Black south Atlanta and historically white north Atlanta)** — Examine how the highway functions as a boundary. Compare neighborhoods on either side.
- **Buckhead vs. Bankhead** — Two neighborhoods on opposite ends of the city’s wealth and racial geography. Compare the built environment, commercial activity, and density.
- **The BeltLine and the neighborhoods it has transformed (e.g., Old Fourth Ward, Reynoldstown)** — A redevelopment project that has reshaped formerly industrial corridors. Look at what the BeltLine’s built environment communicates.

**Context for your analysis:** Atlanta’s spatial pattern was deliberately engineered through highway construction in the 1950s–60s, which was used in many Southern cities to separate Black and white neighborhoods. Robert Moses-style planning logic shaped the city’s racial geography.

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**Task 1:** Which of the three Engels passages from the cadet handout did your group focus on, and what specific spatial claim is Engels making in that passage? (One or two sentences.)

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**Task 2:** Identify the specific location(s) in Atlanta that you examined. Note street names, neighborhoods, or intersections. Describe what you observed in satellite view and at street level.

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**Task 3:** Make an analytical claim. Does what you observed in Atlanta support Engels’ argument that industrial capitalism produces a particular spatial logic, complicate it, or challenge it? Be specific. (Three or four sentences.)

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**Report-Out Preparation (3 minutes)**

*Before the report-out, designate one group member to (a) name the Engels passage, (b) describe your Atlanta case, and (c) state your analytical claim. The whole group should be ready to respond to questions.*

# Group Worksheet: Cleveland

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**Group Members:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section / Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Suggested starting points in Cleveland:**

*Use Google Maps (satellite view and Street View) to examine the following locations. You are not limited to these — they are a starting point.*

- **The Cuyahoga River industrial corridor (the Flats)** — Historically the heart of Cleveland’s steel and chemical industry. Examine the proximity of industrial facilities to residential neighborhoods.
- **Hough neighborhood (east side, site of the 1966 uprising)** — Compare housing density, vacancy, and commercial activity to neighborhoods just to the west or south.
- **Shaker Heights (just east of Cleveland’s eastern edge)** — A planned wealthy suburb developed in the early twentieth century. Compare its layout and built environment to the adjacent Cleveland neighborhoods.

**Context for your analysis:** Cleveland’s spatial pattern was shaped by its role as a major steel and manufacturing center, federal redlining (Cleveland was one of the most heavily redlined cities in the U.S.), and post-1970s deindustrialization.

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**Task 1:** Which of the three Engels passages from the cadet handout did your group focus on, and what specific spatial claim is Engels making in that passage? (One or two sentences.)

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**Task 2:** Identify the specific location(s) in Cleveland that you examined. Note street names, neighborhoods, or intersections. Describe what you observed in satellite view and at street level.

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**Task 3:** Make an analytical claim. Does what you observed in Cleveland support Engels’ argument that industrial capitalism produces a particular spatial logic, complicate it, or challenge it? Be specific. (Three or four sentences.)

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**Report-Out Preparation (3 minutes)**

*Before the report-out, designate one group member to (a) name the Engels passage, (b) describe your Cleveland case, and (c) state your analytical claim. The whole group should be ready to respond to questions.*

# Group Worksheet: Johannesburg

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**Group Members:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section / Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Suggested starting points in Johannesburg:**

*Use Google Maps (satellite view and Street View) to examine the following locations. You are not limited to these — they are a starting point.*

- **Alexandra township and Sandton (separated by the M1 motorway)** — One of the starkest spatial juxtapositions in any contemporary city: a high-density informal township directly adjacent to Africa's wealthiest commercial district. Examine the boundary.
- **Soweto (southwest of central Johannesburg)** — A planned township under apartheid, now a sprawling area home to over a million people. Examine the housing typology, the density, and the distance from the central business district.
- **The mine dumps along the southern edge of central Johannesburg** — Massive yellow waste hills from a century of gold mining, which historically formed a physical and racial barrier between the white northern suburbs and the Black southern townships.

**Context for your analysis:** Johannesburg's spatial pattern was shaped by deliberate apartheid planning (the Group Areas Act of 1950 forcibly segregated the population) and by the gold mining industry that founded the city in 1886. The British colonial administration originally established the racial structure that apartheid later codified. This is a useful case for considering how the spatial logic Engels identified in industrial Manchester was exported and intensified through empire.

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**Task 1:** Which of the three Engels passages from the cadet handout did your group focus on, and what specific spatial claim is Engels making in that passage? (One or two sentences.)

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**Task 2:** Identify the specific location(s) in Johannesburg that you examined. Note street names, neighborhoods, or intersections. Describe what you observed in satellite view and at street level.

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**Task 3:** Make an analytical claim. Does what you observed in Johannesburg support Engels' argument that industrial capitalism produces a particular spatial logic, complicate it, or challenge it? Be specific. (Three or four sentences.)

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**Report-Out Preparation (3 minutes)**

*Before the report-out, designate one group member to (a) name the Engels passage, (b) describe your Johannesburg case, and (c) state your analytical claim. The whole group should be ready to respond to questions.*