Chapter 7
Regions of the United States
Chapter 7: Regions of the United States

Section 1: The Northeast

Section 2: The South

Section 3: The Midwest

Section 4: The West
• How have the physical characteristics and resources of the Northeast affected its economy?
• How did the Northeast become an early leader of industry?
• Why has the Northeast coastal region become a megalopolis?
• Millions of people visit the Northeast every year to experience the scenery, culture, and history of the region.
• The Northeast has relatively few natural resources.
• The Appalachian Mountains make some areas quite rugged.
• Apart from coal in Pennsylvania, the Northeast has few mineral resources.
• The Northeast has been a center of commerce and fishing since Colonial times.
• The Northeast’s rivers have been vital to its history.
• Abundant precipitation and hilly terrain helped early industrialists harness water power by building water wheels that powered machines.
• Factories were built at waterfalls along many of the region’s rivers.
• The factories produced goods that were sold across the United States and exported to markets around the world.
• The rivers also served as trade routes, railroad routes, and highway routes.
The cities of the Atlantic coast grew from being harbors of international trade to centers of industry that attracted many people from the countryside and overseas.

Over time, the coastal cities spread and ran into each other, creating a megalopolis, meaning “very large city.”

The east coast megalopolis remains one of the dominant centers of American business and industry.

There are now concerns that the megalopolis might run short of water or waste disposal facilities.

Some cities in the Northeast are declining in population.
How did hilly terrain and high precipitation benefit the region?
   a) Rich mineral deposits were exposed for easy mining.
   b) Swift rivers enabled industrialists to build water wheels to power machines.
   c) Hills and rivers protected towns from invading forces.
   d) Soil was rich for farming.

The coastal cities spread and ran together, and by the 1960s they formed
   a) a metropolis.
   b) an urban area.
   c) a megalopolis.
   d) a hinterland.
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• How have warm climate and rich soils affected vegetation in the South?
• What key natural resources have influenced industrial development?
• How have changes in the South led to the growth of cities there?
• The South’s warm, wet climate produces thick mixed forests and stands of mangrove trees.

• Marshy inlets of lakes and rivers in Louisiana are called bayous.

• Rich soils, ideal for agriculture, attracted Europeans, some of whom built large plantations.

• Farming is still important to the South’s economy.

• Some parts of the South, such as Appalachia, are deeply impoverished.
In the 1840s, entrepreneurs built water-powered textile mills along the **Fall Line**, the region where rivers and streams form waterfalls as they descend from the Appalachian Mountains to the Atlantic Ocean.

Many cities sprang up along waterfalls on the Fall Line in both the Northeast and the South.

Textile mills were built close to farms that grew cotton.

Oil was discovered in east Texas in 1901, and for decades the petroleum and the petrochemical industries brought great wealth to the region.

A large band of manufacturing facilities borders the Gulf of Mexico, with ready access to raw materials and ocean ports.
Old and new industries have flourished in the South in recent decades. The South attracted business for several reasons:
- Southern industrial plants were newer and more efficient.
- New factories could be built on much cheaper land.
- Labor unions were less common in the South, so labor was cheaper.
Many people moved to the South because of the milder climate.
The South is part of the Sunbelt region that stretches from the Carolinas to California, overlapping the South and the West.
The South has a diverse population, with a mix of people of European, African, and Latin American descent.
What natural resource attracted early European immigrants to the South?

a) the dense forests  
b) the fertile soil  
c) the mineral-rich mountains  
d) the mild climate

In what area were many textile mills built in the 1840s?

a) Appalachia  
b) the bayou  
c) the Fall Line  
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How does the climate of the Midwest support agriculture?
Why has farming become big business?
How have resources and transportation promoted industry in the Midwest?
An Agricultural Economy
The Midwest is relatively flat and contains fertile soil that is rich in a dark-colored organic material called **humus**.

The Midwestern climate favors agriculture with its long, hot summers.

There are many regional variations, such as precipitation, growing season, and quality of soil, that affect the type of agriculture possible.

Midwestern farms, the most productive in the world, have earned the Midwest the nickname “the nation’s breadbasket.”
American farms were once modest family enterprises, but they have become big businesses involving fewer people and more machinery.

**Farming Technology**
- In 1834, Cyrus McCormick’s mechanical reaper revolutionized farming, allowing vast amounts of wheat to be harvested in less time.
- As more tasks became mechanized, farmers could produce more crops.
- Push-and-pull migration factors have helped reduce the number of farm workers.
- Farm output has increased dramatically.

**Linking Farms to Cities**
- Agriculture dominates the Midwestern economy.
- Business activities focus on dairies or on grain elevators.
- Large Midwestern cities are closely linked to the countryside.
- The Chicago Mercantile Exchange is the world’s busiest market for many farm products.
- The Chicago Board of Trade is the largest grain exchange.
• The Midwest is home to much heavy manufacturing because of its supply of natural resources.
• Minnesota is a leader in iron ore production, while sizeable coal deposits are found in Indiana and Illinois.
• Easy access to minerals spurred the development of steel mills, which encouraged the region’s automobile industry.
• Many of the major cities in the Midwest are located on the shores of the Great Lakes or along major rivers, and water transportation aided the growth of heavy industries.
• The growth of the railway system brought farm products to Chicago from the West to be processed and shipped east.
What economic activity dominates the Midwest?
   a) farming
   b) mining
   c) finance
   d) fishing

What factors aided the growth of heavy industry?
   a) large populations of immigrant workers
   b) access to iron, coal, and water transportation
   c) fertile soils rich in humus
   d) close location to ocean ports
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Chapter 7, Section 4
The West

• How does the abundance or scarcity of water resources affect natural vegetation in the West?
• What major natural resources have influenced economic activity in the Western United States?
• How have geography and distance affected where people live and work in the region?
Abundance or scarcity of water affects natural vegetation, economic activity, and population density.

Much of the West has a semiarid or arid climate, with short grasses, shrubs, sagebrush, and cactuses for vegetation.

The western side of the cordillera receives much more rainfall, and it contains deciduous and coniferous forests at lower elevations.

Hawaii has a wet tropical climate and dense tropical vegetation.

The tundra of Alaska is a dry, treeless plain that sprouts grasses and mosses only when the top layer of soil thaws in the summer.
The Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada are rich in minerals such as gold, silver, uranium, copper, and tin.

Most of the mineral wealth of the region is deep underground, out of the reach of the fortune-seeking prospectors who swarmed into the area in the 1800s.

Discovery of a major oil field in Alaska in the 1960s transformed the state’s economy.

The Trans-Alaska pipeline carries crude oil from northern Alaska to the southern coast.

Forestry and commercial fishing are also important to the economy of the region.
Completion of the first transcontinental railway in 1869 spurred the growth of towns and cities along its length.

Because of the harsh landscape and climate, few people settled in the region’s countryside, and most in the West still prefer to live in cities.

Los Angeles, the second-largest city in the United States, began as a cattle town that provided beef for prospectors during the Gold Rush.

To support its growing population, Los Angeles needs to obtain water through aqueducts, large pipes that carry water long distances.

Alaska is an immense but sparsely populated state with few roads through its rugged mountains.

Hawaii is an island chain more than 2,000 miles from the mainland, and it was annexed in 1898 to provide a refueling station for naval vessels.
What resources drew fortune-seekers to the West in the 1800s?
   a) tin and copper
   b) uranium
   c) oil and natural gas
   d) gold and silver

What effect did the completion of the transcontinental railroad have?
   a) Towns and cities grew rapidly.
   b) People left the area in droves.
   c) Mineral prospectors flooded into the region.
   d) The United States annexed Hawaii.
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