

A Spatial Way of Thinking

Introduction

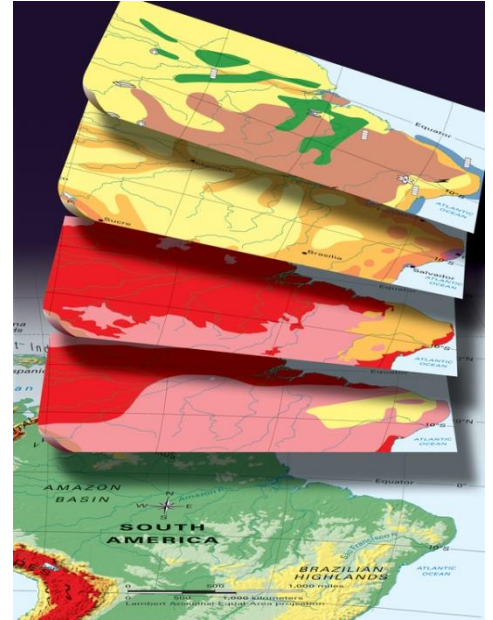
These thematic maps of South America show different information about the area.

In the late summer of 1854, a highly contagious disease called cholera struck a neighborhood in London, England. People suddenly began suffering cramps, vomiting, and terrible thirst. The disease was so severe that many people died within hours of their first symptoms. In just 10 days, the disease killed about 500 people. Wagons groaned under the weight of corpses being taken away for mass burial.

No one knew how cholera spread or had any idea how to contain the outbreak—except a doctor named John Snow. Snow convinced officials to remove the handle from a water pump on Broad Street so that no one could draw water from the well there. As the cholera outbreak slowed, Snow knew he had correctly identified the source of infection: polluted drinking water.

Snow had, in effect, solved the mystery by using the skills of the geographic inquiry process. First, he asked a question: How was cholera spread? Next, he acquired information by going door to door to find out where people were dying. He then organized his information on a neighborhood map, marking the house of each cholera death. His next step was to analyze his map. Thus, he was able to answer his question: The Broad Street pump must be spreading the disease because most of the deaths were clustered around it.

John Snow's map is an example of a **thematic map**, a map that presents information related to only one theme, or topic. In this lesson, you will learn how to identify and read different types of thematic maps. In addition, you will see how geographers use these tools to make sense of Earth's physical and human features.

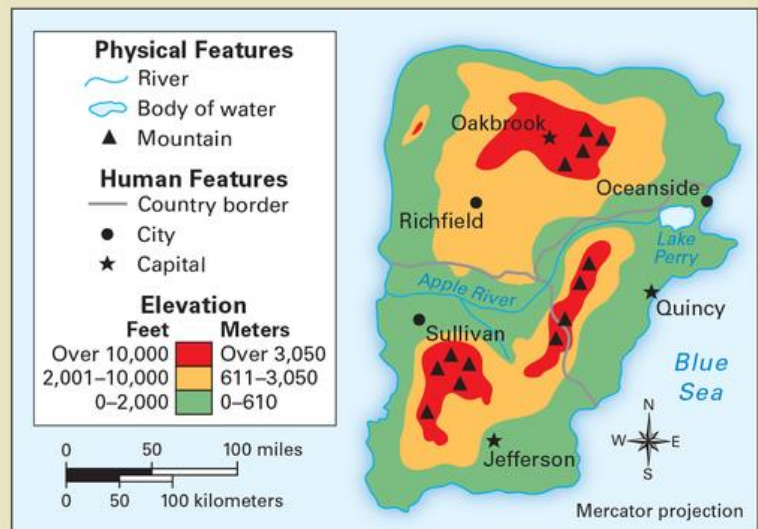


Essential Question

Why do geographers use a variety of maps to represent the world?

Geographers use maps for many purposes. A map legend tells you what kind of information the map shows. Colors, for example, can show different climates. Symbols can show physical features like rivers, or they can identify human features such as roads and cities. Keep this fictitious map and its legend in mind as you try to answer the Essential Question.

Graphic Organizer



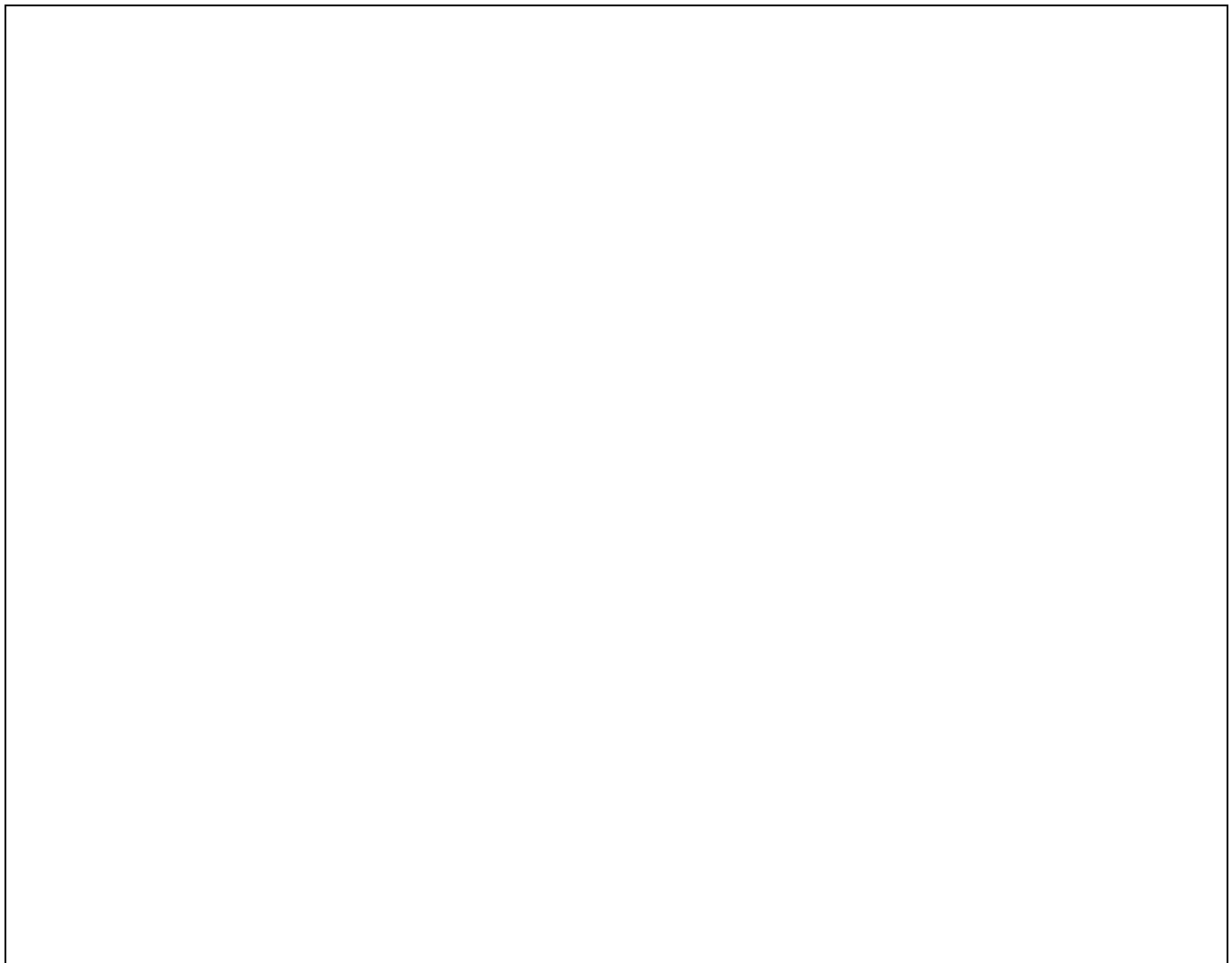
A Spatial Way of Thinking

Why do geographers use a variety of maps to represent the world?

Preview

Design an advertisement that encourages people to move to your town or city. Include these things in your ad:

- a memorable slogan
- a map that shows where your town or city is located in your state
- an illustration and brief caption for each of the following: landscape, average weather conditions, plant life, the estimated number of people living in your town or city, jobs
- creative touches to make the ad eye-catching and attractive
- writing that has correct grammar and spelling



1. The Geographic Setting

Thematic maps are all around us. Tune in to a news program and you're likely to see a weather map with the high and low temperatures for towns in your area. To find your way on the local bus system, you might use a map showing bus routes. By focusing on a specific topic, or theme, maps like these show information about some aspect of physical or human geography.

Thematic Maps Can Show Physical Geography Some thematic maps focus on physical geography. For instance, they may display Earth's **physical features**, or the natural parts of Earth's surface. Such features include **landforms** like mountains, valleys, plains, and **plateaus**. Physical features also include bodies of water such as oceans, seas, rivers, and lakes.

Thematic maps can also illustrate other aspects of the physical environment. For example, some maps focus on **climate**, or long-term weather patterns. Climate maps show how much rainfall different areas receive. They also show how hot or cold various places tend to be in winter and summer.

Climate has a tremendous effect on the types of **vegetation**, or trees and other plants, that will grow in an area. You can see this by comparing a climate map of Earth with a vegetation map, a map that shows the kinds of trees and other plants that grow in various places. In many ways, it looks like a climate map, although other factors also affect what will grow where.

Thematic Maps Can Show Human Geography Thematic maps can also focus on human geography. John Snow's map of the cholera deaths near the Broad Street pump is a good example. Another example is a political map. A political map of the United States shows the borders of the 50 U.S. states. Political maps of larger areas show the borders between countries. In addition to borders, political maps also show important cities, such as the capitals of states and countries.

Another type of thematic map shows **population density**. This is the average number of people living in a unit of area, such as a square mile. The higher the number, the more crowded an area is. A population density map reveals where large numbers of people cluster.

Besides showing where people live, a thematic map can show what they do. A map of **economic activity** focuses on the ways people produce, buy, and sell goods and services. This kind of map might show the main types of business and industry in an area. It might also show the **natural resources** that fuel the area's economy. Natural resources are useful items found in nature, such as wood, coal, and oil.

A Map's Title and Legend State its Theme To read a thematic map, first look at a map's title. The title usually states the topic of the map. Then, look at the map legend to determine how to read the map's symbols. On a U.S. political map, the legend often shows the symbols for the national and state capitals. A map legend may also explain how the map uses colors. For instance, a thematic map might use colors to show differences in elevation or population density.

► Geotermns

climate the pattern of weather over a long period of time

economic activity any action that relates to the making, buying, and selling of goods and services

landform any natural feature of Earth's surface that has a distinct shape. Landforms include major features such as continents, plains, plateaus, and mountain ranges. They also include minor features such as hills, valleys, canyons, and dunes.

physical feature any natural characteristic of Earth's surface, such as landforms and bodies of water

population density the average number of people who live in a unit of area, such as a square mile. Population density measures how crowded an area is.

region an area defined by one or more natural or cultural characteristics that set it apart from other areas

thematic map a map that shows a particular theme, or topic

vegetation all the plants and trees in an area



Political Maps

Political maps help us see where countries, states, and important cities are located. On this map of the United States, you can see the borders of your state. A star marks the state’s capital, and a star with a circle around it shows the nation’s capital.

Write the physical geography features to the right side of the chart and the human geography features to the left side of the chart.

vegetation population density political boundaries economic activities mountains climate

Human Geography	Physical Geography

Section 1 - The Geographic Setting

Read the Introduction and Section 1. Then, create an illustrated dictionary of the Geoterms by completing these tasks:

- Create a symbol or an illustration to represent each term.
- Write a definition of each term in your own words.
- Write a sentence that includes the term and the word *map*.

Climate

Symbol:	Definition:
	Sentence

Economic Activity

Symbol:	Definition:
	Sentence

Vegetation

Symbol:	Definition:
	Sentence

Population Density

Symbol:	Definition:
	Sentence

2. Mapping Earth's Physical Features

In the winter, snowboarders look for a snowy mountain to practice their sport on. In the summer, vacationers seek to cool off by a lake or river. These are just three of the landforms and bodies of water that you might see on a physical features map.

Physical Features Map

The map below shows major physical features in India. The Himalayas are India's highest physical feature. Two long rivers, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra, flow out of the Himalayas and form one of the world's largest river deltas where they meet the Bay of Bengal.

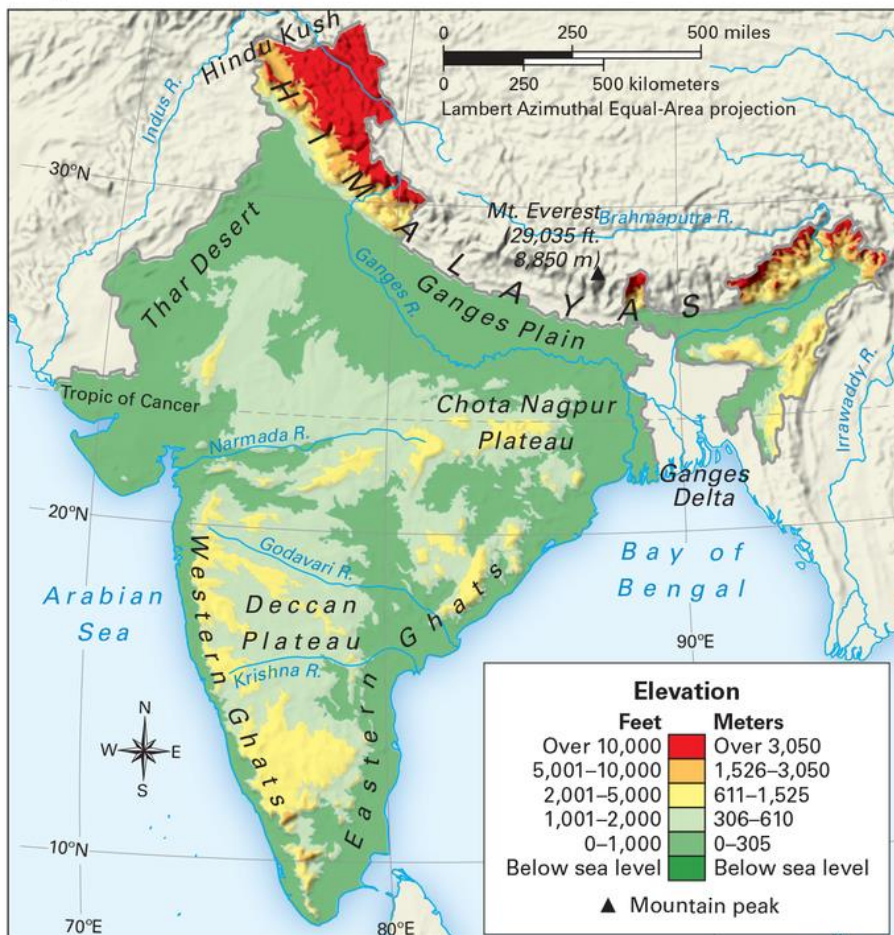
Common Landforms Geographers have given names to the many landforms found on Earth. Some landforms have distinctive shapes when viewed from above. A long, narrow peninsula, for example, juts out from a continent into the ocean and is surrounded by water on three sides. Other landforms have distinct shapes when viewed from ground level. Mountain ranges tower over low, flat plains. A plateau is a raised, flat area of land. A canyon is a deep, narrow valley with steep sides.

Physical features maps show the shapes of features as seen from above. They also show the **elevation**, or height above sea level, of various features. These maps typically use colors and shading to show changes in elevation.



The Steep Rock Walls of Canyon de Chelly
A canyon is a landform found mostly in the southwestern United States. Canyon de Chelly was once home to Anasazi Indians. They built their villages in the steep canyon walls. You can find Canyon de Chelly on a physical features map of Arizona.

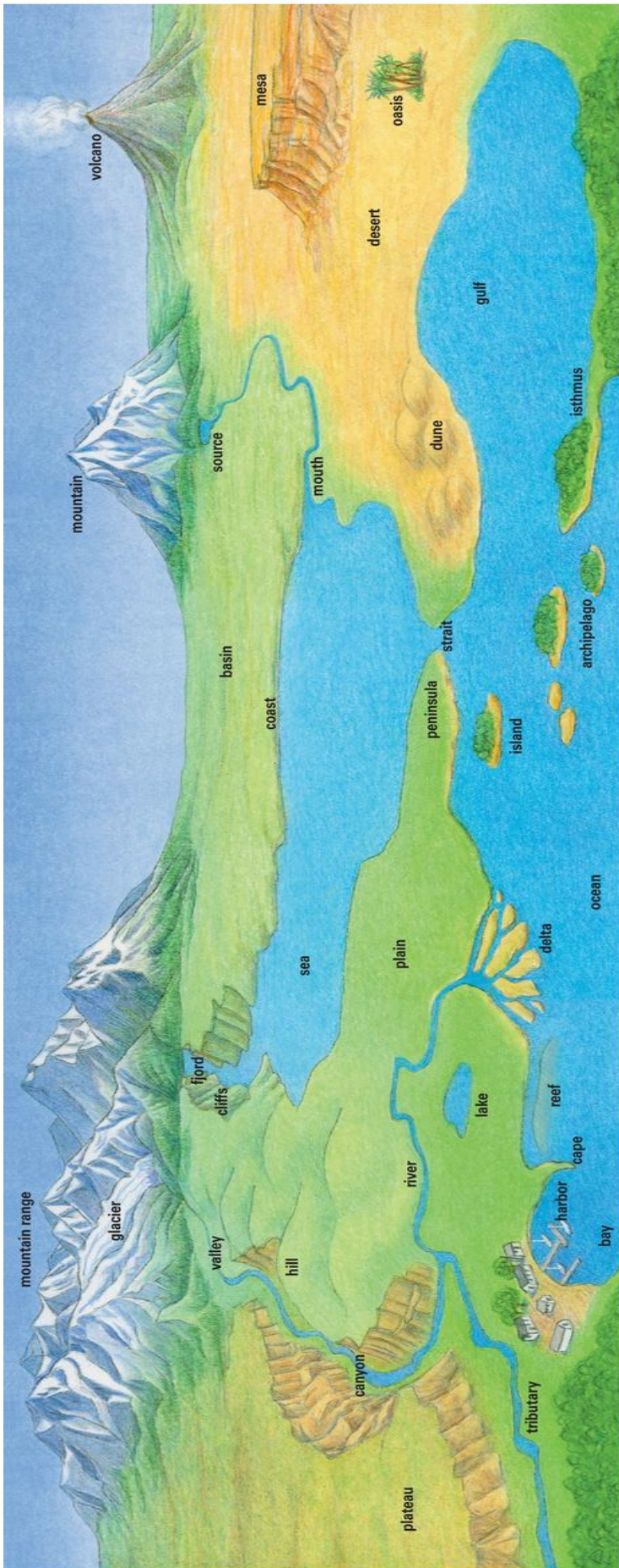
Physical Features of India



Bodies of Water Geographers also label bodies of water on physical features maps. Many kinds of bodies of water appear on continents. For instance, rivers flow from mountains and make their way to the sea. Lakes are entirely surrounded by land. Other water bodies are created where oceans and seas meet continents. A bay is part of an ocean that is enclosed by an inward-curving stretch of coastline. A **gulf** is a body of water that cuts deeply into the shoreline and is enclosed by land on three sides.

Landforms and Water Bodies

You will see both landforms and bodies of water labeled on maps. This diagram shows many of these physical features.



Select the correct answer.

1. A physical features map shows landforms and bodies of water as seen from

- a) elevation
- b) below
- c) above
- d) climate
- e) vegetation

2. These maps typically use color and shading to show changes in

- a) elevation
- b) below
- c) above
- d) climate
- e) vegetation

Acting Out a Physical Feature

You will work with your group to bring to life one aspect of the world physical features map. All members of your group must participate in the act-it-out.

Step 1: Circle the physical feature your group has been assigned.

basin	isthmus	plateau	gulf
bay	lake	river	plain
canyon	peninsula	strait	delta
mountain range			

Step 2: Your group members will arrange their bodies to model your assigned physical feature. You may use sounds or movement to make your presentation more realistic. For example, to model a river, you might lie on the floor in a line and make the sounds of water flowing by. Your presentation must be geographically accurate and clearly demonstrate your assigned feature.

To prepare, talk about these questions with your group:

- *Does this feature represent the shape of land, something on land, or a body of water?*
- *What are the characteristics of your feature?*
- *What makes this feature unique?*

Step 3: Practice arranging your bodies to model your physical feature. Remember, you may use sounds or movement to make your model more realistic.

3. Hot, Cold, Wet, Dry: Earth's Climates

Do you check a weather report each morning to see what the day will be like? Are most days sunny, or does it rain a lot where you live? Such long-term patterns in weather are called *climate*.

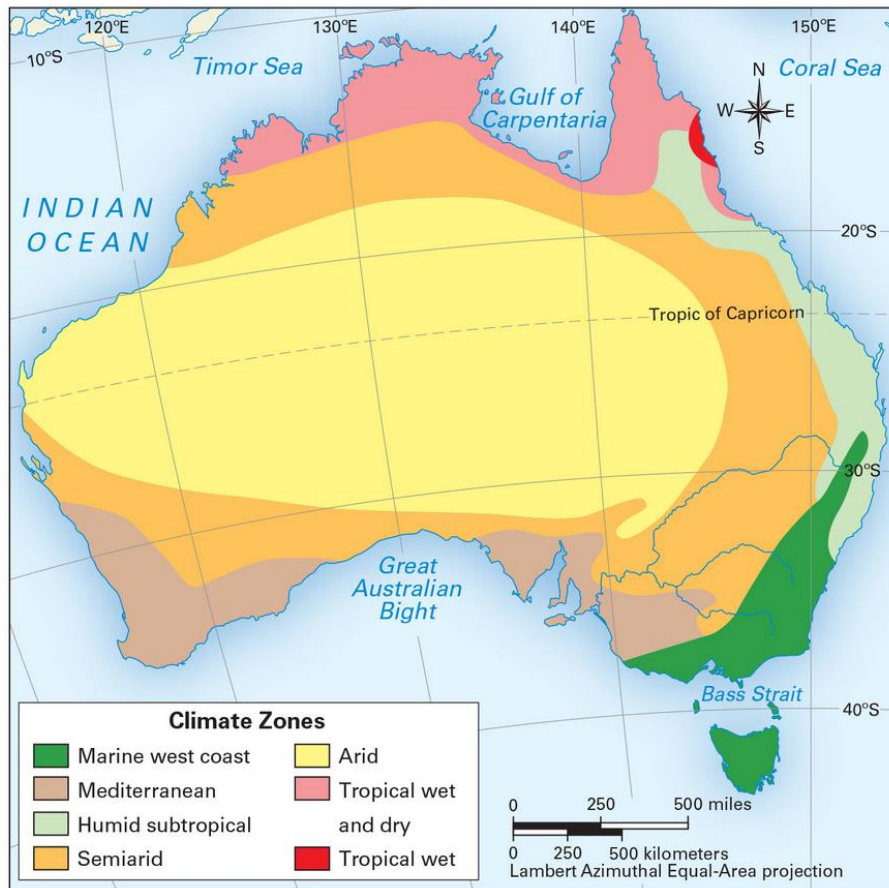
Climate Zones To study climates, geographers divide Earth into **climate zones**. Each zone has a particular pattern of temperature and **precipitation**: rain, snow, or other forms of moisture. This pattern is often shown on a **climagraph**.

A climagraph shows the average temperature and precipitation in a place over a year. The letters at the bottom of a climagraph stand for the months of the year. The curved line indicates the average monthly temperatures, while the bars show the average monthly precipitation.

Location Affects Climate Many factors affect a location's climate, but none is more important than latitude. Places in tropical latitudes, near the equator, get the most direct rays from the sun all year, so these places have hot weather year-round. Places at high latitudes, close to the North and South poles, receive much less sunlight and remain quite cold all year.

Elevation, or altitude, also affects climate. Places at high elevations have colder climates than those lower down. Large bodies of water can also affect an area's climate. In coastal areas, ocean winds and warm-water currents keep temperatures even year-round. Places farther inland have more extreme climates, with hotter summers and colder winters. You'll learn more about the factors that affect climate throughout this program.

Climate Zones of Australia



Climate Maps

Australia has seven climate zones. This climate map shows each zone in a different color.

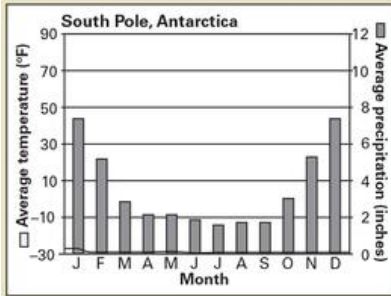
► Geotermns

climate zone: a large area of Earth with a particular pattern of weather

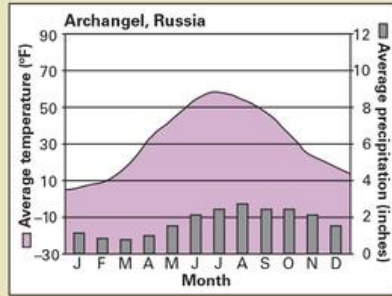
precipitation: moisture that falls from the sky as rain, snow, sleet, or hail

climagraph: a graph that shows the average temperature and precipitation in a place over a year

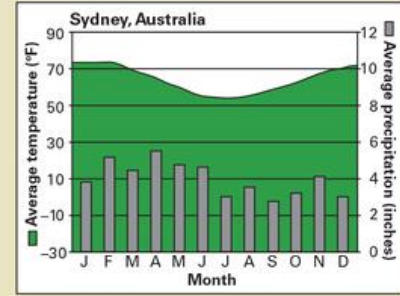
World Climate Zones



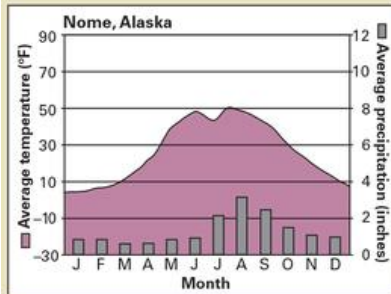
ice cap very cold all year with permanent ice and snow



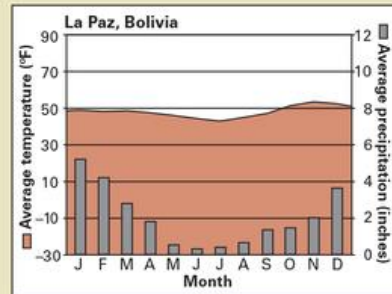
subarctic cold, snowy winters and cool, rainy summers



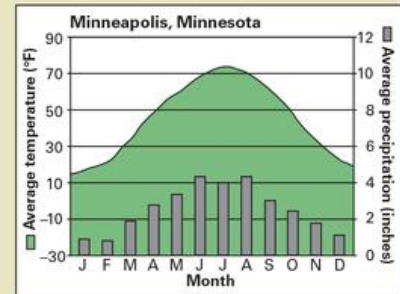
marine west coast warm summers, cool winters, and rainfall all year



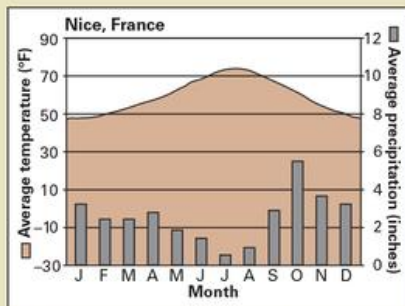
tundra very cold winters, cold summers, and little rain or snow



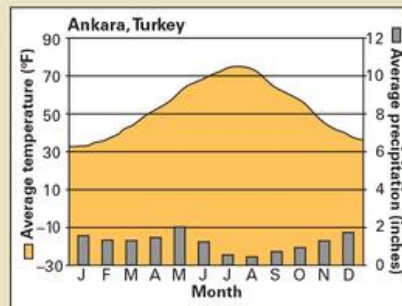
highlands temperature and precipitation vary with latitude and elevation



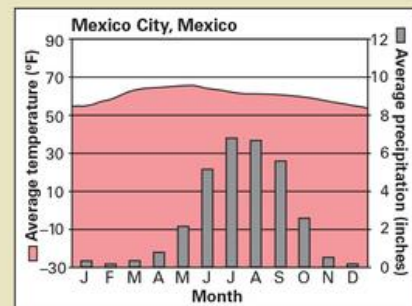
humid continental warm, rainy summers and cool, snowy winters



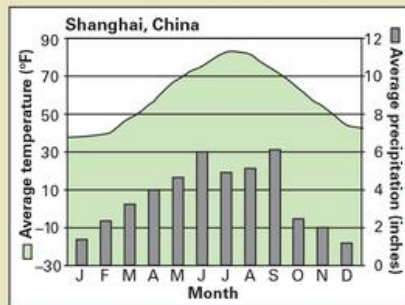
Mediterranean warm all year with dry summers and short, rainy winters



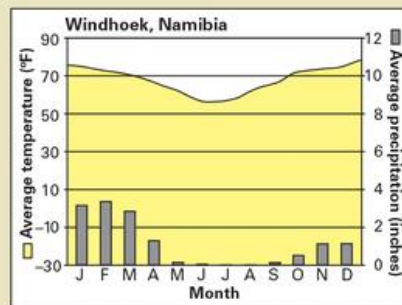
semiarid hot, dry summers and cool, dry winters



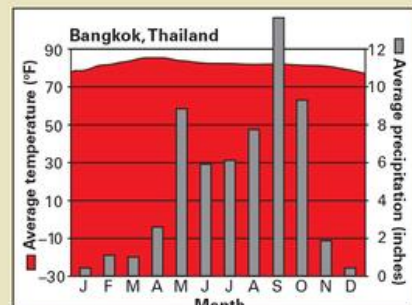
tropical wet and dry hot all year with rainy and dry seasons



humid subtropical hot, rainy summers and mild winters with some rain



arid hot and dry all year with very little rain



tropical wet hot and rainy all year

Select the appropriate term.

1. The pattern of temperature and precipitation in a particular climate zone is shown on a
 - a) longitude
 - b) weather map
 - c) climagraph
 - d) latitude

2. One of the most important factors in determining a place's climate is its _____ because it effects the amounts of sunlight that the place receives.
 - a) longitude
 - b) weather map
 - c) climagraph
 - d) latitude

3. Write two sentences describing a world climate map and the information it shows.

Make a poster

With your partner make a poster that includes the following:

1. City and state of your assigned climagraph
2. Name and description of climate zone
3. Latitude of city
4. A picture that shows the climate

Write a short presentation explaining your poster to the class.

Choose 3 climate zones that you read about and were described in your fellow students' presentations. Complete the table by creating a definition for each zone in your own words. Also include an example of a place that is in this climate zone.

Climate Zone:

Definition:
Example:

Climate Zone:

Definition:
Example:

Climate Zone:

Definition:
Example:

4. Trees and Other Plants: Earth's Vegetation

Think about the climate where you live and about the kinds of trees and other plants that grow nearby. In an **arid** climate like a **desert**, you might see hardy cacti and scrubby brush. In a **humid continental** climate, you might see lofty fir and pine trees that stay green all year. Climate has a major effect on the kind of vegetation that grows in a place.

Vegetation is Adapted to Its Environment Plants of some kind grow nearly everywhere on Earth. But in order to survive, plants must adapt to their environment.

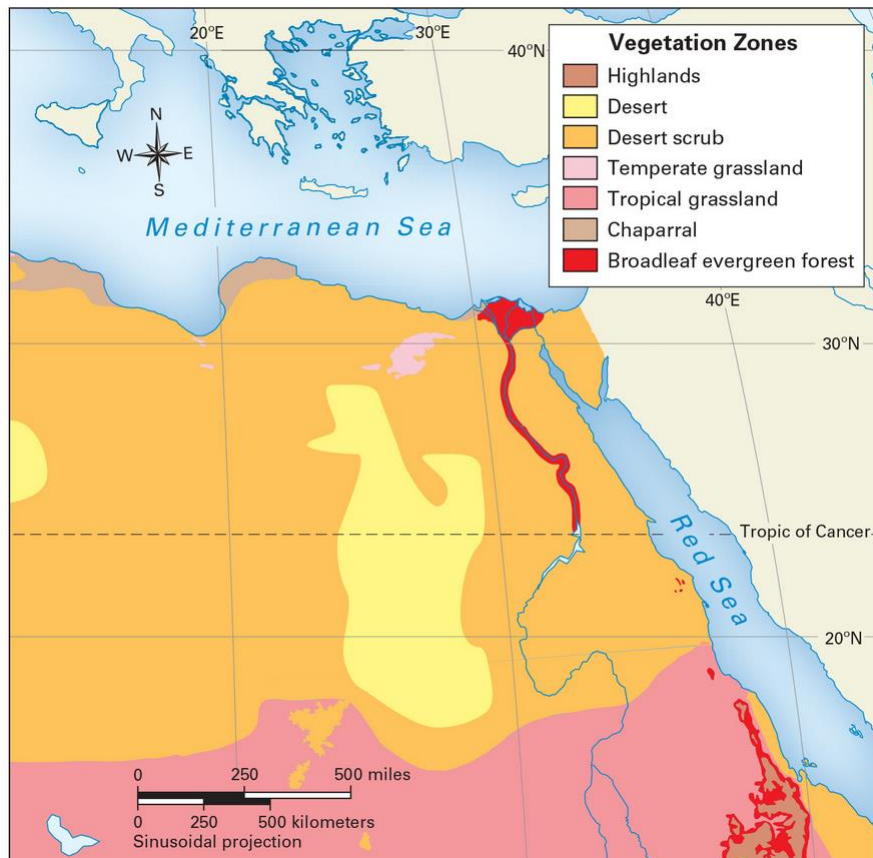
Plants have found ways to adapt to even extreme environments. A tundra climate zone is very cold and dry, yet small plants and bushes grow there and wildflowers blossom in the tundra's short summer. In arid climates, cacti can survive very hot days and go for long periods without water. Other kinds of vegetation need plentiful precipitation to thrive.

In addition to climate, other factors affect what plants grow where. Among them are elevation, amount of sunlight, and richness of the soil.

Global Vegetation Zones Geographers study where different plants grow by dividing the world into **vegetation zones**. In each zone, a certain mix of plants has adapted to similar conditions.

Like climate zones, vegetation zones are affected by latitude and elevation. They range from the barren ice cap zones at the poles to the dense broadleaf evergreen forest zones near the equator. Highlands vegetation zones are usually on mountain slopes.

Vegetation Zones of North Africa



Vegetation Maps

This map shows the vegetation zones found in North Africa. Chaparral thrives beside the Mediterranean Sea. Desert and desert scrub are found in the dry Sahara. A narrow band of broadleaf evergreen forest appears in the northeast corner of North Africa. What do you think allows tropical trees to survive in such an arid region?



► Geoterms

arid: dry or lacking rainfall; also a climate or climate zone that is hot and dry all year with very little rain

desert: a geographic region with too little rainfall to support much plant life; also a vegetation zone

humid continental: a climate or climate zone with warm, rainy summers and cool, snowy winters

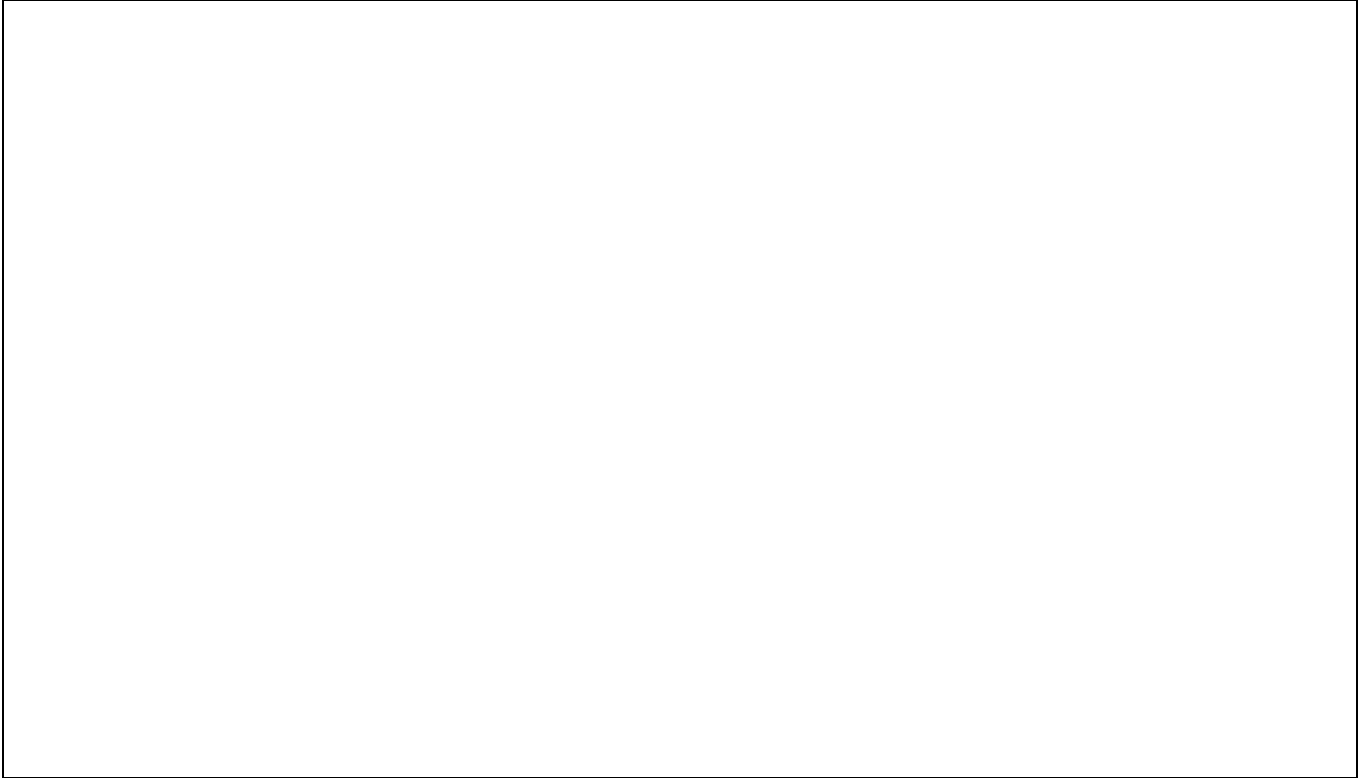
vegetation zone: a large area of Earth with a certain mix of plants and trees that are adapted to similar conditions

Vegetation Zone	definition
Ice cap	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
tundra	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
coniferous forest	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
deciduous forest	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
mixed forest	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
broadleaf evergreen forest	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
temperate grassland	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

tropical grassland	
chaparral	
desert scrub	
desert	

What vegetation zone do you live in? _____

Draw a picture of what the natural vegetation looks like where you live. (not your front yard)



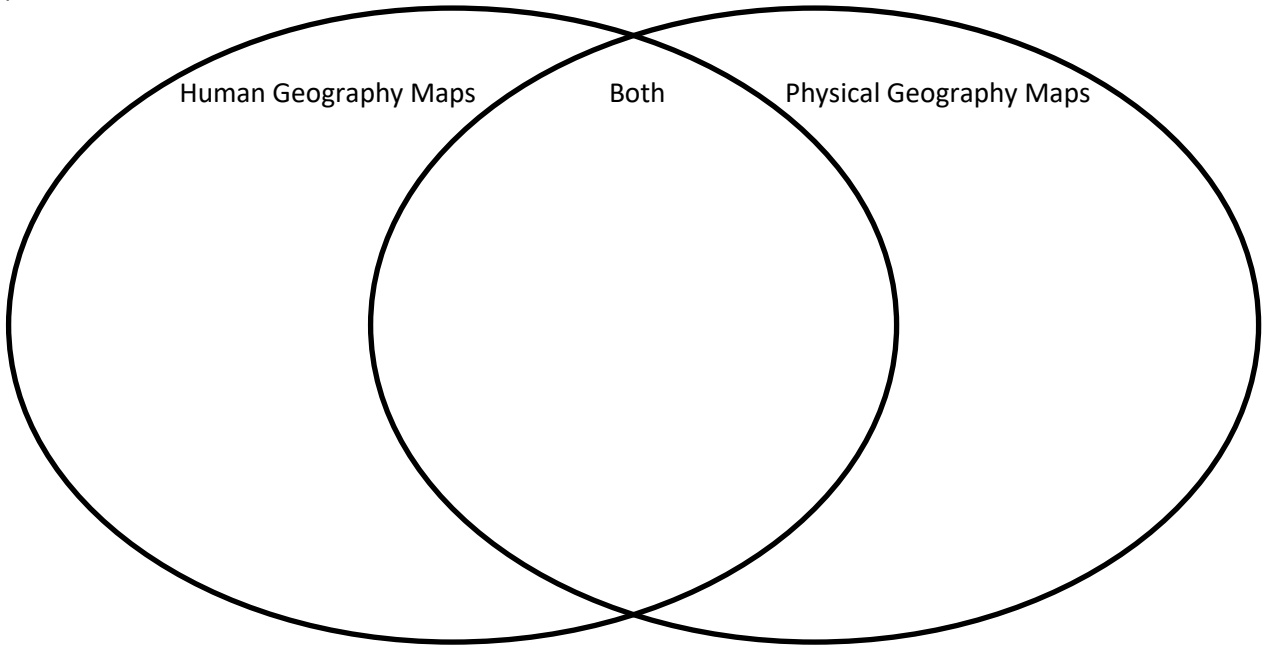
Name one other vegetation zone that you think might exist in the United States.

Draw a picture of what that natural vegetation looks like.



Study Guide: SS6 2L Vegetation Zones

1. Compare and Contrast



2. Geographers study where different plants grow by dividing the world into

3. Name a plant that might be found in a desert zone.

4. What vegetation zone contains mostly evergreen trees with needles and cones?

5. Most of Michigan is found in which vegetation zone?

5. Where People Live: Population Density

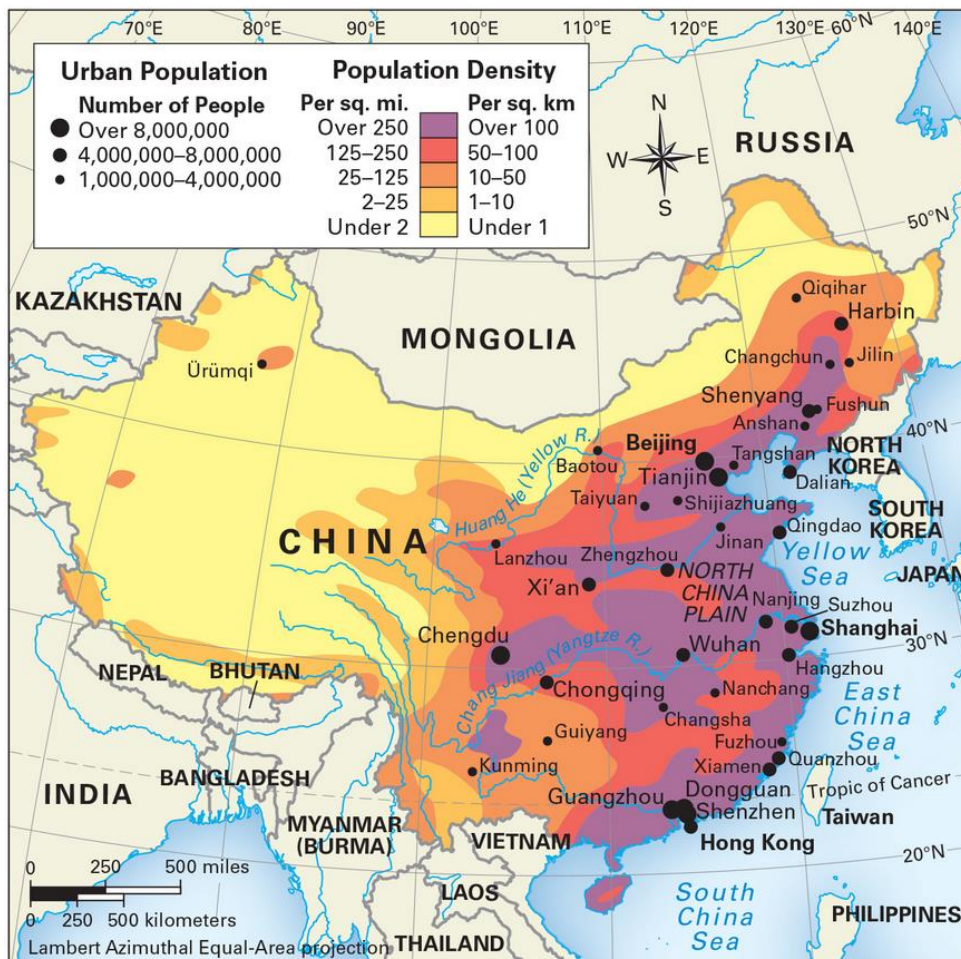
In 2010, the 8.2 million people residing in New York City were jammed into an area of about 300 square miles. Compare this with the town of Skwentna, Alaska, in 2010, where approximately 40 people were spread out over about 450 square miles. When it comes to crowding, these two places are about as different as they can be. Geographers show these kinds of differences using population density maps.

Population Density Measures Crowding Population density tells us how crowded a place is. To calculate the density of a place, divide the total number of people living there by the location's total land area. The higher the result, the more crowded the place is. In 2010, New York City had a population density of more than 27,000 people per square mile. In contrast, Skwentna had less than 1 person per square mile.

Population density affects how people live. In Skwentna, houses are so spread out that people rarely see their neighbors. There are no roads, so residents use airplanes, boats, or snowmobiles to get to the local store and the post office. Skwentna's version of rush hour comes in February, when dogsled racers speed through town.

Things are far different in New York City. Many people live in highrise apartments, where they may have hundreds of neighbors just in their own building. Every day at rush hour, New Yorkers pour into railroads, ferries, and underwater tunnels to get to their destinations. Millions of "straphangers" hold on tight as they jostle one another in the city's crowded subways.

Population Density of China



Population Density Maps

Population density maps show patterns of where people live. On this map, much of the North China Plain is colored purple, as are many coastal areas. These are the most crowded parts of China.

Population Density from High to Low

Population density is a measure of crowding. Some countries are very densely populated, while others are not. These photographs show places with different population densities.



More Than 250 People per Square Mile

Manilla in the Phillipines is the most crowded place on Earth. On average, many more than 250 people live in a square mile in this busy city.



125 to 250 People per Square Mile

Austria is a fairly crowded country. On average, between 125 and 250 people live in every square mile of this mountainous land.



25 to 125 People per Square Mile

This uncrowded New England village has a lot of space for living. On average, between 25 and 125 people live in every square mile of this town.



2 to 25 People per Square Mile

This photo of Ireland's countryside shows a thinly populated country. Ireland has some big cities, but in most of Ireland, there is an average of 2 to 25 people per square mile.



Fewer Than 2 People per Square Mile

Some people of Central Asia live in almost empty countries. Fewer than 2 people might live in every square mile of areas like this one.

Write True or False

_____ Metropolitan cities tend to have low population densities.

_____ Population density affects how people live.

_____ Population density is calculated by dividing the total number of adults living in an area by the total number of children living in an area.

What population zone do you live in? _____

Draw a picture of what the population zone looks like where you live.



Name one other population zone that you think might exist in the United States.

Draw a picture of what that population zone looks like.



6. Economic Activity: Land and Resources

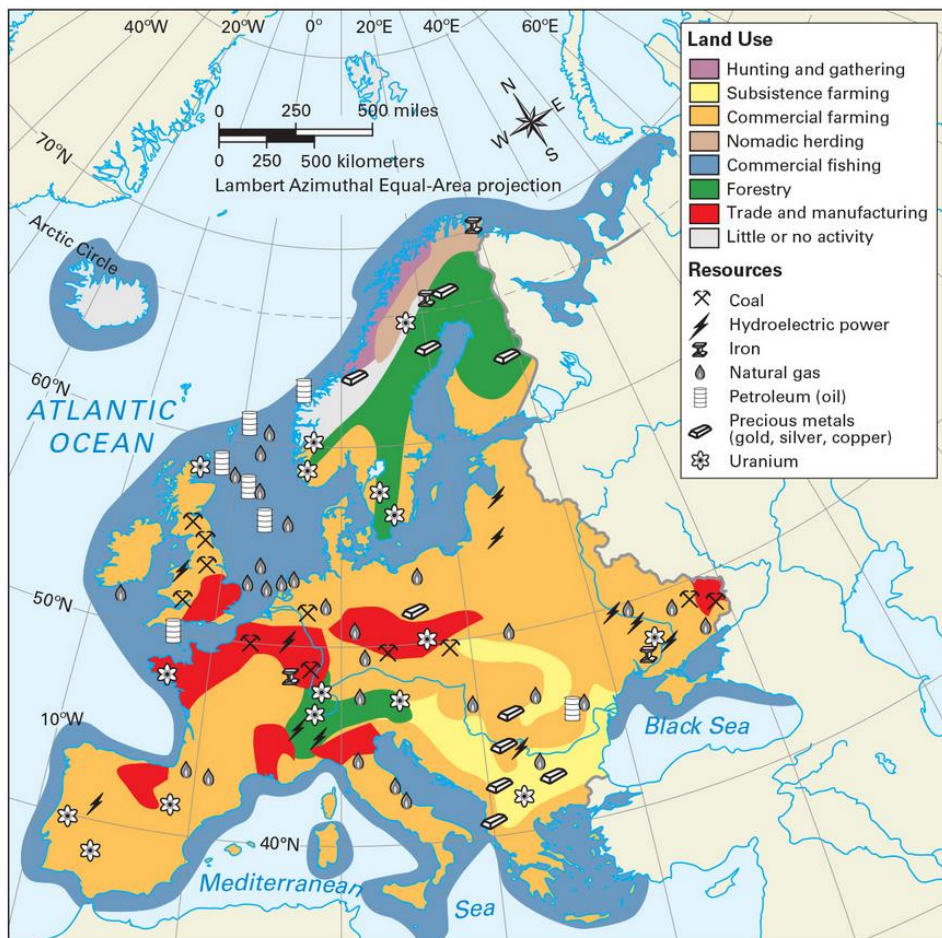
Do you like chocolate? This sweet treat comes from cocoa beans, the fruit of the cacao tree. The cacao tree grows only in hot, humid tropical areas near the equator. However, the factories that convert cocoa beans into chocolate are found mostly in Europe and the United States. The locations of cacao **plantations** and chocolate factories are examples of the kind of information you might see on an economic activity map.

Land Use Shows How People Make a Living Economic activity maps often show patterns of **land use**, or the way people use the land they live on to meet their needs. In some areas, for example, people use land for farming or for grazing large flocks of cattle, goats, and sheep. In other areas, they may use land for mining.

Natural Resources Affect Economic Activity Economic activity also depends on a country's natural resources. **Forestry**, or the harvesting of trees to produce wood products, is important in forested areas. Near oceans, fishing is an important industry.

Some resources lie concealed beneath the ground. This is true of mineral resources such as iron, copper, and gold. **Fossil fuels** such as oil, coal, and natural gas are extracted from Earth and burned to meet people's energy needs. Uranium, another underground energy resource, provides fuel for nuclear power plants. In contrast, moving water is an easy-to-find energy resource. Dams can be built on rivers to harness the moving water's energy and convert it to **hydroelectric power**.

Economic Activity of Europe



gold. **Fossil fuels** such as oil, coal, and natural gas are extracted from Earth and burned to meet people's energy needs. Uranium, another underground energy resource, provides fuel for nuclear power plants. In contrast, moving water is an easy-to-find energy resource. Dams can be built on rivers to harness the moving water's energy and convert it to **hydroelectric power**.

Economic Activity Maps

The colors on this map show land use patterns in Europe. The most widespread land use is commercial farming. The symbols show the locations of important resources in Europe. Where is petroleum, or oil, found in Europe?

► Geoterns

plantation: a large farm, especially in a hot area

land use: the ways in which people use a particular area of Earth's surface; for example, for farming, development, or preservation

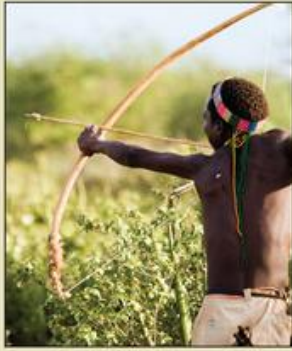
forestry: the planting, growing, and harvesting of trees

fossil fuel: any fuel, such as petroleum, coal, and natural gas, that is made from the remains of prehistoric plants and animals

hydroelectric power: electricity that is generated from the power of moving water

Land Use and Resources

How people use land depends on the natural resources in their area. Some still get their food by hunting and gathering, and others grow crops and raise animals to sell. Many others make and sell goods created from natural resources. Natural resources are not evenly distributed around the world.



Hunting and Gathering in Tanzania

Many people still hunt animals and gather plants for food. Most live in small groups that move from place to place. This hunter in Tanzania uses a bow and arrow to hunt wild game.



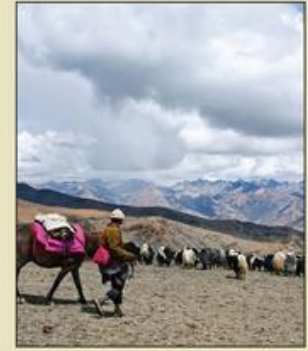
Subsistence Farming in Myanmar

Some farmers grow only enough crops to feed their own families. This is called *subsistence farming*. Most farms in Myanmar are small and only provide enough food for the owners. Most of the subsistence farmers are women.



Commercial Farming in Brazil

Commercial farmers raise crops or livestock to sell. Commercial farms are often very large. Many grow a variety of crops, while others specialize in just one crop.



Nomadic Herding in Nepal

Millions of people around the world are nomadic herders, moving around often to find food and water for their animals. This herder in Nepal uses the animals' milk, hides, and other products.



Livestock Raising in Australia

Cattle, sheep, and goats are raised on huge ranches. More than half of the farmland in Australia is used for raising sheep and cows. Australian livestock raisers lead the world in production of wool for clothing and carpets.



Commercial Fishing in Asia

Many people make their living by fishing the world's oceans, lakes, and rivers. The Pacific Ocean yields more than half the world supply of fish. In 2014, about 55 million people worked in the fishing industry, with the majority in Asia.



Forestry in the United States

Forestry uses trees as a resource for making homes, furniture, and paper. In 2014, the United States was the second leading supplier of wood in the world. The United States also uses up more forest resources than any other country.



Trade and Manufacturing in Germany

Manufacturing turns resources into goods to sell. In this German factory, workers assemble cars for shipment around the world.

Choose from the following terms to best complete the sentences below.

natural resources	production output	land use	economic activity map
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_____ is the way people use the land they live on to meet their needs. It often depends on a country's _____, which might include fish, minerals, and fossil fuels.

Acting Out an Economic Activity

You will work with your group to bring to life an aspect of the world economic activity map. All members of your group must participate in the act-it-out.

Step 1: Circle the land use your group has been assigned.

hunting and gathering	nomadic herding	livestock raising	trade and manufacturing
forestry	subsistence farming	commercial farming	commercial fishing

Step 2: Your group will demonstrate the activities of the people who use the land in the way of your assigned land use. For example, to model commercial fishing, you might rock side to side as if on a boat and pretend you are lifting heavy nets full of fish. Your presentation must be geographically accurate and must clearly demonstrate your assigned land use.

To prepare, talk about these questions with your group:

- *In what parts of the world is this land use found?*
- *How does the land look, sound, or smell?*
- *What types of jobs would people have?*

Step 3: Practice your act-it-out. Pantomime the activities of people who live where your land use is found. When asked by your teacher, you will have to answer the questions below without directly naming your assigned land use. (For example, if your assigned land use is subsistence farming, do not say that you see a farm. Instead, you might say you see fields.) Assign one question to each group member.

- *In what part of the world are you?*
- *What are the sights, sounds, and smells of this location?*
- *What are you doing?*

You may use visuals and other props to make your act-it-out more realistic.

Choose 3 economic activities that you read about and were acted out in your fellow students' presentations. Complete the table by creating a definition for each zone in your own words. Also include an example of a place that is in this climate zone.

Economic Activity:

Definition:
Example:

Economic Activity:

Definition:
Example:

Economic Activity:

Definition:
Example:

Study Guide SS6_2L7 Land Use

1. What does an economic activity map of a country show?
2. What type of land use would you expect to find at a place that has a high population density? Why?
3. Name at an economic activity that is dependent on an area's natural resources? Explain.
4. Explain the difference between subsistence farming and commercial farming.

Organizing Earth's Surface: Regions

As you have learned, geographers use many kinds of maps to help make sense of the world. Some of these maps focus on physical geography, and others focus on human geography. All of them reveal interesting patterns to explore.

Geographers use these patterns to organize Earth's surface into **regions**. A region is an area with one or more features that set it apart from other areas. As you will see, the concept of region allows geographers to divide the world in useful ways.

Unique Features Define a Region Think about the community in which you live. Does it have a business district? A shopping mall? An industrial park? A civic or community center? A residential neighborhood? Each of these areas has unique features that set it apart from other parts of the community. You might think of one area as a business region, another as a shopping region, and still another as a residential region. Each region looks different, has a different purpose, and has different requirements.

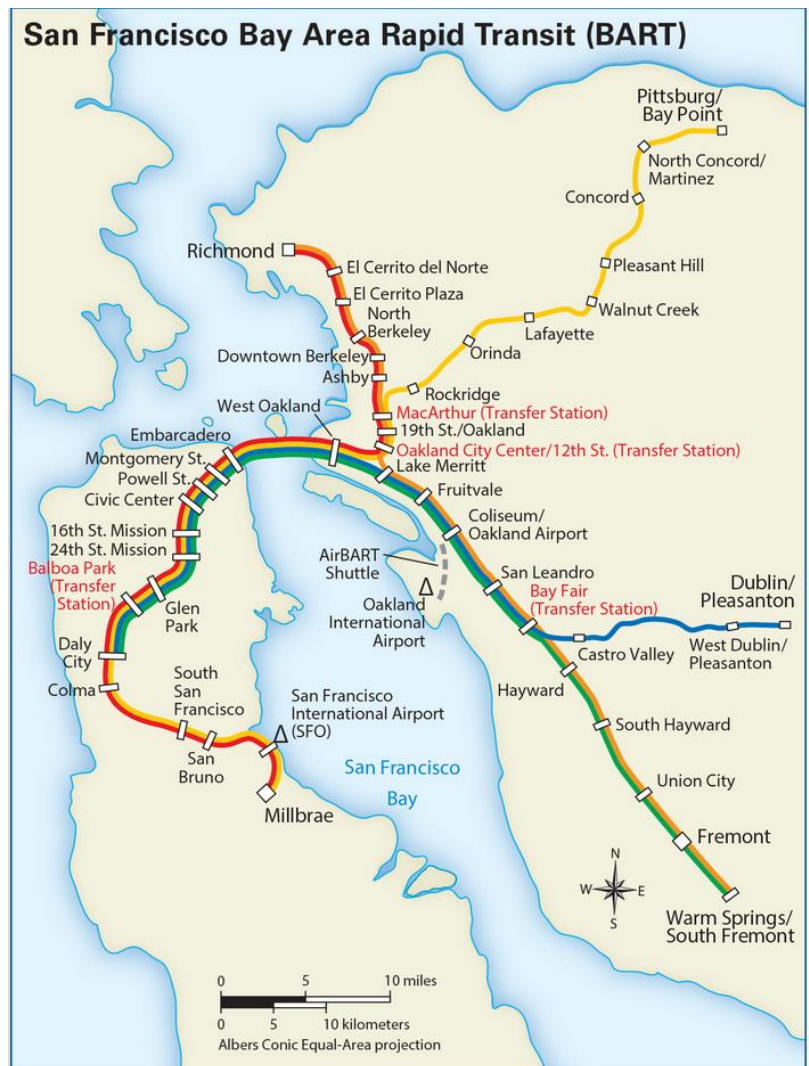
Geographers define regions in several ways. The Sunbelt is a region made up of states in the southern and southwestern United States, from Florida to California, that is defined by physical, or natural, features. What sets the Sunbelt apart from other regions is its warm, sunny climate. The Corn Belt, in contrast, is a region made up of states in the center of the country, such as Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa, and it is defined by the human feature of raising corn as an important economic activity.

Dividing the World into Seven Major Regions The world is a very large place to make sense of. For this reason, geographers usually divide it into regions to study. These world regions are still very large, but each has its own distinct features.

This program divides the world into seven major regions. Each region is shown in a different color on the world regions map. Your study of a region will begin with an introduction to its most important physical and human features, in which you will begin to see what makes each of these regions unique.

Transportation Region Maps

A region is an area with one or more features that set it apart from other areas. A feature might be something physical like climate, or it might be a human feature such as roads and train lines. The network of routes on this map defines a transportation region in the San Francisco Bay Area.



region: an area defined by one or more natural or cultural characteristics that set it apart from other areas

Regions of the World



Economic Systems

Introduction

It is a Saturday afternoon, and across the United States, supermarkets are bustling. Inside, brightly lit shelves are neatly stocked with every imaginable foodstuff and household item. Shoppers maneuver their carts through the aisles, deciding which products to buy from a seemingly endless array of choices.



It was on a day like this in 1989 that Boris Yeltsin, a popular political leader from the Soviet Union and formerly chief of the Moscow Communist Party, visited a supermarket in Houston, Texas. It was one of many stops on a two-week tour of the United States.

To Yeltsin, the sight of ordinary people doing their weekly grocery shopping was anything but ordinary. In fact, to someone who had lived his whole life under communism, it was a revelation. A local newspaper reported that Yeltsin wandered the aisles, shaking his head in amazement. He sampled cheese and produce. He stared at the meat displays. He stopped customers to ask about the items in their carts and how much they cost. He asked the manager whether special training was necessary to run a supermarket.



Yeltsin's reaction was understandable. By the late 1980s, the state-run Soviet economy was in shambles. Consumer goods were scarce. People had to wait in long lines to buy food and other necessities. Store shelves were frequently empty of all but one or two poorly made goods. Even the privileged Communist Party elite did not enjoy such abundance as could be found in the average American supermarket.

The stark contrast between American and Russian living standards was, Yeltsin later wrote, “shattering.”

When I saw those shelves crammed with hundreds, thousands of cans, cartons, and goods of every possible sort, for the first time I felt quite frankly sick with despair for the Soviet people. That such a potentially super-rich country as ours has been brought to a state of such poverty! It is terrible to think of it.

—Boris Yeltsin, *Against the Grain*, 1990

The visit confirmed for Yeltsin the painful truth about the Soviet economic system: it was a complete failure. In Houston and other American cities, he saw a very different economic system at work.

In this lesson, you will explore different economic systems. You will learn how each one functions and who makes the decisions in each type of economy. You will also learn why some types of economy have succeeded while others have failed.

Answer these questions about the cartoons.



1. Where are the people in each cartoon?
2. How would you describe each scene?
3. Who or what decides what consumers get in each cartoon?
4. What advantages and disadvantages do you see represented in each cartoon?
5. Which store would you prefer to shop in, and why?


1. Who Gets What? How Do Societies Decide?

If resources were unlimited, we could all have whatever we want. But resources are limited, so people must make choices about what to have and what to give up. This also forces societies to make choices. The larger and more advanced a society is, the more numerous and complex these choices may be.


Key Concept

The Three Basic Economic Questions


Every society—no matter how rich or poor—must answer three basic economic questions about the goods and services its people want.



What will be produced? Even with our limited resources, billions of things might be produced. Who or what decides which wants to fulfill and which to leave unsatisfied?



How will it be produced? There are many ways to produce a desired item. Who decides how the factors of production will be organized to make what people want?



For whom will it be produced? Once an item is produced, the question remains: who should get it? The first person in line? The highest bidder? The person who needs it most?

The Three Fundamental Economic Questions: What to Produce, How, and for Whom?

In deciding how to allocate limited resources, every society—from a tribe of people living in the Kalahari Desert to a modern industrial nation like the United States—must answer three fundamental economic questions. Each society answers these questions differently, depending on its priorities. The questions, however, are the same for everybody.

What goods and services are to be produced? Because resources are limited, no society can produce everything its people might want. This raises the question: What goods and services are most wanted and needed? For example, should the United States conserve wilderness areas for recreational purposes or open them up to logging or oil exploration? Should the U.S. steel industry produce more car parts or more beams for skyscrapers? What do consumers want or need more: sneakers or diapers? Teachers or dentists? Books or video games? With millions of possible products and many different interests competing for the same limited resources, the choices seem endless.

Even the simplest societies face difficult choices. Vanuatu is a nation of several small islands in the South Pacific. Vanuatu's economy has long depended on agriculture, but tourism is growing in importance. The question looming over Vanuatu's people is about what will benefit them more—putting more resources into growing food, or expanding tourist services? As a society, Vanuatians must decide.

How are goods and services to be produced? The answer to this question is not as simple as it may seem. You know that goods and services are produced by combining the factors of production: land, labor, and capital. But how is this done, exactly, and in what combination?

Consider wheat production. How should land, labor, and capital be used to raise this essential grain? Should wheat be grown mainly on giant factory farms? That is the way an American agribusiness raises wheat. But in a different society, wheat maybe grown on smaller family farms. Think about another example: hats. Should hats be crafted individually, by hand, or in factories by machines? Each society has to decide for itself the answer to such questions.

At this point, you are probably wondering why a society as a whole has to make decisions about hats. Don't hat manufacturers decide how to produce headwear? In the United States, they do, but that is because our society gives them that choice. Not all societies work this way.

For whom are goods and services to be produced? In other words, who gets what? This last question is a difficult one, because it raises the slippery question of fairness: who *deserves* what? Again, every society finds its own answer.

Goods and services are distributed in a variety of ways. The ability to pay is the approach most of us know best. It essentially says that anyone who can afford to buy a hat can have one.

Another approach is equal distribution. This approach was adopted by the Soviet Union before its collapse. Unfortunately, goods were in such short supply that lines formed for everything. Instead of distributing goods equally, the system favored those who got in line early and had time to wait. As a result, some people got more than their share, while others got nothing.

This brings us to yet another form of distribution: first come, first served. As in the Soviet Union, this approach often prevails when quantities are limited. Goods such as concert and theater tickets are usually sold this way.

In addition, there is distribution according to need. A soup kitchen does this when it provides meals to the homeless. So does a public school that provides classroom aides for special education students.



A Society's Answers Depend on Its Economic Goals

The way a society answers the three economic questions will necessarily depend on its economic goals and social values. Most societies try to address some or all of the following six economic goals.



Economic freedom. In our society, we place a high value on **economic freedom**—the ability to make our own economic decisions without interference from the government. When you choose to buy something, whether it's a new game or a used car, you are exercising this freedom. When you choose to sell your car or go into business selling cars or anything else, you are exercising this freedom. A society that values economic freedom gives individuals and businesses the right to make decisions about how to use their resources, without government intervention.

Economic efficiency. An efficient economy makes the most of society's resources. It delivers the goods by allocating resources in such a way that the greatest number of consumers get what they want with the least amount of waste. Because unemployed workers are a wasted resource, an efficient economy strives for **full employment**, which exists when all who want to work can find jobs.

Economic equity. The term equity concerns fairness and justice. **Economic equity** involves the fair and just distribution of a society's wealth. A society that values economic equity seeks to give everyone his or her fair share of the economic pie. But what constitutes a fair share? Is it fair that corporate executives make millions while retail workers earn minimum wage? Is it fair that women, as a group, earn less than men? People often disagree on questions of equity, which makes it a difficult goal to achieve.

Economic growth. An economy is said to grow when it produces more and better goods and services. **Economic growth** is desirable because over time it leads to an improved standard of living. A century ago, middle-class Americans lived without cars, electricity, kitchen appliances, and indoor plumbing (not to mention antibiotics, frozen foods, and the Internet). A key element of economic growth is scientific and technological innovation. New ideas and inventions bring new and improved products into the market, creating economic growth and raising living standards.

Economic security. Every society has people who cannot provide for themselves. They may be too young, too old, too sick, or too poor to meet all of their basic needs. A society that puts a high value on economic security seeks to provide its less fortunate members with the support they need in terms of food, shelter, and health care to live decently. This is another economic goal about which people often disagree.

Economic stability. No one likes economic uncertainty. Societies therefore strive for its opposite: economic stability. **Economic stability** means that the goods and services we count on—electricity on demand, food and clothing in the stores—are there when we want them. Our jobs are there when we go to work each day. Prices are predictable, allowing us to plan ahead for purchases.

Most societies consider these goals when making economic choices, but societies differ in the degree of importance they attach to each goal. Sometimes progress toward one goal can be achieved only at the expense of another. For example, when the government taxes our wages in order to pay unemployment benefits, it is contributing to society's economic security. But it is also encroaching on our economic freedom to control our own resources. Societies, like individuals, must weigh the tradeoffs and costs of pursuing any particular set of economic goals.

For each of the three fundamental economic questions, explain why it is important for society to answer that question.

Question 1:

What is it?
Why is it important?

Question 2:

What is it?
Why is it important?

Question 3:

What is it?
Why is it important?

Rank the six economic goals from most important to least important.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Write a one- or two-sentence justification of your rankings.

2. Who Decides What in Different Economic Systems?

In the process of answering the three economic questions, every society develops an economic system. An **economic system** is the way a society coordinates the production and consumption of goods and services. Economic systems are as old as humankind, so you might expect there to be many different models. But if we strip away all the cultural differences that exist between all the societies that ever were, we find that history has produced only three basic types of economic systems. There are those built on tradition, those based on the command of rulers, and those organized by free markets. Each system answers the three economic questions differently. And each emphasizes different economic goals.

Traditional Economies: Decision Making by Custom

The first and oldest economic system is the traditional economy. Traditional economies have existed since the first clans of hunter-gatherers emerged in Africa. In a **traditional economy**, custom and tradition dictate what to produce, how to produce it, and for whom.

Most traditional economies that survive today belong to indigenous people who live much as their ancestors did hundreds or thousands of years ago. The Maasai of East Africa, for example, are a seminomadic herding people. Livestock, primarily cattle, is an important part of their economy and Maasai wealth is measured in cattle and children. The traditional Maasai diet consists primarily of meat, blood, and milk from cattle. The Maasai's answer to the question of *what to produce* is cattle, because it is their centuries-old tradition to raise cattle.

As for the question of *how to produce*, people in traditional economies engage in farming, herding, fishing, hunting, and the gathering of wild plants. Exactly who does what is determined by social customs. Labor is often divided along gender lines. Among the Maasai, for example, men build enclosures to protect the cattle from lions, boys graze the cattle, and women and girls milk the cattle. Among the Khoi-San people of the Kalahari Desert in Southern Africa, men hunt and women gather.

For whom to produce is another question decided by tradition. Social hierarchies play an important role. A good illustration of this is the way meat is distributed among the Khoi-San people of the Kalahari. After a hunt, the kill is divided up, with a large share going to the hunter. He gives some to relatives, and they give part of theirs to other relatives, all according to the accepted social order. In the end, everyone gets enough to eat.

The highest goals of people in a traditional economy are economic stability and security. Most want nothing more than to live as they always have, following traditional ways of life, in harmony with nature. For most traditional societies, though, this goal is increasingly difficult to attain. Traditional economies have continued to shrink as they come in to more contact with the modern world. As modern economies exert an ever-growing influence, traditional societies are struggling to find a path to economic survival.

Command Economies: Decision Making by Powerful Rulers

The next economic system to develop is what economists call a command economy. In a **command economy**, decisions about what, how, and for whom to produce are made by a powerful ruler or some other authority.

The earliest command economies originated in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, and India about 5,000 years ago. As these civilizations became highly advanced, centralized governments arose that were headed by powerful rulers. These rulers imposed their economic choices on society. This happened even as tradition still guided economic activity at the lower levels of society.

Rulers at the top of these early civilizations—kings, pharaohs, emperors—commanded the populace to devote economic resources to building projects or military adventures. Many thousands of people might be conscripted to build a pyramid, defensive wall, irrigation canal, temple, or road. In a preindustrial age, such projects took vast quantities of human labor. Often, many people would be drafted into a ruler's army and sent into battle in distant lands.

The primary goal of these ancient command economies was to accumulate wealth and goods for the ruling class. It also needed to preserve economic stability. The many monuments these societies are a testament to this economic system. It shows both their productive power and the excesses of their rulers.

Market Economies: Decision Making by Individuals

The newest economic system to emerge in human history is the market economy. A **market economy** depends not on tradition or command to coordinate its activities but on the decisions of individual producers and consumers. Note that when economists speak of “the market,” they are referring to the economic system within which buyers and sellers exchange goods and services. This is distinct from an everyday market, which is a place where people buy and sell goods.

In a **free market economy**, the workings of the market are not planned or directed. No one—no single person, business, or government agency—tells producers or consumers what to do. Economic decisions are made voluntarily, one at a time, by millions of individuals guided by self-interest.

The highest goals of a market economy are economic freedom and efficiency. Individuals and businesses are left at liberty to decide what, how, and for whom to produce. The producers of goods and services make these decisions based largely on consumers' spending decisions. Because you are free to buy what you want, producers must compete for your dollars. This competition means that you, the consumer, have many choices. It also forces producers to use resources efficiently. If they do not, a competitor will find a way to offer the same good or service at a price that consumers will be more willing to pay.

In a free market, individuals are encouraged to pursue the jobs that allow them to make the most of their human capital. If one employer fails to pay them what they think they are worth, they can quit and seek employment elsewhere. Or they can start their own businesses, perhaps even offering new products or services to consumers.

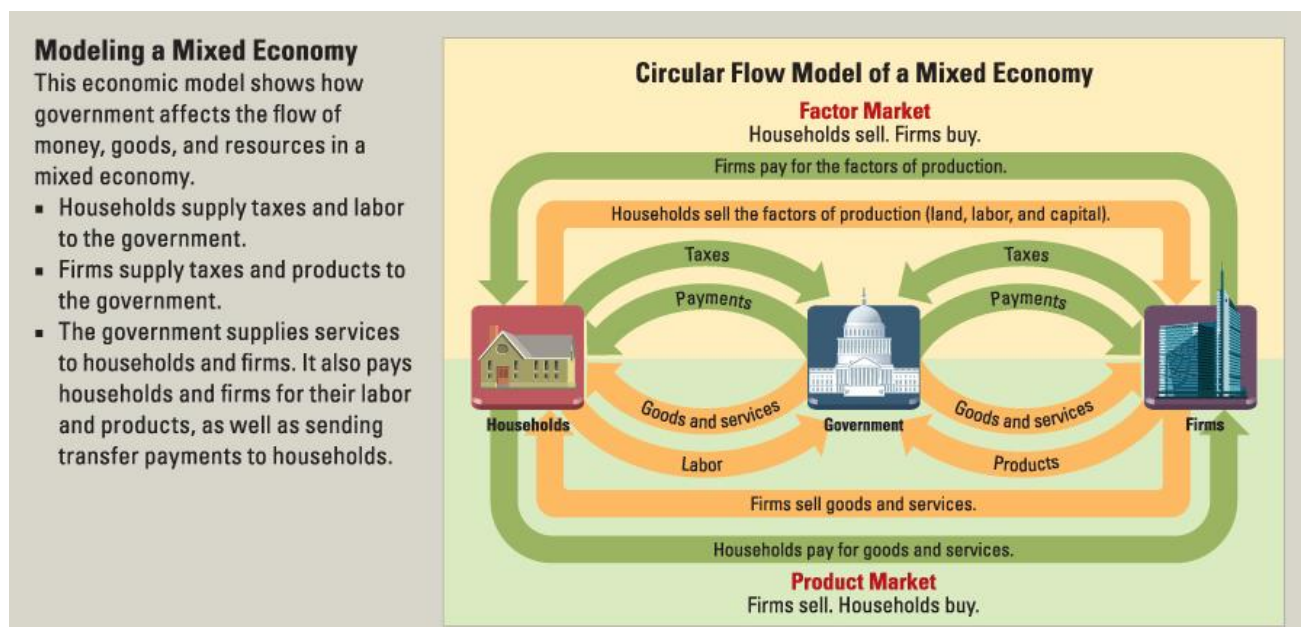
You might expect this individual decision making and competition would be chaos. But just the opposite is true. Markets are highly efficient at producing a great variety of goods and services that people find attractive and at prices they are willing to pay. It was this coordinating power of markets that Adam Smith famously described as “the invisible hand.” He wrote,

Every individual . . . neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it . . . He intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention . . . By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it.

—Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, 1776

The Flow of Money and Goods in a Market Economy

The reason markets work so well is that one person's output always becomes another person's input. Goods are produced and consumed. Money comes in and goes out. This flow keeps the economy running. Economists use the **circular flow model** to illustrate these interactions.



In the simplified market economy, there are two kinds of participants: households and firms. A **household** is made up of a person or of a group of people living together. The model assumes that households own the factors of production. A **firm** is an organization that uses these factors to make and sell goods or services.

The model also includes two kinds of markets. One is the **product market**, in which goods and services are sold by firms and purchased by households. Your local mall or supermarket is part of the product market. The other is the **factor market**, in which households sell their land, labor, and capital to firms. A household, for example, might rent land to a firm. Or members of a household might sell their labor to a firm for wages. They might loan money to a firm in exchange for interest payments, or they might buy a firm's stock in the hopes of receiving dividend payments. The funds paid to households—whether in the form of rent, wages, interest, or dividends—are known as **factor payments**.

This model is circular. Households buy products from firms with money that they receive in the factor market. Firms acquire land, labor, and capital from households using money that they receive in the product market. For example, you (as part of a household) might buy a pair of jeans from a firm with money that you earned by working at a local ice cream parlor (another firm). The ice cream parlor, in turn, pays you for your labor with money that it receives from selling ice cream cones to other households.

All these transactions are conducted by people and businesses who want something for themselves. People work so that they can buy things. Firms employ people so that they can make things to sell. In a market economy, everybody chooses what is best for him or herself. As Adam Smith observed, “It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest.”

Capitalism Gives Rise to Socialism and Communism

Market economies emerged in Europe in the 1700s and began to grow rapidly in the 1800s. This economic growth was a direct result of the **Industrial Revolution**. During the Industrial Revolution, new inventions and manufacturing processes spurred the growth of industry. Individual investors, called **capitalists**, grew wealthy by accumulating capital, such as machinery, factories, and railroads. The term **capitalism** came to be synonymous with the free market economic system.

The headlong growth of capitalism had profound effects on society. As more and better goods became widely available, people's standard of living improved. But capitalism did not improve the quality of life for everybody. The workers who filled the factories and mills labored under harsh conditions. Most worked extremely long hours for meager wages. Critics of capitalism blamed the capitalists for exploiting workers and keeping them in poverty.

In 1848, economist Karl Marx and philosopher Friedrich Engels published *The Communist Manifesto*. In it, they advocated the overthrow of capitalism. They proposed an alternative vision of society known as socialism. **Socialism** is a political and economic philosophy that calls for property to be owned by society as a whole, rather than by individuals, for the equal benefit of all.

To bring about this socialist vision of society, Marx and Engels called on workers everywhere to revolt against their governments. Once the workers had gained power, private property and the free market would be replaced with national ownership of industry and more equal distribution of income.

The final phase of socialism, in the view of Marx and Engels, is **communism**, a political and economic system in which all property and wealth are owned by all members of society. In a communist society, class differences—and the conflicts they create—disappear. Once that happens, government is no longer needed to keep order. Instead of self-interest, people in a communist society are guided by Marx's famous slogan: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.”

Modern Command Economies: Decision Making by the State

The ideas of Marx and Engels spurred the development of political movements dedicated to the creation of a workers' paradise. But when the first successful communist revolution took place in Russia in 1917, it did not lead to the utopian society Marx had envisioned. Instead, the revolutionaries formed an authoritarian government that pursued its socialist goals with brutal force. The renamed Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or Soviet Union for short, became the first modern command economy.

In the Soviet Union, private ownership of property was forbidden. The state owned the factors of production. **Economic planning** was done by government committees of economists, production experts, and political officials. These central planning committees attempted to perform the functions of a market. They decided what goods and services should be produced. They decided which farms and factories should get which resources to produce what was planned. Committees also controlled prices and wages and decided how goods and services should be distributed.

In theory, this kind of planning was supposed to ensure economic equity and security—two important goals of a modern command economy—but the reality was very different. The planning committees could not keep track of the millions of products and prices in the Soviet system. Two Soviet economists described what happened when Goskomstren, the committee in charge of prices, raised the price that the government would pay hunters for moleskins.

State purchases increased, and now all the distribution centers are filled with these pelts. Industry is unable to use them all, and they often rot in warehouses before they can be processed. The Ministry of Light Industry has already requested Goskomstren twice to lower purchasing prices, but the “question has not been decided” yet. And this is not surprising. Its members are too busy to decide. They have no time: besides setting prices on these pelts, they have to keep track of another 24 million prices.

—Nikolai Shmelev and Vladimir Popov, *The Turning Point: Revitalizing the Soviet Economy*, 1990

In this planned economy, shortages were common. Long lines would form to buy whatever goods suddenly became available, but once a customer got to the front of that line, choice was limited or nonexistent.

Planners made matters worse by ignoring the incentives-matter principle. The wages paid to workers were determined by government committees, not by a worker's ability or output. A poor worker could not be fired for slacking off, nor could a good worker be rewarded for working hard. Under this system, workers had little or no incentive to produce high-quality goods. They also lacked any incentive to innovate in order to increase productivity. As a result, production was slow, and the goods produced were often shoddy, far inferior to those produced in a market economy.

The Soviet Union and other command economies did succeed in increasing economic equity and economic security for their people. But what good is a guaranteed income if there is nothing to buy? What markets do effortlessly, command economies struggle to do, usually with dismal results. Central planning was so inefficient and wasteful that the Soviet Union economy eventually collapsed. Since then, virtually all modern command economies have either failed or struggled to introduce market-based reforms.

Three Economic Systems and Their Goals

Over time, human societies have developed three types of economic systems. In each system, decisions about what, how, and for whom to produce goods and services are made differently. Each system also emphasizes different economic goals, as shown here.



Traditional Economy
Economic decisions are based on tradition and custom.



Command Economy
Economic decisions are made by a single authority, such as a government agency.



Market Economy
Economic decisions are made by individual producers and consumers interacting freely in the marketplace.

Answer the questions below.

What kind of Economic System do we have in the United States?

How do you know?

After reading Section 2, fill in the missing information for the type of economy your group represented in the activity. As your class reviews the answers, record information for the other type of economy.

Command Economy		Market Economy	
Activity	Reading	Activity	Reading
	The state, or government, decides what, how, and for whom to produce.		Workings of the market are not planned or directed. Individual buyers and sellers make decisions.
Production rewards were equal, based on predetermined quotas or goals.		Production rewards were based on what was produced.	
	Factors of production are controlled by the government, which cannot possibly foresee all market needs. Shortages are common.		Factors of production are sold by households and purchased by firms according to what people are willing to produce and consume.
All products sold for the same price.		Prices varied and were set by producers.	
	No incentive to produce high-quality goods or to innovate. Goods are often poor quality or not what consumers want or need.		People benefit more by working harder, so they tend to be more innovative and produce higher-quality goods in line with what consumers want.

3. How Do Mixed Economies Divide the Decision Making?

No country in the world today relies on a purely traditional, market, or command economic system. These systems represent theoretical extremes. Nearly all countries have mixed economies that fall somewhere in between these extremes. In a **mixed economy**, both the government and individuals play important roles with regard to production and consumption. But who decides what varies from one country to another.

Government's Role in a Mixed Economy: Protection, Regulation, and Public Benefits

Every nation with a mixed economy forges its own balance between market freedom and government involvement. At the minimum, governments are needed to establish the institutions that enable markets to operate. Such institutions include a legal system to enforce laws and a stable system of currency. Most of us never think about these things, but markets cannot function without them.

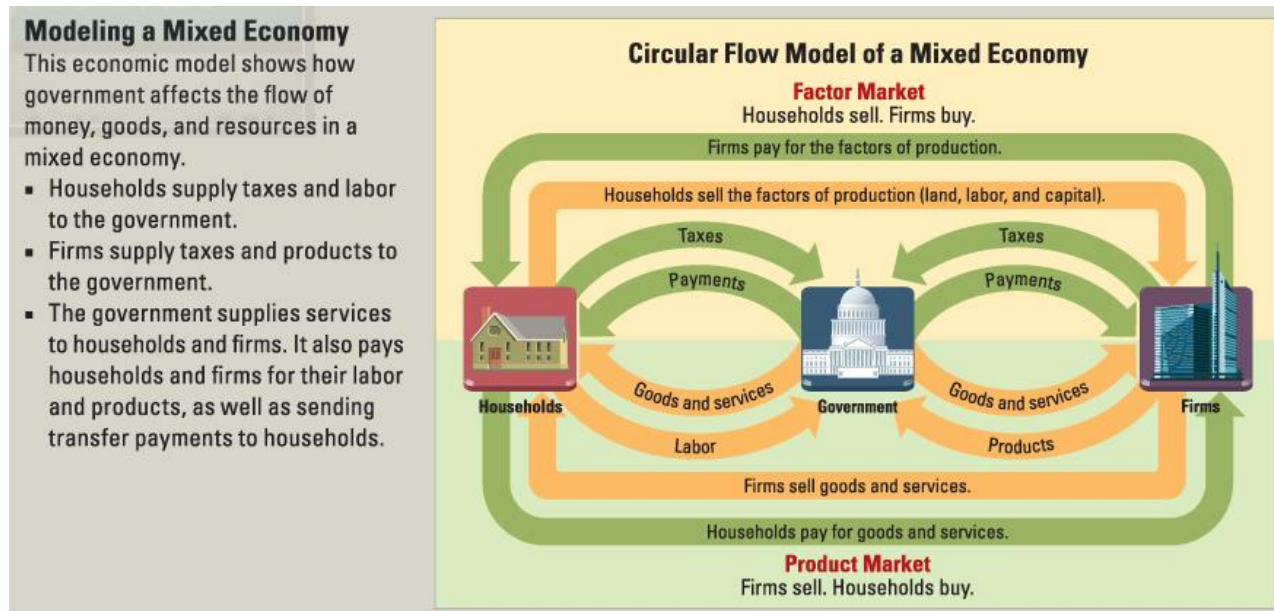
In many countries, people expect government to go further. They want it to step in when the market operates in ways that society finds unacceptable. For example, many nations outlaw child labor. Some governments limit the amount of pollution that industries can discharge. In the United States, the government regulates the manufacture of cosmetics, foods, and drugs because consumers want to know that products on the market are safe. Not all governments regulate to the same degree. Each society decides how far it wants its government to go in curtailing the freedom of the market.

Finally, government provides certain goods and services that markets do not always provide or do not provide enough of. Examples include **public works**, or government-financed projects such as dams, highways, and sewer systems. The market does not provide these goods because, as Adam Smith explained, the cost of providing them “could never repay the expense to any individual or small number of individuals.”

What a government provides varies from country to country. In Canada and much of Europe, health care is provided free to every citizen. Some governments provide free college education or free day care. Governments that provide a high level of goods and services also tax heavily to pay for those goods and services. Again, these are economic choices that every nation makes differently.

The Flow of Goods and Money in a Mixed Economy

How does government participation in the economy change the flow of money and goods? The answer to this can be seen by adding government to the circular flow model.



A government enters the flow of money and products through an economy in a number of ways. It purchases land, labor, and capital from households in the factor market. In the United States, the federal government employs almost 2 million people, making it the nation's largest employer. A government also purchases goods

and services from firms in the product market. As the nation's largest employer, the federal government is also its largest customer, spending hundreds of billions of dollars a year on goods and services.

Governments also combine land, labor, and capital to produce and distribute goods and services. As an example, suppose a town decides it needs a library. The town government buys land and hires architects and builders in the factor market. Later, the town buys books, shelves, computers, and furniture in the product market. Finally, it hires librarians in the factor market. The end result is a public service that the entire community can enjoy.

Now follow the flow of money in a mixed economy. You will see that a government collects taxes from both households and firms. It uses some of this money to pay for the goods and services it buys from firms. It may also transfer some money back to households as payment for government benefits. Social Security checks, welfare payments, and unemployment benefits are examples of government **transfer payments**.

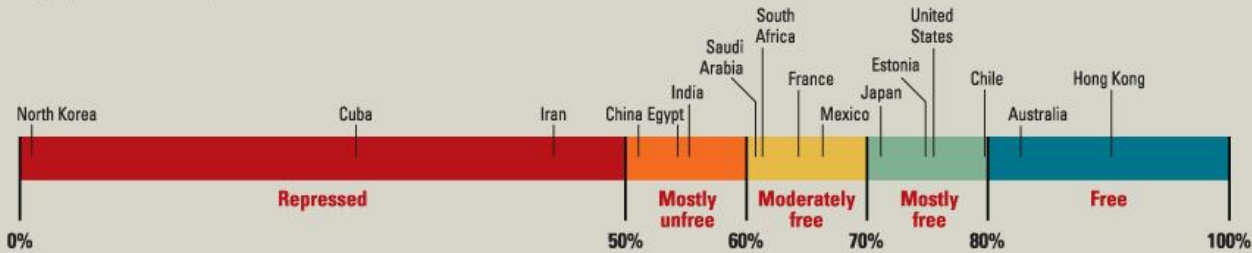
The Mixed Economy Continuum: From Free to Repressed

Although most of today's economies can be described as mixed, the “mix” of market freedom and government control varies greatly from one nation to the next. Each year, the Heritage Foundation and the *Wall Street Journal* publish their annual Index of Economic Freedom. This index is a kind of scorecard that ranks the economic freedom of the world's nations. It is a useful tool for understanding the variety of mixed economies.

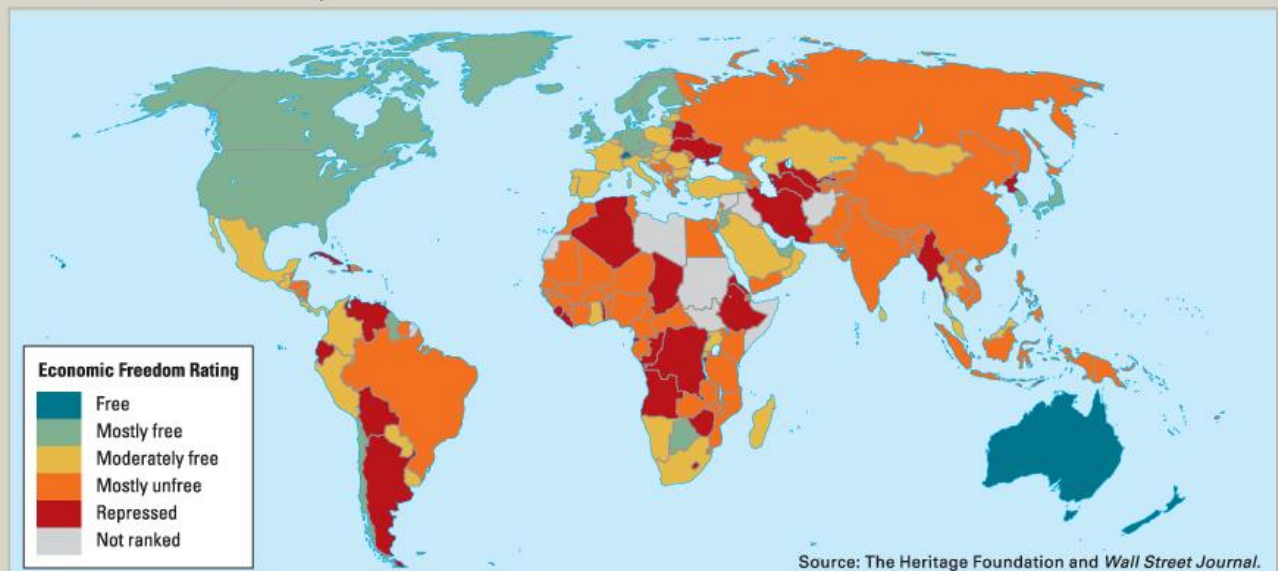
In 2018, Australia rated the fifth-most-free economy. Free markets dominate Australia's mixed economy. All banks are privately owned. The economy is open to foreign investment and trade. Private property is very

Mapping Economic Freedom

Whereas most countries today have mixed economies, the level of economic freedom their citizens enjoy varies widely. The Index of Economic Freedom ranks countries based on 10 indicators, including the ease of starting a new business, protection of property rights, and freedom from corruption. The 2013 rankings—from a high of 89 percent to a low of about 2 percent—are displayed on the map.



Index of Economic Freedom, 2013



secure. Starting a business is easy, taking an average of only two days.

At the very bottom of the list is North Korea, which came in last of the 157 ranked nations. A communist country since 1948, North Korea still has a tightly controlled command economy in which the government directs all industries and businesses. Nearly all foreign trade is forbidden and private property is severely restricted.

What about countries that fall somewhere in between, such as Japan, South Africa, and France? All three have mixed economies dominated by the market system. All have relatively high levels of economic freedom and secure property rights. But they also have high tax rates, which are used to pay for an array of public services and benefits, such as government-provided health care. In these nations, people have decided that achieving economic equity and security for more members of society is worth giving up some measure of their individual wealth.

Further down in the rankings is China, which is rated “mostly unfree.” China, which has had a communist government since 1949, is in transition from a command economy to a market-oriented system. But its mixed economy is still dominated by an authoritarian government. All Chinese banks are owned by the state. Private property is not secure. Internet use is tightly controlled by the government.

Still, China allows more economic freedom than many countries. Cuba, for example, is rated “repressed.” Its economy is dominated by the state. As in repressed North Korea, foreign investment in Cuba is severely restricted.

Only six nations in the 2018 *Index of Economic Freedom*, plus Hong Kong, were rated “free.” In addition to Australia, these countries are Singapore, New Zealand, and Switzerland, and Ireland. What do these countries have in common? All have mixed economies dominated by free markets. Most have democratic forms of government. They are also all among the wealthiest nations in the world. As Adam Smith might have predicted, the societies with the most economic freedom are also among the most prosperous.

What are three roles of government in a mixed economy? For each role, explain whether you view this involvement as positive or negative, and why.

Role 1

What is it?

Circle One: positive negative both

Why?

Role 2

What is it?

Circle One: positive negative both

Why?

Role 3

What is it?

Circle One: positive negative both

Why?

Extra Credit

You have been hired to write the lyrics to a song titled “Who or What Decides What You Get?” Your song should be sung to the tune of any popular or well-known song. The lyrics must explain the difference between a market economy and a command economy. You may create one song that includes information about both market and command economies. Or you can create two versions of the song—one about market economies and one about command economies.

Your song must

- include at least four terms from this lesson.
- include at least one of the primary goals of each type of economic system.
- explain the role of government in each type of economic system.
- highlight at least two benefits and two drawbacks of each economic system.

Comparing Forms of Government

Introduction

In September 2017, representatives for the 193 members of the United Nations met in New York City for the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly. The majority of these nations' governments are categorized as **democracies**. The governments of a few nations are **monarchies**. Fewer yet are **dictatorships**.

Among the members of the United Nations are countries with different populations, forms of government, and economic systems. Consider, for example, two newer members: Switzerland and South Sudan. Switzerland joined the United Nations in 2002. South Sudan, the most recent member, joined in 2011. However, other than UN membership, Switzerland and South Sudan have little in common.

Switzerland existed as an independent nation in Central Europe for more than 350 years before joining the United Nations. Over 8 million people live here. They also have a prosperous **market economy**. With a literacy rate of around 99 percent, the Swiss are among the world's best-educated people. They also enjoy one of the world's highest standards of living.

In contrast, South Sudan became an independent state only days before joining the United Nations in 2011. Before its independence, South Sudan was part of Sudan. Sudan is a landlocked African country with a history of political instability and civil wars. Since Sudan gained independence from British rule in 1956, few people of southern Sudan won positions in their government. After years of war and discontent, South Sudan finally gained independence. Today, South Sudan is a poor nation with a **traditional economy**. About one-fourth of adults in South Sudan can read. Living standards are also low.

The people of Switzerland and South Sudan do have one thing in common. They both decided that “the people” should rule. For the Swiss, this decision was made in 1848, when they adopted a constitution that created a democratic government. The South Sudanese, however, only recently decided to build a democracy. Whether their new government will be successful still remains to be seen.

In this lesson, you will explore different government systems. You will also learn why governments exist and how power is divided within them.

Discuss the following questions with your group. Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

1. In your opinion, which one of the following people or groups should have the power to make the rules at your school, and why?

- principal
- teachers
- student council
- student body
- other (specify)

2. Are there any people or groups above that should not make the rules at your school? If so, why not?



1. The Origins and Evolution of Government

All societies, large and small, develop some form of government. During prehistoric times, when small bands of hunter-gatherers wandered Earth in search of food and game, government might have been as simple as a few elders making decisions for the group. The invention of farming triggered the evolution of more formal systems of governments. Once people learned how to raise food, they settled down into permanent villages. This new way of life created a host of novel problems and conflicts. Governments had to evolve to meet the needs of the more complex societies they ruled.

The Ancient World: From City-States to Empires

Over time, some farming villages grew into cities and **city-states**. A city-state is an independent state consisting of a city and its surrounding territory.

Around 3000 B.C.E., the first city-states arose in Sumer, a region located in what is today southern Iraq. There, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, the Sumerians grew crops of barley, wheat, dates, apples, and plums.

Then, as now, the land between the Tigris and Euphrates was largely desert. Farming in this region depended on irrigation. Governments arose to resolve issues pertaining to the fair and orderly distribution of water. They also provided protection by building walls around their cities and organizing armies to ward off invasions by nomadic tribes. A similar evolution occurred in ancient Egypt, India, and China.

Gradually, power in many city-states became concentrated in the hands of a single ruler. The strongest of these rulers conquered neighboring city-states to create the world's first empires. Sargon of Akkad was one of Sumer's early conquerors. Sargon, whose name is thought to mean "the true king," carried out more than 30 battles against the Sumerian city-states to consolidate his empire. To legitimize their power, empire-builders like Sargon often declared that the gods had given them the right to rule. Some rulers even claimed to be gods themselves. As power passed from father to son in these early empires, monarchy became the most common form of government in the ancient world.

Greece and Rome: Early Forms of People Power

In the fifth century B.C.E., the Greek city-state of Athens made a radical change in its form of government. The Athenians reorganized their city-state as a **direct democracy**. In a direct democracy, public decisions are made directly by citizens. They make these decisions through meeting together in an assembly or voting by ballot. The Athenian leader Pericles explained the new form of government this way:



Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people. When it is a question of settling private disputes, everyone is equal before the law; when it is a question of putting one person before another in positions of public responsibility, what counts is not membership of a particular class, but the actual ability which the man possesses.

—Pericles, *Funeral Oration*, 431 B.C.E.

When Pericles spoke of government being in the hands of "the whole people," he meant in the hands of male citizens of Athens. Women, slaves, and foreign-born people living in Athens were not allowed to participate in government. For those who did qualify, however, they participated on a scale that was unique in the ancient

world. Never before had so many people dedicated so much of their time to the business of governing themselves.

The Italian city-state of Rome developed a different form of people power. In 509 B.C.E., the Roman people overthrew their monarchy and turned Rome into a **republic**. Over time, the Romans set up a **representative democracy** to govern their republic. In a representative democracy, public decisions are made by leaders. These leaders are elected by the citizens to represent their interests.

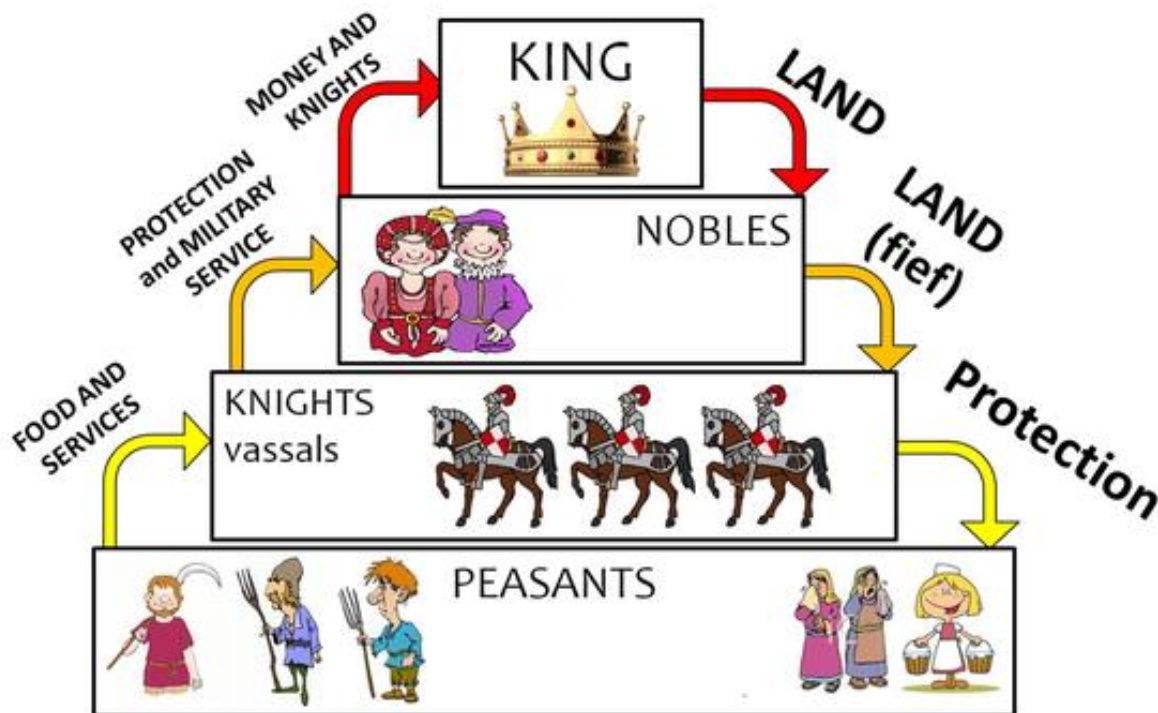
The Roman Republic lasted nearly 500 years. During that time, officials elected by Rome's citizens headed the government. Then, in 31 B.C.E., after 20 years of civil war, the Roman Empire was established. Power passed from elected leaders to emperors who held absolute power for life.

The Middle Ages: From Feudalism to Nation-States

For a time, Rome's emperors ruled an empire that included most of Europe, as well as North Africa and western Asia. In 476 C.E., Rome fell to invading tribes from the east. In parts of Europe once ruled by mighty Rome, the empire broke into tiny districts, each ruled by a duke, lord, king, or other noble.

With no strong central government to provide security, each district had to look out for itself. It often made sense for weak nobles to look to a nearby, more powerful neighbor for protection. However, protection had a price. Because money was scarce, the powerful lord or local king usually took his payment in land. In this way, some lords gained control of very large areas.

By the 700s, many lords acquired more land than they could manage. They began granting parcels of land, called *fiefs*, to tenants. In return, the tenant became the lord's vassal. A vassal took an oath of loyalty to the lord and promised to provide him with military service in time of war. This system of exchanging the use of land for military and other services became known as **feudalism**.



Feudal Pyramid of Power

In addition to serving as warriors, the vassals also had political obligations. For example, they all sat together at the lord's court to help settle disputes. The lord was also expected to seek the advice and consent of his vassals before making new laws. Europe's **parliaments** developed from meetings of vassals summoned by a lord or king.

During the 1200s, the feudal system of lords and vassals entered a period of decline. The 1300s saw the rise of **absolute monarchies**, or governments headed by hereditary rulers who claimed unlimited powers. These powerful monarchs consolidated the patchwork of feudal districts in their kingdoms into the world's first nation-states.

By the 1700s, several European countries had become nation-states headed by absolute monarchs. These all-powerful rulers based their legitimacy on the divine right of kings theory. So important was the role of the monarch in France that Louis XIV is reported to have said of himself, "*L'état c'est moi*" ("I am the state").

The Age of Revolutions: Democracies and Dictatorships

Some monarchs ruled with the best interests of their people in mind. Others ruled as **despots**, or tyrants, who used their power for selfish ends. Growing dissatisfaction with this form of government triggered a series of world-altering revolutions, first in Europe and then in the American colonies.

The first of these revolutions occurred in England in 1688. The Glorious Revolution, also known as the Bloodless Revolution, led to the creation of Europe's first **constitutional monarchy**. In this system of government, powers of the monarch are limited by a constitution, either written or unwritten.



The second of these revolutions began in 1775 when American colonists rebelled against what they saw as British tyranny. The American Revolution led to the creation of the first modern **constitutional democracy**. This form of democratic government is based on a written constitution. Abraham Lincoln would later describe this form of democracy as “government of the people, by the people, for the people.”

A third revolution broke out in 1789, when the French people took up arms against their king. At first the French Revolution seemed likely to produce another constitutional democracy. Instead, the fighting led to chaos. In time, Napoleon Bonaparte restored order, but only by establishing an **authoritarian regime**. In this system of government, the state exercises broad control over the lives of its citizens. Napoleon, for example, used secret police forces to spy on French citizens. He also censored the press while mounting his own propaganda campaigns.

Some historians argue that Napoleon's approach to governing set the stage for rise of in the 20th century. A totalitarian government is an extreme form of an authoritarian regime that seeks to control almost every aspect of its citizens' lives.

Twentieth-century totalitarianism dates back to the Russian Revolution of 1917. That revolution overthrew the Russian monarchy. In its place, revolutionaries established the Soviet Union as the world's first state based on **communism**.

The term communism has several meanings. It can mean a system of government in which a single political party controls the government and the economy. It can also mean the theories developed by German philosopher Karl Marx about the ideal society. Marx's goal was the creation of a society that provides equality and economic security for all. To accomplish that end, he called for government ownership of land, factories, and other resources.

The theory of communism appealed to many people in the 1900s. In practice, however, it led to the creation of totalitarian states, first in the Soviet Union and later in other countries, such as China, Vietnam, and Cuba. In these states, dictators like Joseph Stalin used spies, secret police, and government censors to suppress all opposition.

A form of totalitarianism known as **fascism** first appeared in Italy during the 1920s. Fascism resembles communism in terms of its control of citizens' lives. Unlike communism, however, fascism allows businesses to remain in private ownership, though under government control. Benito Mussolini, the fascist dictator of Italy, used his power to turn his country into a police state.

A third type of totalitarianism, **Nazism** took root in Germany. Nazism is a variety of fascism built in part on the myth of racial superiority. After taking power in Germany in 1933, Nazi leader Adolf Hitler began killing Jews, Gypsies, and other groups he defined as “undesirable.”

Three Forms of Totalitarianism

Communism

Joseph Stalin ruled the Soviet Union from 1922 to 1953. Historians hold him responsible for the deaths of millions of Russians. The hammer and sickle in this communist symbol represents industrial workers, while the sickle represents agricultural workers.



Key Characteristics

- The Communist Party holds supreme power
- Belief that the state should control the economy
- Brutal suppression of opposition
- Hostility to religion and human rights

Fascism

Benito Mussolini was dictator of Italy from 1922 to 1943. He used his power to control every aspect of the government and the press. This symbol of fascism suggests that while a single stick may be easily broken, a bundle of sticks bound together is too strong to break.



Key Characteristics

- Dictator holds supreme power
- Belief that everyone should serve the state
- Extreme nationalism
- Glorification of the military
- Use of censorship and terror to suppress opposition

Nazism

While ruling Germany from 1933 to 1945, Adolf Hitler tried to rid Europe of Jews, Gypsies, and others he deemed “undesirable.” The swastika is an ancient Hindu symbol of well-being. The Nazis adopted it as a symbol of the German master race.



Key Characteristics

- The Nazi Party holds supreme power
- Belief in racial superiority
- Aggressive territorial expansion
- Elimination of “inferior” minorities
- Rejection of democracy and civil liberties

Create a vertical timeline. As you reread the section, record the name of each event next to the date listed below. Some of the dates will be approximate. The timeline has been started for you.

Timeline Events

First city-states arise in Sumer
 Sargon of Akkad formed empire
 Roman Republic formed
 American Revolution
 Athens formed direct democracy
 Roman Empire formed

Rise of absolute monarchies
 Glorious Revolution in England
 French Revolution
 Rise of totalitarian dictatorships
 Feudalism began in Europe

↑	3000 B.C.E.	First city-states arise in Sumer
	2330 B.C.E.	Sargon of Akkad formed empire
	509 B.C.E.	
	500 B.C.E.	
	31 B.C.E.	
	700 C.E.	
	1300 C.E.	
	1688 C.E.	
	1775 C.E.	
	1789 C.E.	
↓	1917 C.E.	

Your teacher will assign your group one timeline event. You will create a poster that includes the following:

- *The date and name of your event*
- *The type of government that arose with your event*
- *The main feature of that type of government*
- *An illustration that shows the time period*

Be prepared to share your poster with the class.

Section 2 - Forms of Government in Today's World

As you read this section, record information in your table for each term listed below.

Monarchy

Definition:
Pros:
Cons

Dictatorship

Definition:
Pros:
Cons

Theocracy

Definition:
Pros:
Cons

Single-Party State

Definition:
Pros:
Cons

Direct Democracy

Definition:
Pros:
Cons

Parliamentary Democracy

Definition:
Pros:
Cons

Presidential Democracy

Definition:
Pros:
Cons

2. Forms of Government in Today's World

With the exception of Antarctica, the landmasses on Earth are divided into nation-states. Some of these countries, such as Switzerland, have existed for hundreds of years. Others, like South Sudan, are new. Almost all have some form of government. These governments fall into three broad groups: rule by the one (monarchies and dictatorships), rule by the few (theocracies and single-party states), and rule by the many (parliamentary and presidential democracies).

Monarchy: Rule by the One Hereditary Ruler

Monarchies are one of the oldest forms of government still found in the world today. For monarchical government to have survived for thousands of years, it must have enduring attractions.

One of those attractions is efficiency. Traditionally, a ruling monarch has been able to make decisions and have them carried out on his or her word alone. As a result, new policies can be carried out without a lot of political bickering. A second advantage is a clear line of succession. Citizens living in a monarchy know who is next in line for the throne. A third is the unifying power of monarchy. Loyalty to a ruling family can be a strong bond holding a nation together.

At the same time, monarchical government has its drawbacks. One is the varying quality of hereditary leaders. A great monarch in one generation may be followed by an incompetent one in the next. Also, the job of running a modern nation-state has become too big for any but the best monarchs to do well.

Today's monarchs go by many names, including king, queen, sultan, emperor, and emir. Most have inherited their power and expect to rule for life. But the modern monarch's power is rarely as great as in the days of Louis XIV and other absolute monarchs.

Most monarchs today face rigid legal restrictions on their power, often imposed by a constitution. The British monarch, for example, has the formal authority to call elections and appoint a new prime minister. These functions, however, are strictly ceremonial. Real power rests with Great Britain's democratically elected leaders.

In contrast, Saudi Arabia's king exercises broad powers. He inherits his position and has legislative, executive, and judicial powers. There are no recognized political parties or national elections in Saudi Arabia. The king may seek support from the royal family, religious leaders, and other important members of Saudi society. However, in theory, only Islamic law and Saudi traditions limit his powers.

Dictatorships: Rule by the One Powerful Leader

Whereas monarchs inherit their power, dictators take and hold power by force. Muammar al-Gaddafi, for example, took control of Libya in a military **coup d'etat**, or coup, in 1969. The term coup d'etat means "blow to the state" in French. A coup is the sudden overthrow of a government by a small group of military officers or political leaders. This often happens during a time of political unrest or a national emergency.

Dictatorships share some of the advantages of absolute monarchies. Power is centralized in the hands of a single military or political leader who can get things done efficiently. With control of the military and police, the leader can put an end to political unrest and maintain peace and order. That same power, however, can easily be used to abuse citizens who oppose the dictator.



Dictatorships face serious legitimacy problems. Over time, pressure often builds to return the government to control by elected leaders. When this happens, ruling becomes increasingly difficult. For example, in February 2011, growing discontent led to a wave of protests in Libya, calling for an end to Gaddafi's rule. Months later, he was overthrown.

Theocracy: Rule by the Few Religious Leaders

A **theocracy** is a government headed by religious leaders. In ancient city-states, theocracies were common.



Government officials often served as religious leaders as well. Having a government based on one set of religious beliefs had clear benefits. A single, state-supported religion encouraged political and social unity. It also ensured that political decisions were in line with the people's moral values and beliefs.

As states grew larger, however, enforcing religious unity became increasingly difficult. Religious minorities were often marginalized or even persecuted. Religious warfare broke out as groups with differing beliefs fought for control of their governments.

By 2018, only a small handful of theocracies existed. Two of these theocracies are Vatican City and Iran. Vatican City is the governmental and spiritual center of the Catholic Church. Although located in the heart of Rome, Italy, it is an independent state headed by the Catholic

pope.

Iran changed from a monarchy to a theocracy in 1979. That year, Iranians expelled their hereditary ruler and formed an Islamic republic. This new republic was headed by a religious leader known as the Ayatollah Khomeini. As Iran's supreme leader, the Ayatollah put into practice his belief that "in Islam, the legislative power and competence to establish laws belong exclusively to God Almighty." The most influential body in Iran's theocracy is the 12-person Council of Guardians. Their job is to make sure that the laws of the country conform to Islamic religious law.

Single-Party State: Rule by the Political Elite

In a **single-party state**, the constitution allows only one political party to govern. Power is exercised by the leading members of the party, who form the nation's political **elite**, or a small group of people within a larger group who have more power, wealth, or talent than the others. The party elite nominate candidates for public office and make most policy decisions for the country.

Ideally, a single-party system avoids much of the political wrangling that is common in multiparty states, making it easier to pass laws and implement government policies. This party unity comes at a cost, however. The views of the party elite may be very different from the interests of the people as a whole, leading to social unrest. Also, people with differing political views or solutions to problems are often completely shut out of the political process.

The handful of single-party states today are mainly socialist republics, in which the Communist Party rules. In China, for example, the Communist Party is the only legal political party, and it has controlled the government since 1949. The legislature in China usually approves all legislation proposed by the Communist Party.



Direct Democracy: Rule by All Citizens

In the direct democracy of ancient Athens, several thousand citizens met regularly as an assembly to make decisions for their city-state. Each citizen had an equal voice in public affairs, and decisions, once made, had widespread support. Nonetheless, this form of government was time-consuming for citizens. That may be one reason why Athenian-style democracy was not widely copied in the ancient world.



The Folketing, the Danish national parliament, has legislative power in Denmark. Like in most parliamentary democracies, the party that wins the most seats in parliament selects a member to serve as the prime minister of Denmark.

In the modern world, no country is governed as a pure direct democracy. The country that comes closest is Switzerland. Swiss citizens regularly vote to approve laws passed by their legislature. This form of direct democracy is known as the **referendum process**. Citizens may also propose laws and submit them directly to voters in what is known as the **initiative process**. As much as the Swiss value their form of democracy, voter turnout is often low because people tire of frequent elections.

Limited forms of direct democracy exist in the United States. One is the New England town meeting. Here, townspeople meet to discuss and solve local problems. In several states, voters help shape public policy through the initiative and referendum processes. They may also be able to vote an elected official out of office by means of a **recall election**.

Parliamentary Democracy: Rule by a Legislative Majority

Most nations today have adopted one of two forms of representative democracy: parliamentary or presidential. Both forms use elections to choose national leaders. But they differ in other ways.

The United Kingdom, India, and Australia are examples of **parliamentary democracy**. In a parliamentary democracy, voters elect lawmakers to represent them in the nation's parliament. The party that wins a legislative majority forms a new administration. If no single party wins a majority, several parties join together to form a ruling coalition.

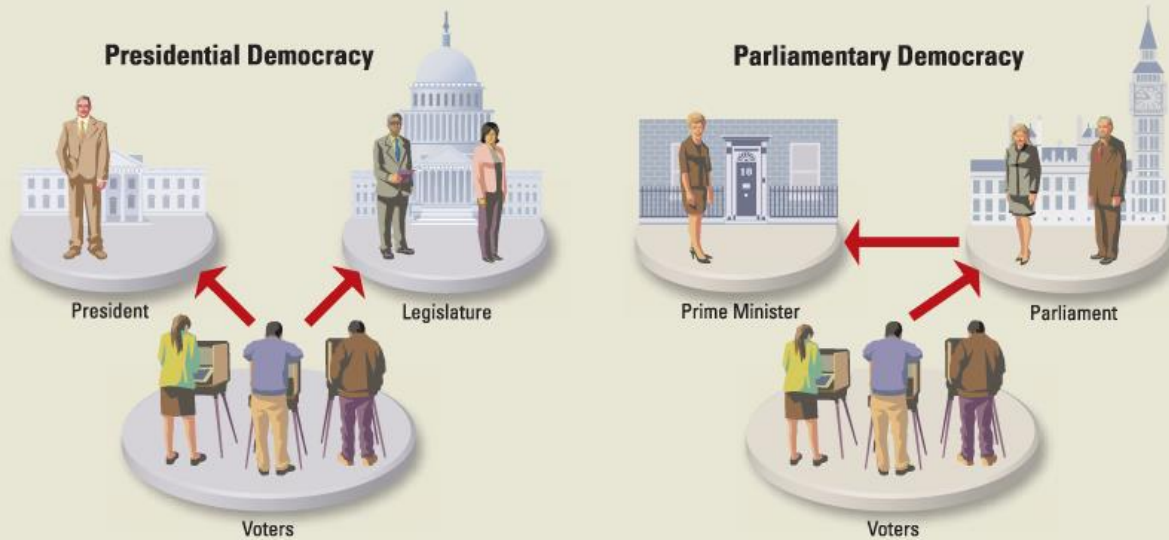
The legislative majority then selects a member of parliament to serve as the nation's **prime minister**, or chief executive. Usually the person chosen is the leader of the party with the most seats. The prime minister then chooses other members of parliament to head key government **ministries**, or executive branch departments.

In a parliamentary democracy, there is no clear-cut separation between the executive and legislative branches of government. Members of the legislative majority usually vote with the prime minister on key issues. This may make it easier to get legislation passed than in a presidential system. However, the lack of separation means there is no real check on the prime minister's power. Also, the prime minister may lack the legitimacy and public support of an elected president.

Prime ministers remain in power only so long as they have the support of parliament. Should parliament approve a **vote of no confidence**, the prime minister must resign. At that point, an election may be held to choose a new legislative majority. Although forcing an unpopular prime minister out of office in this way may seem democratic, it can also make parliamentary governments unstable.

Presidential and Parliamentary Forms of Government

In a presidential democracy, such as the United States, citizens vote for their legislators and also for a president. Legislative and executive powers are thus separated. In a parliamentary democracy, voters elect only their legislators. The majority party in the parliament then chooses one of its own to be prime minister. Legislative and executive powers are thus joined.



Presidential Democracy: Rule by Representatives of the People

The United States, Russia, and most countries in Latin America are **presidential democracies**. Voters in these countries choose a president to lead the government as the head of the executive branch. They also elect lawmakers to represent them in a national legislature. Both the president and the legislators serve fixed terms of office.

This system has some advantages over a parliamentary democracy. Because presidents are directly elected by the people, they may be more responsive to the public than to their party. They may also enjoy more legitimacy and public support than does a prime minister chosen by a parliament. The presidential system also separates executive and legislative powers. This allows each branch to watch over the other to prevent abuses of power. Also, with fixed terms, a presidential system may be more stable than one in which the prime minister can be dismissed at any time.

There are also some disadvantages. First, it is almost impossible to remove presidents from power before their terms end, no matter how unpopular they might be. Also, when presidents are not from the political party that controls the legislature, the result can be gridlock—a situation in which little or no progress is made on pressing issues. Finally, in some countries, presidents have used their power to establish authoritarian regimes.



3. The Distribution of Power in Governments Today

In almost all nation-states, government power is exercised at a minimum of two levels: national and regional. In the United States, each region is called a state. In other countries, regions have names such as canton, province, prefecture, land, and *département*. How power is distributed between these two levels varies. Ultimately, it depends on which system of government a country has: unitary, federal, or confederal.

Unitary Systems Centralize Power

In a **unitary system of government**, the constitution concentrates power in the national, or central, government. The national government may choose to create regional governments to carry out its policies. However, regional governments exercise only those powers given to them by the national government. The national government may also appoint the officials who run the regional governments.

Most nation-states have unitary systems. The main advantage of this system is that it promotes national unity by having all parts of a country follow the same laws and policies. However, most unitary nations have discovered that too much centralization is not good in practice. Policies that fit one region of the country may not work as well in another. Also, officials working at the national level cannot know the needs of every town and village. As a result, most unitary allow regions some powers of their own.

In Japan, for example, the central government has the constitutional power to control the 47 districts, which are called prefectures. It makes national laws that the regional governments must carry out. It also provides funds without which the prefectures could not operate. Yet the prefectures—along with Japan's cities, towns, and villages—have a significant amount of control over local affairs.

Federal Systems Divide Power

In a **federal system of government**, the constitution divides power between the national government and the regional governments. The national government has some fixed responsibilities, such as protecting the nation. The regional government has other responsibilities, such as setting up schools.

A federal system of government is often found in large countries with diverse populations. The main advantage of this system is the flexibility it gives regional governments in meeting the needs of different language and ethnic groups. The downside of this flexibility can be a patchwork of competing laws from region to region. In addition, conflicts may arise between the central government and regional governments.

Confederal Systems Decentralize Power

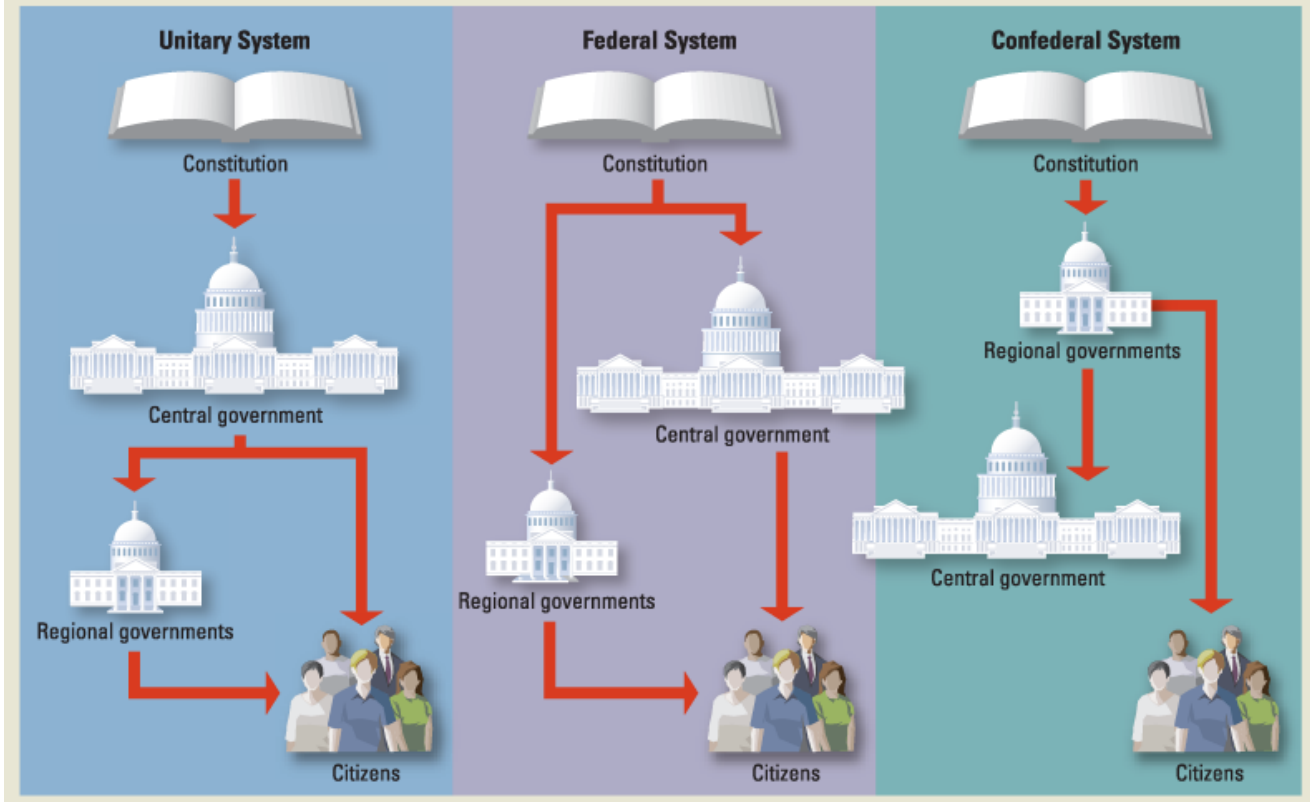
The United States was the first modern country to adopt a federal system of government. However, it did not always have a federal system. The first American constitution, the Articles of Confederation, created a **confederal system of government**. In such a system, power resides in the regions, which are independent states. The regions grant only as much power to the national government as needed to maintain security and to coordinate activities among the regions.

The American states first chose a confederal system because it offered two important advantages. It allowed the states to unite for some purposes without giving up the power to run their own affairs. This allowed for greater flexibility in meeting local needs. And, by limiting the powers of the central government, a confederal system reduced the likelihood that it would become an authoritarian regime.

Within a few years, however, the states reconsidered their choice. The central government, they realized, was too weak to meet the needs of the nation as a whole. It also lacked the power to end quarreling among the states. The result was an unworkable system that threatened the very survival of the nation.

How Power Flows in Three Systems of Government

Power is highly centralized in a unitary system, divided in a federal system, and decentralized in a confederal system. Most nations today have a unitary system. None has a confederal system. Federal systems are more likely to be found in large nations with diverse populations.



No nation-state is organized as a confederation today. However, some **supranational organizations**, such as the European Union (EU), are modeled on confederal systems. The member nations of the EU give some power to the EU government, such as control over cross-border trade. But they remain sovereign nations and can leave the EU at any time. Thus far, its members have found the benefits of union worth the cost of sharing some power with the EU.

Section 3 - The Distribution of Power in Governments Today

As you read this section, record information in your table for each term listed below.

Unitary System

Definition:
Pros:
Cons

Federal System

Definition:
Pros:
Cons

Confederal System

Definition:
Pros:
Cons

Summary

Governments have existed since the rise of city-states in ancient times. Over time, governments have evolved in size, complexity, and form. Even today, who rules and for what purpose varies from one country to the next.

Forms of government Modern governments can be classified according to who holds power. Monarchies and dictatorships ruled by one person are relatively rare. So are theocracies and single-party states in which leaders of a religion or political party run the government. Most of the world's governments today are either parliamentary or presidential democracies.

Distribution of power Modern governments can be defined according to how power is distributed between the national and regional governments. In a unitary system, power is centralized at the national level. In a federal system, the national and regional governments share power. In a confederal system, it is decentralized to regional governments.

Imagine that you are advising a country that is creating a new constitution. Below are the priorities that the country might have when it comes to a government and an economic system. For each possible priority, identify the combination (*form of government + system of government + economic system*) you would recommend. Then, write one or two sentences explaining why you think this combination works best for the particular priority.

Form of government

System of government

Economic system

Efficiency = _____ + _____ + _____

Freedom = _____ + _____ + _____

Prosperity = _____ + _____ + _____

Equality = _____ + _____ + _____

Security = _____ + _____ + _____

Notes:
