Regions of the World

SOL WG.3a
Essential Understandings

A. Regions are areas of the earth’s surface which share unifying characteristics.

B. Regions may be defined by physical or cultural characteristics.

C. Regional labels may reflect changes in people’s perceptions.
Essential Questions

A. Why do geographers create and use regions as organizing concepts?
B. What are some examples of physical and cultural regions?
C. What are some examples of regional labels that reflect changes in perceptions?
The term ‘physical’ in geography refers to:

A. Landforms
B. Vegetation
C. Climate
Physical Regions

If the earth had no humans, no cities, no evidence of people at all, how could we divide the earth into different regions that share similarities?
Physical Regions

A few examples of physical regions are:
A. The Sahara Desert
B. The Taiga
C. Rainforest
D. The Great Plains
E. The Low Countries
Sahara Desert

Unifying Characteristic: Climate
The Taiga

Unifying Characteristics: Climate and Vegetation
Coniferous trees in the Alaskan taiga.
Rainforest

Unifying Characteristics: Climate and Vegetation.
The Great Plains

Unifying Characteristics: Topography and Vegetation. The Great Plains is a region that extends from Canada to Texas. This region is extremely flat and it is covered by a grassland called the prairie.
The Low Countries

Unifying Characteristic: Topography. The low countries are Belgium and The Netherlands in Europe. These countries are very flat and low in elevation. Parts of The Netherlands are below sea level.
Cultural Regions

Cultural regions are based on unifying characteristics such as:

A. Language
B. Ethnicity
C. Religion
D. Economic Conditions
E. Politics
Language Regions

A. Latin America - Spanish
B. Francophone World - Countries in the world that have adopted French as a language of commerce and politics. Most of these countries were colonized by France.
Latin America

Green = Spanish
Orange = Portuguese
Blue = French or Creole
Francophone World
Ethnic Regions

A. Chinatowns or ethnic neighborhoods such as Little Havana.

B. Kurdistan - A region in the Middle East that encompasses parts of Iraq, Turkey, Syria, and Iran where Kurdish people live.
Chinatowns

Many large cities around the world have neighborhoods composed of different ethnic groups because people want to live near people who are similar. Chinatowns are an example of a region based on culture.
Kurdistan
Religious Regions

A. The Islamic World (Southwest Asia, North Africa, Central Asia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia.
B. Buddhism (Southeast Asia: Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Malaysia, parts of China, Korea, and Japan)
The Muslim World

Unifying Characteristic: The religion of Islam.
Economic Regions

A. The Wheat Belt - This is an area in the central United States where wheat or other grains are the primary agricultural product.

B. The European Union - A group of countries in Europe that have signed agreements to stimulate trade and business.
Wheat Belt

Unifying Characteristic: Economies based on wheat production.
A. North Atlantic Treaty Organization - NATO is a group of countries that share the common purpose of protecting and promoting democracy. Some members of NATO are: The U.S., Canada, France, Great Britain.

B. African Union - A political union in Africa that seeks to promote peace, prosperity, and commerce.
Changes in Perception

The way we understand and view regions can change over time.

A. Sun Belt
B. Rust Belt
The Sun Belt is a region that stretches across the southern United States. The population in this region has grown over the last few decades for several reasons.

A. Widespread use of air conditioning
B. People retire in northern states and move south
C. Illegal immigration
Sun Belt
Rust Belt

The Rust Belt is a region in the northeastern United States that used to be the center of heavy industry in the United States such as the automobile industry and steel production. Global competition has forced these industries to either close down or restructure resulting in the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs.
Rust Belt

A few cities in the Rust Belt are:
A. Detroit
B. Pittsburgh
C. Buffalo
D. Cleveland
Rust Belt