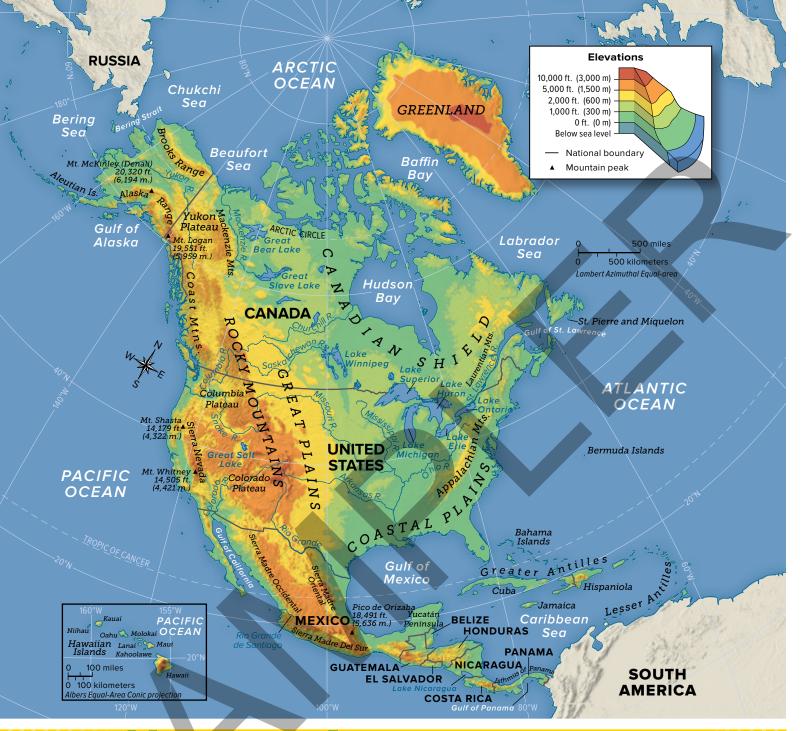


Caribbean Islands

North





NORTH AMERICA

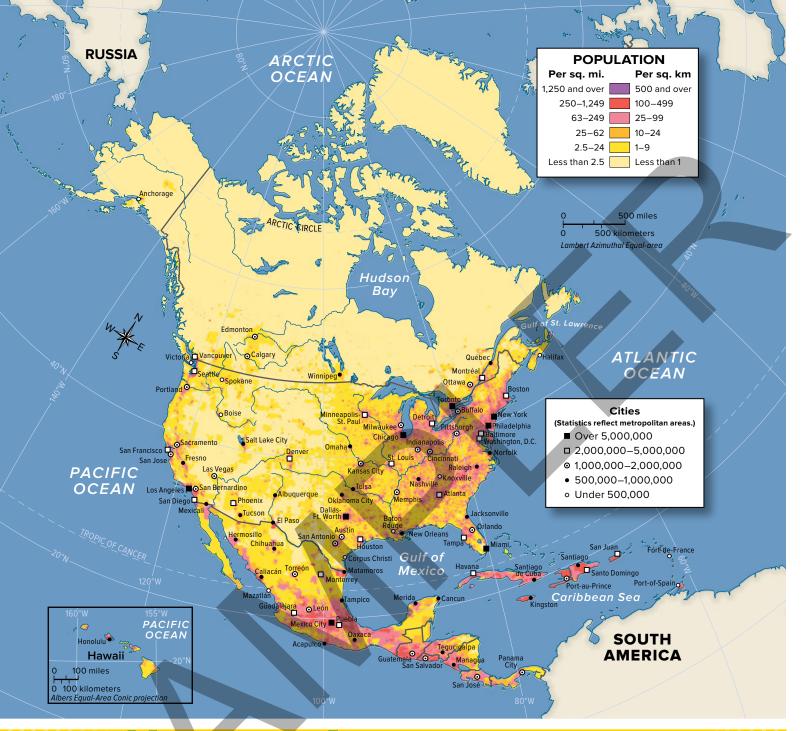


- 1 PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY Describe the locations of each of the following: the three Sierra Madre mountain ranges, the Great Lakes, and the Rocky Mountains.
- **2 THE GEOGRAPHER'S WORLD** Which body of water is located east of Panama?
- 3 PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY What feature surrounds Hudson Bay?



POLITICAL

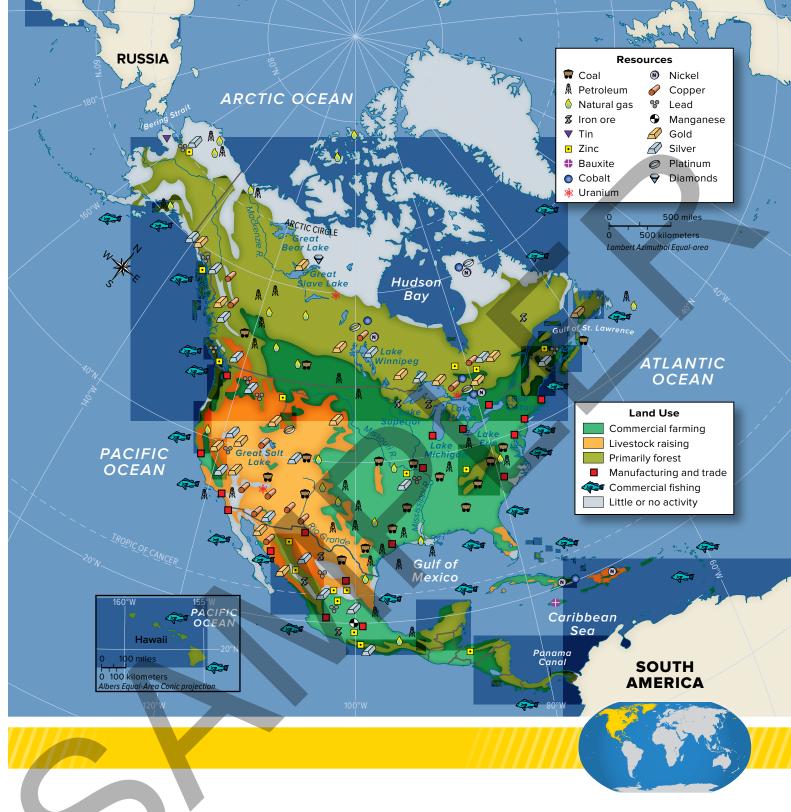
- 1 PLACES AND REGIONS What is the capital of Canada?
- **2 THE GEOGRAPHER'S WORLD** What physical feature forms the natural boundary between the United States and Mexico?
- 3 PLACES AND REGIONS What is the capital of Cuba?



NORTH AMERICA

POPULATION DENSITY

- 1 PLACES AND REGIONS Where is the greatest population density located in Canada?
- **2 PLACES AND REGIONS** Contrast the population density of northern Mexico with southern Mexico.
- **3 ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY** What generalizations can you make about the populations of the Caribbean islands?



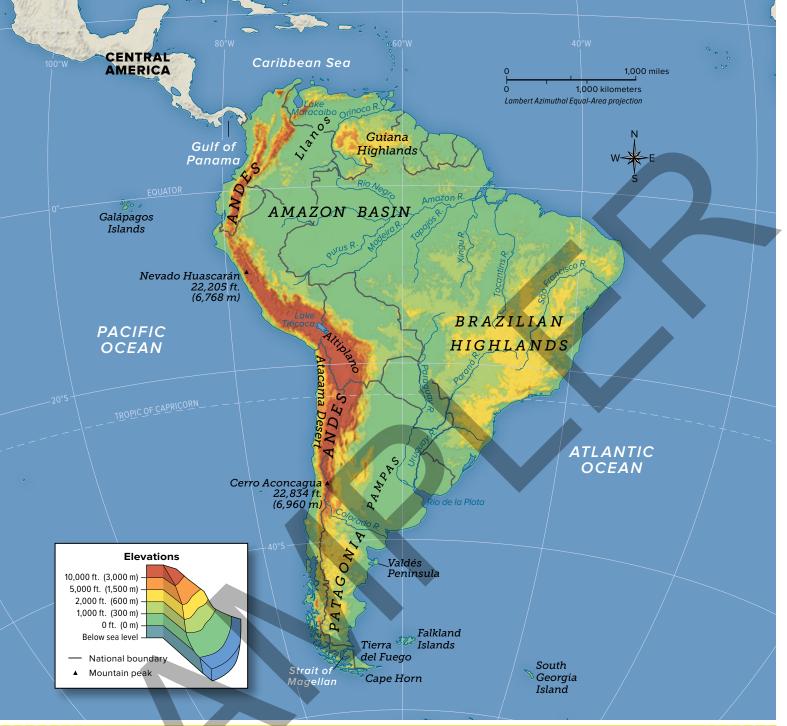
ECONOMIC RESOURCES

- **1 HUMAN GEOGRAPHY** Describe how most land is used throughout Canada.
- 2 HUMAN GEOGRAPHY What is the main economic activity near Panama?
- **3 HUMAN GEOGRAPHY** Contrast how land is used in northern Canada with Central America.



- **1 PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY** What type of climate is most common throughout Canada?
- **2 PLACES AND REGIONS** The Caribbean islands and central Mexico appear to have two things in common. What are these commonalities?
- **3** PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY What is the overall climate of northern Mexico?





SOUTH AMERICA

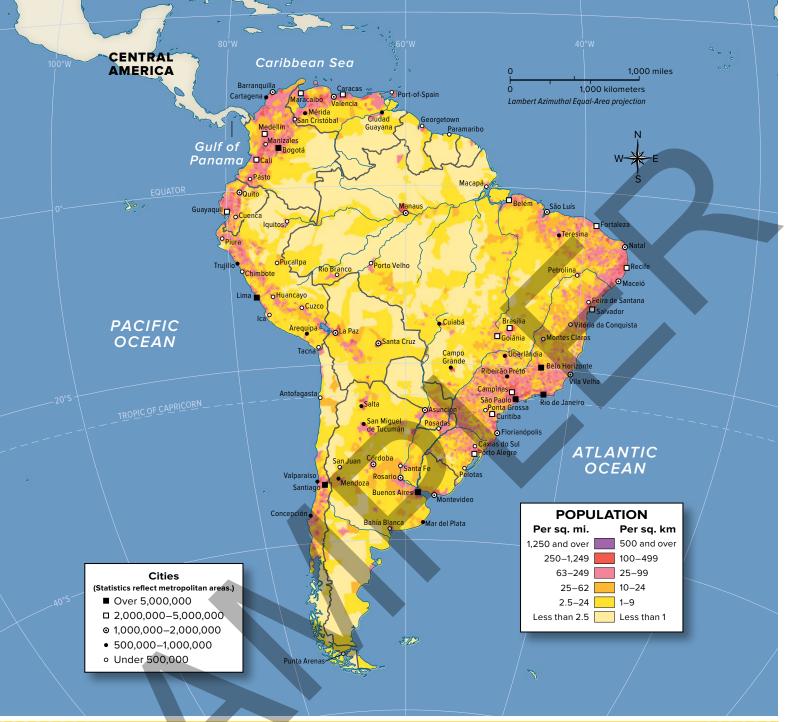
PHYSICAL

- 1 THE GEOGRAPHER'S WORLD What is the easternmost river in Brazil?
- **2 PLACES AND REGIONS** Describe the location of the Atacama Desert. Where is it located in relation to the Andes mountain range?
- **3** PLACES AND REGIONS Explain why elevation of land in the Amazon Basin makes travel easier.



POLITICAL

- 1 PLACES AND REGIONS What is the capital of Uruguay?
- **2 PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY** Which two countries in South America do not have coastlines?
- **3 THE GEOGRAPHER'S WORLD** Which country in South America shares its border with the most countries?



SOUTH AMERICA

POPULATION DENSITY

- 1 HUMAN GEOGRAPHY Where do most people in South America live?
- 2 HUMAN GEOGRAPHY About how many people live in Lima?
- **3 PLACES AND REGIONS** What are the largest cities on South America's eastern coast?



ECONOMIC RESOURCES

- **1 HUMAN GEOGRAPHY** Is there more commercial farming or livestock raising in South America?
- **2 PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY** Where is the greatest concentration of minerals and ores?
- **3 ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY** Is South America a manufacturing center?



- 1 PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY What is the most prevalent climate in South America?
- **2 PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY** Where is South America's desert climate?
- 3 PLACES AND REGIONS In which type of climate is Santiago, Chile, located?

MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA, AND THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS • How does geography influence the way people live? • Why does conflict develop? • Why do people trade?



networks

There's More Online about Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands.

CHAPTER 4

Lesson 1

Physical Geography

Lesson 2
History and Government
of the Region

Lesson 3
Life in the Region

The Story Matters...

Early advanced civilizations developed in this region of the Americas. Their people developed economies based on farming and trade. They built planned cities and developed highly organized societies and governments. The arrival of the Spanish and other Europeans had a dramatic impact on the region and its indigenous peoples. The influence of European colonial rule and the struggles for independence can still be seen in the economies, politics, and cultures of the region today.



Go to the Foldables® library in the back of your book to make a



Foldable® that will help you take notes while reading this chapter.

Chapter 4 MEXICO, CENTRAL AMERICA, AND THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS

Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean islands sit between North America and South America. The region is surrounded by oceans and seas and is located close to the Equator. As you study the map, look for the geographic features that make this area unique.

Step Into the Place

MAP FOCUS Use the map to answer the following questions.

- 1 THE GEOGRAPHER'S
 WORLD What is the largest country in this region?
- 2 ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY Why was the Panama Canal built where it is?
- 3 THE GEOGRAPHER'S
 WORLD What body of
 water separates Mexico
 from the Southeastern
 United States?
- 4 CRITICAL THINKING
 Analyzing Given their
 location, what might be a
 key economic industry of
 the Caribbean islands?



HISTORIC CITY Willemstad, capital of the Caribbean island of Curacao, was founded in 1634 by Dutch settlers.



MAYA RUINS Early Americans known as the Maya built cities in the rain forests of southern Mexico.

Step Into the Time

DESCRIBING Select one location on the time line and describe the impact of European colonization on the lives and environment of the people who lived there.

1325
Aztec found Tenochtitlán

1492 Christopher Columbus arrives in Americas

1500

(t to b)Philip Coblentz/Digital Vision/Getty Images; Glow Images; DEA/G. DAGLI ORTI/De Agostini/Getty Images

116 Chapter 4





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There's More Online!

- GRAPHIC ORGANIZER
 Landforms and Waterways
- IMAGE 360° View:
 Mexico City
- ANIMATION Waterways as Political Boundaries
- **☑** VIDEO

Reading **HELP**DESK

Academic Vocabulary

- similar
- benefit

Content Vocabulary

- isthmus
- tierra caliente
- tierra templada
- tierra fría
- bauxite
- extinct
- dormant

TAKING NOTES: Key Ideas and Details

Organize As you read about the region, take notes on the physical geography using a graphic organizer like the one below.

Area	Landforms				
Mexico					
Central America					
Caribbean islands					



Lesson 1 Physical Geography

ESSENTIAL QUESTION • How does geography influence the way people live?

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Mexico and Central America are southern neighbors to the United States.

Physical Geography of Mexico and Central America

GUIDING QUESTION What landforms and waterways do Mexico and Central America have?

Mexico and the seven nations of Central America act like a bridge between two worlds. Geographically, they form an isthmus that connects North and South America. An **isthmus** is a narrow piece of land that connects two larger landmasses. Culturally, they join with South America and some Caribbean islands to make up Latin America. Latin America is a region of the Americas where the Spanish and Portuguese languages, based on the Latin language of ancient Rome, are spoken. Economically, the nations have close ties to the United States. They also trade with their Latin American neighbors.

Shaped like a funnel, the region is wider in the north than in the south. To the north, Mexico has a 1,951-mile (3,140-km) border with the United States. At the southern end, the Central American country of Panama is only about 40 miles (64 km) wide.

Land Features

Mexico is the largest nation of the region, occupying about two-thirds of the land. Imagine a backwards *y* along the western and eastern coasts of Mexico, with the tail to the south. That backwards *y* neatly traces the mountain systems

on Mexico's two coasts and south central region. The coastal ranges are called the Sierra Madre Occidental (Spanish for "western") and the Sierra Madre Oriental (Spanish for "eastern"). They join in the southern highlands. Coastal plains flank the western and eastern mountains. The eastern plain is wider.

Between the two arms of the *y* is a vast highland region called the Central Plateau. It is the heartland of Mexico. This plateau is home to Mexico City, which is the capital, and a large share of the nation's people.

Mexico has two peninsulas. The Yucatán Peninsula bulges northeast into the Gulf of Mexico. Baja California (*baja* means "lower" in Spanish) extends to the south in western Mexico.

Central America has landforms **similar** to those of south central Mexico. Mountains run down the center of these countries. Narrow coastal lowlands flank them on the east and west.

Mexico and Central America lie along the Ring of Fire that rims the Pacific Ocean. Earthquakes and volcanoes are common in the Ring of Fire. The Sierra Madre Occidental are made of volcanic rocks, but they have no active volcanoes. The mountains in the southern part of the central plateau and in Central America, however, do have numerous active volcanoes. These volcanoes bring a **benefit**. Volcanic materials weather into fertile, productive soils.

Academic Vocabulary

similar much like benefit advantage

Mountains appear on the hazy horizon of Mexico City. Mexico's capital lies about 7,800 feet (2,377 m) above sea level.







Popocatépetl volcano stands in the background as a farmer plows the land. Popocatépetl, also known as "smoking mountain," has experienced eruptions since ancient times.

Explaining Why are earthquakes common in some parts of Mexico and Central America?

Earthquakes are common in the area, too. A magnitude 8.0 earthquake that hit Mexico City in 1985 killed thousands of people. One that struck El Salvador in 2001 produced another kind of disaster. A hill weakened by the earth's movement collapsed onto the town of Las Colinas. It crushed homes and killed hundreds of people.

Bodies of Water

Mexico and Central America are bordered by the Pacific Ocean to the west. The Gulf of California, an inlet of that ocean, separates Baja California from the rest of Mexico. To the east, the region is surrounded by the waters of two arms of the Atlantic Ocean. They are the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.

The region has few major rivers. In the northern half of Mexico, the climate is dry. This means that few rivers flow across the rocky landscape. Southern Mexico and Central America receive more rain, but the landscape is steep and mountainous, and the rivers are short. An important river is the Río Bravo. In the United States, this river is called the Rio Grande. The largest lake in the region is Lake Nicaragua, in Nicaragua.

An important waterway in the region is not a river, but a feature built by people. It is the Panama Canal, built in the early 1900s. The Panama Canal makes it possible for ships to pass between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans without journeying around South America. It saves thousands of miles of travel, which in turn saves time and money. It is one of the world's most important waterways.

Climates

Most of Mexico and Central America lie in the Tropics. Because of their location near the Equator, it might seem that the climate would be hot. Although the coastal lowlands are hot, areas with higher elevation are not. The highlands are much cooler.

Nearly the entire region can be divided into three vertical climate zones. Soil, crops, animals, and climate change from zone to zone. The *tierra caliente*, or "hot land," is the warmest zone. It reaches from sea level to about 2,500 feet (762 m) above sea level. Major crops grown here are bananas, sugarcane, and rice.

Next highest is the **tierra templada**, or "temperate land." This climate zone has cooler temperatures. Here farmers grow such crops as coffee, corn, and wheat. Most of the region's people live in this climate zone.

Higher in elevation is the **tierra fría**, or "cold land." This region has chilly nights. It can be used only for dairy farming and to grow hearty crops such as potatoes, barley, and wheat.

Think **Again**

Because the Panama Canal connects the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, it must go east to west.

Not really! Central
America twists to the east
where Panama is located.
As a result, the Panama
Canal is cut from the north
to the south.

Hot Springs Canyon was formed by flowing waters that have cut through the land. The Rio Bravo, or Rio Grande, carves its way through rugged countryside. It forms part of the border between Mexico and the United States.

CRITICAL THINKING

Describing Why are there so few rivers in the northern part of Mexico?



GRAPH SKILLS >

CLIMATE ZONES

Although the region is located in the Tropics, many inland areas of Mexico and Central America have relatively cool climates.

► CRITICAL THINKING

- 1. Identifying What products are grown in tierra caliente?
- 2. Analyzing Why are many inland areas of Mexico and Central America relatively cool?



Geographers also designate other vertical climate zones. Few human activities take place on the *tierra helada*, or "frozen land". This vertical climate zone is more common in other regions of the Americas.

Tropical Wet/Dry Climate

Much of Mexico and Central America have a tropical wet/dry climate. The climate is characterized by two distinct seasons. The wet season, during the summer months, is when most of the precipitation falls. The dry season occurs during the winter months. The dry season is longer in the areas farther from the Equator and closer to the polar regions.

The region's tropical location exposes it to another natural hazard. Ferocious hurricanes can strike in the summer and early autumn months. These storms do great damage. For example, a 1998 hurricane killed more than 9,000 people in Honduras and destroyed 150,000 homes.

Natural Resources

Oil and natural gas are Mexico's most important resources. They are found along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico and in the gulf waters. Mexico is an important oil-producing country. It has enough oil and gas to meet its own needs and still export a large amount. The exports help fuel the nation's economy. However, Mexico's oil production has declined since 2004. Many oil fields are old and are starting to run out of oil.

When Spanish explorers first came to Mexico, they were attracted to the area's gold and silver. Mexico still produces silver, which is mined in the central and north central parts of the country. Gold also is still mined in Mexico. Other minerals include copper, iron ore, and bauxite. Bauxite is used to make aluminum.

The seven smaller nations of Central America have few mineral resources. Nicaragua is an exception, with gold, silver, iron ore, lead, zinc, and copper. The nation is so poor, however, that it has not been able to take advantage of these deposits. Guatemala also has some oil, and its mountains produce nickel.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Analyzing Why are different climate zones found in this region, even though most of the region is in the Tropics?

Physical Geography of the Caribbean Islands

GUIDING QUESTION How are the Caribbean islands alike and different from one another?

Hundreds of islands dot the Caribbean Sea. The islands are home to more than 30 countries or territories belonging to other countries. Some are large, with millions of people living on them. Others are tiny and home to only thousands.

Major Islands

The Caribbean islands can be segmented into three different groups. The first group is the Greater Antilles. The four islands, the largest Caribbean islands, include Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola, and Puerto Rico. Cuba and Jamaica are independent countries. Hispaniola is home to two countries: Haiti in the west and the Dominican Republic

This scenic bay in the Caribbean island of Antigua provides an ideal harbor for yachts and other sailing ships. Antigua is part of the Lesser Antilles.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Describing What islands make up the Greater Antilles?



Thinking Like a Geographer

Why are the Caribbean islands hit so often by earthquakes and volcanoes?

The islands of the Caribbean are not along the edge of the Pacific Ocean. So why do they experience these disasters? The Ring of Fire is not the only place where tectonic plates meet. Many Caribbean islands are located at the boundaries of different plates where volcanoes form and earthquakes occur. Hence, the islands are vulnerable to these disasters. A 2010 earthquake near Haiti's capital of Port-au-Prince might have killed as many as 200,000 people and forced 1 million others out of their homes.

in the east. Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States. Although it is a possession of the United States, it has its own government. The people of Puerto Rico are American citizens. They can travel freely between their island and the United States.

The second group of islands is the Lesser Antilles. Dozens of smaller islands make up this group. They form an arc moving east and south from Puerto Rico to northern South America. Most of the islands are now independent countries. At one time, they were colonies of France, Britain, Spain, or the Netherlands. Each has a culture reflecting its colonial period.

The third island group is the independent nation of the Bahamas. The islands lie north of the Greater Antilles and east of Florida. The Bahamas include more than 3,000 islands, although people live on only about 30 of them.

The Greater Antilles are a mountain chain, much of which is under water. On a map, you can see that this chain extends eastward from Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula. These islands include some mountains, such as the Sierra Maestra in the eastern part of Cuba and the Blue Mountains of Jamaica. The highest point in the Caribbean is Duarte Peak, in the Dominican Republic. The Lesser Antilles are formed by volcanic mountains. Many of the volcanoes are **extinct**, or no longer able to erupt. Some islands have **dormant** volcanoes, or ones that can still erupt but show no signs of activity.

The Caribbean Sea

The Caribbean Sea is a western arm of the Atlantic Ocean. In the past, sailing ships traveling west from Europe followed trade winds blowing east to west to reach the sea. Christopher Columbus used the winds to reach the Bahamas in 1492. There, he first sighted land in the Americas. Columbus explored the Caribbean, too. These voyages sparked European settlement of the Americas.

The warm waters of the Caribbean help feed the Gulf Stream. This current carries warm water up the eastern coast of the United States.

The Climate of the Caribbean Islands

The Caribbean islands have a tropical wet/dry climate. Temperatures are high year-round, though ocean breezes make life comfortable. Humidity is generally high, but rainfall is seasonal and varies significantly. Islands like Bonaire receive only about 10 inches (25 cm) of rain per year. Dominica, on the other hand, receives about 350 inches (899 cm) of rain each year. That is an average of almost an inch of rain every day.

Like Central America and Mexico, the Caribbean islands are prone to hurricanes. These storms are more likely to occur in the northern areas, toward the Gulf of Mexico, than to the south. On average, seven hurricanes strike the Caribbean islands each year.





Natural Resources

The waters of the Caribbean are rich in fish. Some are fished for food and others for sport. The islands have few timber resources today. People have cut down most of the trees already to use for fuel or to make farmland.

Mineral resources are generally lacking too, although some Caribbean islands have important resources. Trinidad and Tobago has reserves of oil and natural gas. The Dominican Republic exports nickel, gold, and silver. Cuba is a major producer of nickel. Jamaica has large amounts of bauxite.

Perhaps the most important resources of the Caribbean are its climate and people. Warm temperatures and gracious hosts attract millions of tourists to the region each year. Some enjoy the white sandy beaches and clear blue water. Some scuba dive to see the colorful fish darting through coral reefs.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Citing Text Evidence How did the islands of the Caribbean form?

Tourists on a boat near the French-ruled island of Guadeloupe learn to dive in Caribbean waters.

Identifying What natural resource of the Caribbean Sea benefits the region's island nations?



Include this lesson's information in your Foldable®.



LESSON 1 REVIEW

Reviewing Vocabulary

1. What is the *tierra templada*? Why do most people in Mexico and Central America live in this vertical climate zone?

Answering the Guiding Questions

- **2.** *Describing* How are the physical geography of Mexico and Central America similar?
- **3. Analyzing** What impact does the Panama Canal have on the cost of shipping goods? Why?
- **4. Determining Central Ideas** How do the locations of Mexico and Central America increase the possibility of natural hazards striking the region?
- **5. Determining Word Meanings** Why are some islands in the Caribbean called the *Greater* Antilles and others called the *Lesser* Antilles?
- **6. Narrative Writing** Imagine you are taking a cruise that stops at a Caribbean island, a port in Central America, and a port in Mexico. Write three diary entries describing what you would see in each place.

Reading **HELP**DESK

Academic Vocabulary

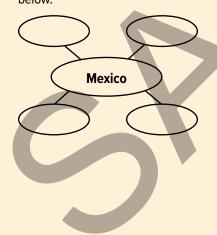
- feature
- transform

Content Vocabulary

- staple
- surplus
- conquistador
- colonialism
- revolution
- plantation
- cash crop
- caudillo
- Columbian Exchange

TAKING NOTES: Key Ideas and Details

Summarize As you read about the history of Mexico, take notes using the graphic organizer below.



Lesson 2

History and Government of the Region

ESSENTIAL QUESTION • Why does conflict develop?

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

The region was home to highly developed native civilizations.

Mexico's History

GUIDING QUESTION How did economic and governmental relationships between Spanish and native civilizations in Mexico change over time?

Mexico was first inhabited by native groups. Later, Spanish soldiers conquered the groups and ruled them. Since the early 1800s, Mexico has been independent. Its history is long and rich, and its accomplishments are many.

Early Civilizations

Native peoples first grew corn in Mexico about 7,000 years ago. They also grew other foods that have become **staples**, or foods that are eaten regularly, such as corn, squash, chilies, and avocados. Farming allowed people to produce food **surpluses**, or more than they needed to survive. Surpluses helped people specialize in jobs other than getting food.

About 3,000 years ago, the Maya formed the major civilization in the region. They lived mainly in the lowland plains of Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula and in what is now Guatemala and Belize. One **feature** of their culture was great cities. The Maya erected pyramids with stepped sides and temples on top. They invented a complex system of writing. By studying astronomy, they were able to make accurate calendars. The height of Maya civilization was from about A.D. 300 to A.D. 900. Then their power suddenly collapsed. Archaeologists do not know exactly why.

The Aztec ruled the region next. They settled in central Mexico in about 1300. Their impressive capital city was Tenochtitlán. Mexico City occupies the site where it once stood. Tenochtitlán was built on an island in the middle of a lake. Causeways connected it to the mainland.

The Aztec had a complex social and religious system. They conquered many of their neighbors and made slaves of captured soldiers. Priests performed rituals to win the favor of their gods. The Aztec were also skilled farmers.

The Spanish Arrive

In the early 1500s, a rival power appeared. Around 1520, Hernán Cortés led a small force of Spanish **conquistadors**, or conquerors, to Mexico. Within two years, these explorers and soldiers had defeated the Aztec and taken control of their empire.

How could the Spanish conquer the Aztec with only a few hundred men? Spanish guns and armor were better weapons than Aztec spears. Another major factor was European diseases. The diseases did not exist in the Americas until Europeans unknowingly brought them. Native peoples had no resistance to them, so the diseases killed many thousands. Cortés also took advantage of the anger of other native peoples who resented Aztec rule. Several groups joined him as allies.

Winning the Aztec Empire brought Spain riches in gold and silver mines. The conquest completely **transformed** life in Mexico. Roman Catholic priests converted native peoples to Catholicism. Conquistadors forced native peoples to work on farms or in mines. Spanish rule in Mexico was an example of colonialism.

Some grew to dislike the treatment and enslavement of native peoples. Bartolmé de las Casas led a reform movement that started in the 1510s. He petitioned the Spanish government for better treatment of native peoples and suggested Africans might make a better enslaved labor source. A much-reduced native population made for a hasty transition to African enslaved labor in Spanish America.

In Mexico, the population of enslaved Africans and Afro-Mexicans grew. By 1650, New Spain (present day Mexico, Central America, Southwest United States, Florida, and the Spanish Caribbean) was

home to the second-largest population of enslaved people of African descent. In Mexico, enslaved Africans and Afro-Mexicans labored in the silver mines, in sugar plantations in the south, and in houses and ranches throughout Mexico. Enslaved Afro-Mexicans were a critical part of the economy of colonial Mexico.

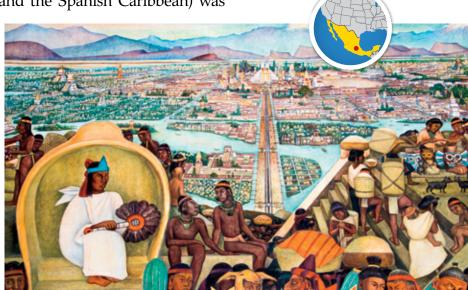
Academic Vocabulary

feature a characteristic **transform** to change

The Aztec city of Tenochtitlán was linked by canals, bridges, and raised streets built across the water.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Describing How were the Aztec able to build a city and farms in an area covered by a lake?



Under **colonialism**, one nation takes control of an area and dominates its government, economy, and society. The colonial power uses the colony's resources to make itself wealthier. In colonial Mexico, settlers from Spain had the most wealth.

Independence and Conflict

After almost 300 years of Spanish rule, a priest named Miguel Hidalgo led a rebellion in Mexico in 1810. The goal of the rebellion was to win independence from Spain. Some people hoped it would also create a more nearly equal society. The Spanish captured and executed Hidalgo, but by 1821 Mexico had gained its independence. Spanish rulers, though, were replaced by wealthy Mexican landowners, politicians, and military officials who created a constitution to promote democracy in 1824. This constitution established three branches of government (executive, judicial, and legislative, with an upper and a lower house). While technically a presidential democracy, a series of leaders traded off dictatorial rule. Native peoples remained poor.

Through much of the 1800s, Mexico was troubled by political conflict. Rival groups fought one another for power. Most of Mexico's people remained poor and were excluded from political participation.

Revolution and Stability

By the early 1900s, dissatisfaction was widespread. A revolution erupted in Mexico. A **revolution** is a period of violent social and political change. One change was the land reform plan, which divided large estates into parcels of land that were then given to poor people to farm. National public schools were established, and a new constitution was written detailing the responsibilities of the government toward the people. Only one political party, however, held power until the 1990s. Since 2000, the Mexican people have voted for leadership from several different political parties.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Determining Central Ideas How were the Spanish able to conquer the Aztec?

A History of Central America

GUIDING QUESTION How did the nations of Central America develop?

The nations of Central America developed in similar ways to Mexico. But there were differences, as well.

Early Civilizations and Conquest

The Maya had flourished in Guatemala and Belize, as well as in southern Mexico. Even after their great cities were abandoned, the Maya continued to live in the region. After conquering Mexico, the





Spanish moved south. By the 1560s, Spain had seized control of most of Central America. During the early 1800s, Britain claimed the area that is now Belize.

Independence

Central America gained its independence soon after Mexico. In 1823 the territories of Central America united to form one government. By 1840, they had separated into five independent countries: Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. The area that is now Belize was still a British colony. Panama was part of Colombia.

Central American countries were subjected to economic colonialism. This means that foreign interests dominate a people economically. These foreign interests were large companies from other countries. They set up plantations, or large farms, where poorly paid workers produced cash crops. Cash crops are crops sold for profit. The most important were bananas, coffee, and sugarcane.

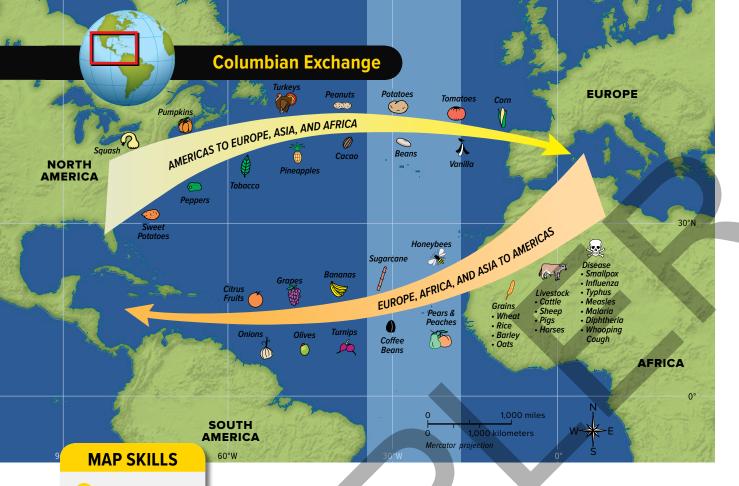
Heading the governments for much of this time were military strongmen called **caudillos**. The caudillos helped ensure the foreigners' success. In turn, the foreigners made sure that the caudillos remained in power.

Conflict in Modern Times

Around 1900, Panama gained its independence from Colombia. It was helped by the United States, which wanted to build a canal there. The United States controlled the canal until 2000. Then, by agreement, Panama took control of the canal.

Built by the United States in the early 1900s, the Panama Canal is now owned and operated by the Republic of Panama.

Identifying Which country held Panama shortly before the United States built the Panama Canal?



1 THE USE OF GEOGRAPHY Describe the Columbian Exchange.

2 HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

What diseases spread throughout the world as a result of the Columbian Exchange?

The late 1900s was a time of conflict. New wealth came to the upper classes, but most people remained poor. Various groups demanded reforms. Several countries were ravaged by civil wars. Only Costa Rica and Belize remained peaceful. One of Costa Rica's presidents, Óscar Arias Sánchez, helped bring peace to the region.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Analyzing How did Central America and Mexico's history differ?

History of the Caribbean Islands

GUIDING QUESTION How did the Caribbean islands develop?

The history of the Caribbean islands is similar to that of Mexico and Central America. The islands have greater diversity, though, because several European countries ruled them as colonies.

Indigenous Peoples and European Settlers

Europeans changed the way the native peoples of the Caribbean lived. Like the native civilizations of the mainland, they suffered from diseases carried by the Europeans. This is why their numbers declined sharply soon after the arrival of the Europeans. Overwork and starvation also reduced their numbers. The Spanish set up colonies in what are now Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto

Rico. Later, the French settled in what is now Haiti and on other smaller islands. The British and Dutch had some colonies, too.

Colonialism

During the 1600s, the Caribbean colonies became the center of the growing sugar industry. European landowners hoped to make money by selling the sugar in Europe. Because so many of the native people forced to work the plantations died, Europeans brought in hundreds of thousands of enslaved Africans to work the plantations.

For example, the Spanish imported 778,000 enslaved Africans to Cuba throughout its colonial era to work on coffee, sugar, and tobacco plantations. The large presence of people of African descent continued to define Cuba and the rest of the Caribbean throughout the colonial era and up to today.

The term **Columbian Exchange** refers to the transfer of plants and animals between Europe, Asia, and Africa on one side and the Americas on the other. Foods such as wheat, rice, grapes, and apples were introduced to the Americas as were cattle, sheep, pigs, and horses. At the same time, products from the Americas were introduced into Europe, Africa, and Asia. They included corn, chocolate, and the potato. The Columbian Exchange also resulted in the introduction of new diseases into different parts of the world.

Independence

The first area in the Caribbean to gain independence was Haiti, then called Saint Domingue. Led by Toussaint-Louverture, Haiti gained its independence from France in 1804. The Dominican Republic won its independence in 1844. Cuba and Puerto Rico remained Spanish until 1898. When Spain lost the Spanish-American War, it gave independence to Cuba. Puerto Rico passed into American hands. Other islands of the Caribbean did not win the right to self-government until the middle 1900s.

Turmoil in the Twentieth Century

Independence did not mean freedom or prosperity. Rule by caudillos and widespread poverty have remained a problem in Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Cuba, too, was often subject to dictatorial rule following its independence. Under dictatorial rule, Cuba had built strong cultural and economic relationships with the United States. The Cuban economy was built on the production and trade of sugar. Americans invested in Cuban businesses and many tourists visited the island. Economic instability and political corruption fed Cuban's dissatisfaction with the dictatorial rule. Then in 1959, revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro took over. Castro soon cut all ties with the United States. He said that Cuba would follow the ideas of communism and a command economy. Communism



Since 1959, the Cuban government has controlled the distribution of food and basic products through a rations booklet system. Citizens use rations vouchers to shop for scarce ingredients like rice, beans, sugar, or chicken.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Inferring Why would a government ration food?

FOLDABLES
Study Organizer

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involves government control of all areas of the economy and society. His rule did not bring economic success to Cuba. The relationship between Cuba and the United States became strained during the 1960s and the United States imposed an embargo on Cuba that restricted trade to the island. In recent years, the relationship between Cuba and the United States has improved and some travel and trade has been taking place between the two countries.

The other islands of the Caribbean have had their own difficulties. Some countries in the region are trying to

improve conditions and bring economic benefits to all their citizens. Small and with few resources, they have been unable to develop strong economies. Many of the islands depend on aid from the governments that used to run them as colonies.

Modern Caribbean Governments

The nations of the Caribbean have diverse forms of government. France, England, the Netherlands, and the United States have territories in the Caribbean and govern from afar. Other islands declared independence and formed new representative governments over the past centuries. Many took the forms of parliamentary democracies, constitutional monarchies, presidential republics, or presidential democracies.

Cuba's authoritarian government is the exception. While the government technically has executive, judicial, and legislative branches, Cuba's government is controlled by the Cuban Communist Party and its leader. While Cuba's autocratic rulers have begun to relax some economic rules, they continue to maintain tight control over the government and economy of Cuba.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Analyzing What caused the population of the Caribbean islands to grow in colonial times?

LESSON 2 REVIEW

Reviewing Vocabulary

1. What is the difference between a *conquistador* and a *caudillo*?

Answering the Guiding Questions

- 2. Describing How did the Maya and the Aztec differ?
- **3. Analyzing** How were relations between Europeans and native peoples similar in Mexico during colonial times and the 1800s?
- **4. Determining Central Ideas** How did economic colonialism affect the nations of Central America?
- **5. Analyzing** How was the development of Cuba and of Haiti similar and different?
- **6.** *Informative/Explanatory Writing* Write a summary of the history of Mexico, Central America, or the Caribbean islands after independence.

networks

There's More Online!

MAP Hispaniola

▼ VIDEO

Reading **HELP**DESK

Academic Vocabulary

- circumstance
- initiate

Content Vocabulary

- maquiladora
- mural
- dependence
- free-trade zone
- remittance
- reggae

TAKING NOTES: Key Ideas and Details

Summarize As you read about Mexico, use the graphic organizer below to take notes about its economy and culture.





Life in the Region

ESSENTIAL QUESTION • Why do people trade?

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Mexico and other countries in the region have close ties to the United States.

Modern Mexico

GUIDING QUESTION What is life like in Mexico today?

When you think of Mexico, you might think of Mexican food like tacos. You might think of mariachi musicians playing lively music and wearing large sombreros. But Mexico has a rich and complex culture and is a rising economic power.

Trade and the Economy

Over the past years, Mexico's economy has grown for several reasons. Literacy rates have improved, creating an educated workforce. This workforce produces more industrial goods which has expanded the economy, leading to an improved standard of living. In addition, a growing number of entrepreneurs have created new innovative companies that have sparked economic growth and improved Mexico's gross domestic product.

Most of Mexico's population lives in the south of the country, which includes Mexico City. Numerous resources including petroleum, silver, copper, natural gas, and timber are located in this region.

Farming remains important. Cotton and wheat are grown in the dry north using irrigation. Along the southeastern coast, farms produce coffee, sugarcane, and fruit. On the central plateau, farmers grow corn, wheat, and fruits and vegetables. In the poor south, many farmers engage in subsistence farming—growing just enough food to feed themselves and their families.

Think **Again**

All Mexican food is spicy.

Not true! Mexican food varies from region to region. Most dishes are based on traditional native foods—corn, beans, and squash—along with rice, introduced from Spain. Not all Mexican food is spicy, although chilies are used in many dishes.

Farmers sell produce at a village market in Mexico.

CRITICAL THINKING

Describing What is farming like in southern Mexico?

Service industries are important in Mexico. Banking helps finance economic growth. A major service industry is tourism. Visitors from around the world come to visit ancient Maya sites or to see the architecture of Spanish colonial cities. Tourists also come to relax in resorts along the warm and scenic tropical coasts.

In recent decades, Mexico has developed its manufacturing industry. Factories account for about a third of Mexico's output. Some of them are **maquiladoras**. These are factories where parts made elsewhere are assembled into products. Many of the factories are located in northern Mexico. The goods are then exported. Food processing is another major industry in Mexico. The textile and clothing industries are important, too. Mexico also has heavy manufacturing, producing iron, steel, and automobiles.

Mexican trade depends on its natural resources and industrial production. Mexico's main exports are: automobiles, trucks, computers, petroleum, and televisions. Over 80 percent of Mexico's goods are exported to the United States and Canada.

Mexico relies heavily on trade with the United States and Canada. In 1994, the three countries entered into the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The countries agreed to remove trade barriers, such as taxes, so that trade could occur more easily and bring about economic growth. Within NAFTA, the United States is Mexico's largest trading partner. From 2012 to 2016, over 80 percent of Mexico's exports went to the United States. Forty-six percent of Mexico's imports came from the United States.



Culture

Mexicans are proud of their blend of Spanish and native cultures. They have long celebrated the folk arts that reflect native traditions. In the early 1900s, several Mexican painters drew on these traditions to paint impressive murals celebrating Mexico's history and people. **Murals** are large paintings made on walls. The Ballet Folklorico performs Mexican dances.

Sports reflect Mexico's ties to Spain and the United States. Soccer is popular there, as it is in Spain, along with baseball.

Challenges

With nearly 9 million people, Mexico City is one of the largest cities in the world. Including the city's suburbs, it has more than 21 million people—nearly 20 percent of Mexico's population. Overcrowding is a major problem.

Pollution is another problem, particularly air pollution. Because Mexico City is at a high elevation, the air has less oxygen than at sea level. This makes breathing difficult for some people in normal circumstances, but conditions in Mexico City are not normal. A great deal of exhaust from cars and factories is released into the air. The polluted air is held in place by the mountains around the city. Sometimes a layer of cold air high in the atmosphere keeps the pollution from rising. The result can be a serious threat to health.

Another challenge facing Mexico is the power of criminals who sell illegal drugs. Drug lords use violence to fight police and to intimidate people. Mexico has mounted a major effort to battle this problem with some success.

Poverty is yet another major challenge facing Mexico. Anywhere from one-fifth to nearly half of Mexico's people are poor. Continued economic growth would help, and seems to be working. Mexico is the second-leading economy in Latin America after Brazil.

Central American migration has also become an important issue in Mexico and the United States. While Mexican immigrants make up the largest foreign-born group in the United States, the Mexican immigrant population is shrinking currently. Mexico serves as a bridge for immigrants traveling to the United States from Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. These immigrants travel to the United States to escape poor living conditions, lack of economic opportunities, and violence. Immigrants send billions of dollars in remittances to their friends and family back home. A remittance is money sent back to the homeland by people who migrated someplace else to find work. In fact, Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala are four of the top 10 countries where people in the United States send their remittances.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Analyzing How have close ties with the United States helped Mexico's economy?



Mexican workers construct and assemble jet airplane parts at a maquiladora. Eventually, goods from this factory are exported to aircraft manufacturers in the United States.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Inferring How do maquiladoras impact the Mexican economy?

Academic Vocabulary

circumstance a condition

Modern Central America

GUIDING QUESTION What is life like in Central America?

The nations of Central America have fewer resources than Mexico. The region must also deal with political problems.

Central America's Economies

The countries of Central America long showed **dependence**, or too much reliance, on cash crops. In recent years, some have begun to escape this trap. A good sign is the growth of manufacturing. This consists mostly of food processing and production of clothing and textiles. Tourism has grown as well. Tourists come to Belize and Guatemala to see ancient Maya sites. They travel to Costa Rica to see the varied plants and animals in its rain forests.

Panama benefits economically from the Panama Canal. Working for additional benefit, Panama **initiated** a major building program to expand the canal so it can accept larger cargo ships.

High rates of population growth create an economic challenge. The countries need to grow their economies fast to provide enough jobs. One hope for promoting growth is trade agreements between the countries of the region and other countries.

In the 2000s, the United States and the Dominican Republic signed a series of agreements with five Central American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua). The agreement, called the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), was the first agreement among the United States and smaller developing economies. CAFTA-DR creates a **free-trade zone** that lowers trade barriers between the countries. Often, however, such trade agreements help the United States more than the other countries.

Challenges Facing the Region

Another challenge to the area is natural disasters. Earthquakes and hurricanes can have a devastating effect on the region's fragile economies. Nicaragua was making some economic progress in the 1990s when Hurricane Mitch hit. The destruction set the nation's economy back significantly.

The need to solve long-standing political problems also holds the region back. The civil wars of the 1980s and 1990s are over, but some of the issues that caused them remain unsolved. If these issues again become more severe, conflict may resume.

Culture

The culture of Central America is strongly influenced by European and native traditions. Spanish is the chief language in Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala but not Belize, where English is the official language. English is spoken

Academic Vocabulary

initiate to begin

A tourist descends from a tree in a rain forest in Costa Rica.

CRITICAL THINKING

Identifying Point of View Why do visitors travel to Costa Rica's rain forests?





in many cities in the region as well. In rural Guatemala, native languages are common.

The population is mainly of mixed European and native heritage. Some people of African and Asian descent live there as well. Most people of the region are Roman Catholics. In recent years, however, Protestant faiths have gained followers.

▼ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Identifying What are the causes of poverty in Central America?

The Caribbean Islands

GUIDING QUESTION What is life like on the Caribbean islands?

The Caribbean islands are mostly small countries with small populations and few resources. Although they have a rich and vibrant culture, they face many challenges.

Island Economies

The biggest challenge for the islands is to develop economically. Many people on the islands are poor. Even in Puerto Rico, a large share of the population lives in poverty. One reason for the poverty is high unemployment.

In Haiti, a history of poor political leadership has held back economic development. Haiti ranks among the world's poorest nations. Poverty is not the country's only problem. Widespread disease is another threat. In addition, as many as one in eight Haitians have left the country. Many of those who emigrated were among Haiti's most educated people. This loss hurts efforts to improve the economy. Finally, the country has not yet recovered from a deadly 2010 earthquake. Despite these problems, Haiti's people are determined to succeed.

Haiti's brown, barren landscape contrasts sharply with the richly forested terrain of the neighboring Dominican Republic.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Analyzing Why has economic development been held back in Haiti?

Vadim Nefedov/Alamy Stock Photo

Trinidad and Tobago has one of the more successful economies in the region. Sales of its oil and natural gas have funded economic development. Its location near Venezuela and Brazil has helped make its ports busy. The smaller Caribbean islands have had more political success than the larger ones. Governments are democratic and stable, but the economies are plagued by few resources and poverty.

Another important economic factor in the region is remittances. Many Dominicans came to the United States for work and send money home to support their families.

Tourism is a major part of the economy of several islands. Resorts in the Bahamas, Jamaica, and other islands invite tourists to come and relax in pleasant surroundings. The resorts often separate tourists from the lifestyle of the islanders, but they provide jobs for island citizens.

Island Cultures

The cultures of the Caribbean islands show a mix of mainly European and African influences. Large numbers of Asians also came to some of the islands in the 1800s and 1900s. Those from China went mainly to Cuba. South Asians settled in Jamaica, Guadalupe, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The languages spoken on the islands reflect their colonial heritage. English is the language of former British colonies such as the Bahamas and Jamaica. Spanish is spoken in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. English is also taught in Puerto Rico's schools. French and Creole, a blend of French and African languages, are spoken in Haiti.

The Caribbean islands have strongly influenced world music. Much of the music blends African and European influences. Cuba is famous for its salsa, and Jamaica for reggae. Both forms of music

Cruise ship travel to Havana, and other Cuban ports, has become popular since diplomatic relations with the United States were restored in 2015. The number of passengers increased from about 37,000 in 2015 to 500,000 in 2018.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Analyzing Why do tourists visit Cuba?



rely on complex drum rhythms. **Reggae** has become popular around the world not only for its musical qualities but also for lyrics that protest poverty and lack of equal rights.

Cuban Trade and Economy

Like the Mexican economy, Cuba's economy has grown in recent years. Remember, Cuba's government controls the country's economy. In the past, Cuba's largest trading partners were the Soviet Union and Venezuela. After the economies of these two countries collapsed, Cuba's economy slowed.

In 2011, the Cuban government allowed for some free market reforms.

Self-employment and entrepreneurship were encouraged. The government budgeted more money for education, which has created a higher skilled workforce. As a result, the standard of living has improved. Cubans are also acquiring more money that they are spending on electronics, cars, and vacations.

Cuba's population is clustered in cities such as Havana, Santiago de Cuba, Camaguey, and Holguin. Tourism is vital to Cuba's economy. Tourists are attracted to the island's location in the Caribbean Sea and its warm tropical climate. Industries rely on Cuba's natural resources such as cobalt, nickel, iron ore, and copper. A trade embargo, or ban, has existed between Cuba and the United States since the 1960s. Although the trade embargo is still in effect, some products such as petroleum and food are imported from the United States. Cuba exports medical products, tobacco, sugar, and coffee to Venezuela, Russia, and Germany.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Citing Text Evidence How do economic conditions in Jamaica relate to the development of reggae?



Cuban workers extract juice from a sugarcane stalk using a sugarcane press. Small private businesses sell the refreshing juice called *guarapo* in street stands because if it is not consumed immediately, it begins to ferment, or chemically change.

Describing Since what year has entrepreneurship been encouraged in Cuba?



Include this lesson's information in your Foldable®.



LESSON 3 REVIEW

Reviewing Vocabulary

1. What is a *free-trade zone*, and why do the nations of the region want to be in one?

Answering the Guiding Questions

- **2.** *Determining Central Ideas* Do you think Mexico has a strong economy? Why or why not?
- **3.** *Identifying* What challenges does Mexico face?

- **4. Describing** How have the economies of the Central American countries changed in recent years?
- **5.** *Analyzing* How do the languages of the Caribbean islands reflect their colonial history?
- **6. Argument Writing** Take the role of a government official in one of these countries. Write a brief report to the nation's president explaining whether you think promoting tourism is good or bad for the nation's economy. Give reasons.

Chapter 4 ACTIVITIES

Directions: Write your answers using standard grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

1 Use your **FOLDABLES** to explore the Essential Question.

INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING Write a couple of paragraphs explaining how geographical features led the Aztec and then much later the founders of Mexico City to build their cities on the same site.

2 21st Century Skills

INTEGRATING VISUAL INFORMATION Choose a country mentioned in this chapter.
Identify resources you would use to create a travel poster or slide show highlighting the country's or island's best features and include any places you would like to see.

Research and present your completed project to the class.

Caribbean

3 Thinking Like a Geographer

INTEGRATING VISUAL INFORMATION Draw a graphic organizer like the one shown here and use it to record information about the islands of the Caribbean.



Locating Places

Match the letters on the map with the numbered places listed below.

- **1.** Panama Canal
- **3.** Mexico City
- **5.** Caribbean Sea
- **7.** Guatemala
- **9.** Cuba

- **2.** Honduras
- 4. Rio Grande
- 6. Haiti
- 8. San Juan, Puerto Rico

Islands

Chapter 4 ASSESSMENT

REVIEW THE GUIDING QUESTIONS

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question.

- What are Mexico's two most important natural resources?
 - A. gold and silver
 - B. oil and natural gas
 - C. iron ore and copper
 - D. bauxite and zinc
- 2 Which is one of the most important waterways in the world?
 - F. Lake Nicaragua
 - G. Río Bravo
 - H. Panama Canal
 - I. Caribbean Sea
- A civilization that flourished in Southern Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala about
 - 3,000 years ago and built pyramids like the Egyptians was the
 - A. Anasazi.
 - B. Olmec.
 - C. Aztec.
 - D. Maya.
- 4 Europeans established plantations and brought enslaved people to Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Hispaniola in order to grow
 - F. tobacco.
 - G. bananas.
 - H. sugar.
 - I. coffee.
- **5** Which country is Mexico's biggest trading partner?
 - A. Canada
 - B. China
 - C. Venezuela
 - D. the United States
- 6 What is the most serious economic challenge facing Central American countries?
 - F. high rate of population growth
 - G. fluctuating oil prices
 - H. food shortages
 - I. debt

DBQ ANALYZING DOCUMENTS

Read this passage about the Maya.

"About six million Maya live in Central America. Like their ancestors, many of them survive by growing maize (Indian corn) or other crops on their land, or by producing woven textiles for sale. In some villages, the men have to leave their families to find work in the cities, or on coffee and cotton plantations."

-from How People Live, DK Publishing

- **IDENTIFYING** Which Maya activity today is similar to one from ancient times?
 - A. working in tourism
- C. growing maize
- B. working in factories
- D. working in cities
- **3 DETERMINING CENTRAL IDEAS** Which best explains why some men have to leave their villages?
 - F. They leave to seek wives elsewhere.
 - G. They're forced to do so by the government.
 - H. The villages are overcrowded.
 - I. They face a lack of jobs within the villages.

SHORT RESPONSE

"At the beginning of the 17th century the sweet crystal [sugar] transformed the Caribbean Islands into the Sugar Islands, though the islands did not turn sweet themselves. . . . Entire jungles were leveled; a slave or, later, cheap work force was massively imported from Africa and Asia; [and] a huge wave of European settlers arrived to stay."

—from Alfonso Silva Lee, Natural Cuba/Cuba Natural

- **DESCRIBING** In what ways were the Caribbean islands transformed by the spread of sugar farming?
- **DETERMINING WORD MEANINGS** What does the author of the passage mean by the phrase "the islands did not turn sweet themselves"?

EXTENDED RESPONSE

INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING Research and then write a brief report comparing and contrasting the cotton and rice plantations of the American South with the sugar plantations of the Caribbean islands.

Need Extra Help?

If You've Missed Question	0	2	3	4	6	6	Ð	8	9	10	0
Review Lesson	1	1	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	3