

CHAPTER  
8

# The United States

*The United States is home to more than 280 million people, roughly 5 percent of the world's population. Most of these people live in the 48 contiguous states between Canada and Mexico. The rest live in Alaska and Hawaii.*

In this textbook you will learn about the diverse regions that make up our world. You will read about the physical features that can be found in each region. You will also learn about the cultural, economic, political, and social features that make each region distinct.

In addition, this textbook will introduce you to people from the world's many countries. Most of these individuals are students like you. They will tell you about their daily lives, activities, and cultures. Through their stories, you will learn something about different ways of life around the world.

We will begin our study of the world by looking at our own country, the United States. In this chapter you will study the history, culture, regions, and important geographic issues of the United States today. You can begin your study of the United States by looking at yourself and the students around you. What languages do you speak? Do you practice a religious faith? Do you live in a big city or in a small town? What are some values and beliefs that you think are important? Do you have a favorite sport? What do you like to eat? The answers to these and many other questions will help you understand what the geography of the United States is like.

Hopi kachina from the southwestern United States



Trumpet player in New Orleans





Section  
**1**

# History and Culture

HOLT

## Geography's Impact Video Series

Watch the video to understand the impact of immigration on the United States

**READ TO DISCOVER**

1. What are some important events in the history of the United States?
2. What are some unique elements of American culture?

**DEFINE**

colonies  
plantations  
bilingual

**LOCATE**

Alaska  
Florida  
California  
Mississippi River  
Texas

### Reading Strategy

**READING ORGANIZER** Before you read this section, draw a concept map (a circle with rays that attach smaller circles). Label the large circle History and Culture. As you read, write in the smaller circles the information you learn about the history and culture of the United States.



Model T



## The United States: Physical-Political







The cliff dwellings of Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado were built between A.D. 1000 and 1300 by the Anasazi, the ancestors of the Pueblo Indians. The Anasazi grew crops on the mesa above these cliffs and in river valleys below. The cliff dwellings were abandoned about 700 years ago, possibly after severe droughts.

## History

The ancestors of today's American Indians first settled North America at least 14,000 years ago. These early settlers probably came across an Ice-Age land bridge that linked Asia and Alaska. However, many researchers today think humans may have reached North America much earlier, possibly traveling by sea along the Alaskan coast. Eventually, these early settlers spread throughout the Americas. Over time many different cultures and languages emerged.

Spanish explorers reached the continent about 500 years ago. They claimed parts of what is now the United States from Florida to California. The Spanish were soon followed by the English and French. English colonists settled along the east coast of North America. The French explored the major river systems and Great Lakes in the interior of the continent.



### FOCUS ON HISTORY

**Place-Names in the United States** The early settlement of the United States is still reflected in the country's many place-names. In fact, place-names can tell us a lot about a region's historical geography.

Many Native American place-names are still used throughout the United States. These names include the *Appalachians*, named for the Apalachee tribe. *Mississippi* is an Algonquian word that means "great river." A number of U.S. states, such as Alaska, Arizona, Kansas, Nebraska, and North and South Dakota, have names that originate from Indian words.

Spanish explorers arrived in the early 1500s. In the 1600s and 1700s Spanish settlers migrated north from Mexico into Texas, New Mexico, and California. They set up missions, towns, and forts such as San Antonio, El Paso, Albuquerque, Santa Fe, San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Because of the Southwest's dry environment, the Spanish founded many settlements along rivers such as the Rio Grande. In California, they settled along the coast.

French fur trappers were among the first Europeans to reach the Great Lakes and Midwest. The French explored the interior of the country by traveling along the Mississippi and St. Lawrence Rivers and Great Lakes. As a result, many French place-names are found along these physical features today. These include New Orleans, St. Louis, Dubuque, and Detroit.



**INTERPRETING THE MAP** Which cities on this map do you think were named after European cities or to honor people?

Many place-names in the east reflect that region's history as part of the British Empire until 1776. New York, Richmond, and Charleston are among the many English place-names there.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Environment and Society* What physical features and environmental conditions influenced early French and Spanish migration patterns and the distribution of European settlers?

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**Colonial History** The British became the major influence on the early history of the United States. Beginning in the early 1600s they set up 13 **colonies** along North America's east coast. A colony is a territory controlled by people from a foreign land. Other early settlers included Dutch and Germans. In 1619 Europeans began bringing enslaved Africans to the colonies.

Overland travel was difficult in the early colonies. For a long time, water transportation was the colonists' main link to the outside world. In fact, nearly all the early colonial settlements were ports located on natural harbors or navigable rivers. New settlers migrated by sea to the growing coastal towns and inland trading posts on rivers.

The American colonies developed regional economies. In the southern colonies, the climate and soils were ideal for growing tobacco and cotton. Soils were less fertile and farming less productive in the northern colonies. The colonies in the north became centers for trade, shipbuilding, and fishing. Forests were an important resource at a time when ships were made from lumber. Eventually the colonists grew increasingly unhappy with British control over their economies. In 1776 they began a successful rebellion against colonial rule, which led to independence for the United States.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Environment and Society* How did physical geography affect migration patterns to colonial America?

**Independence and Westward Expansion** After independence, the United States set up a federal system of government. Under the U.S. federal system, power is divided between local, state, and national governments. Underlying all levels of government is the idea that ultimate power rests with the people. This idea and the U.S. model of democratic government have both diffused throughout the world.

During the 1800s many Americans and immigrants migrated westward in search of more and better farmland. By 1830, settlers had crossed the

Albert Bierstadt, *Emigrants Crossing the Plains*, 1867, oil on canvas, A011.IT: The National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center, Oklahoma City, OK.



**INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD**

*This painting by the American artist Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902) shows a group of pioneers heading west across the Great Plains. In the 1800s some Americans thought the United States was destined to expand across the continent, an idea known as manifest destiny. What does Bierstadt's painting suggest about American perceptions of the West during the 1800s?*



## Territorial Expansion of the United States



### INTERPRETING THE MAP

Within 100 years of independence, the borders of the United States had expanded to the Pacific Ocean. New land was added through negotiations, purchases, and wars. How did the United States gain most of its territory after 1783? Which was the largest single addition?

### INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

Once considered part of the Great American Desert, the southern Great Plains attracted many settlers in the 1800s. Some even described the area as a Garden of Eden. However, in the 1930s the area was hit by a severe drought made worse by poor farming practices. Strong winds carried away topsoil and caused huge dust storms. As a result, more than 350,000 people left the area, which became known as the Dust Bowl. How did changing perceptions of the Plains lead to shifts in settlement patterns?

Mississippi River and settled as far south as Texas. Pioneers were soon settling on the Pacific coast. Many arrived after gold was discovered in California in 1848. However, few people settled in the deserts and mountains of the western United States or in the plains between the Mississippi River and Rocky Mountains. They called this grassland region the Great American Desert and believed it was too dry to support farming.

The boundaries of the United States shifted as settlement spread westward. By the mid-1800s the country stretched from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast. (See the map.) The government sold land cheaply or gave it away to encourage people to settle new areas.

As pioneers moved westward, they began to have bitter conflicts with American Indians. Many American Indians did not own land like the descendants of Europeans did. Instead, some Indians considered land a shared resource rather than someone's personal property. As settlers occupied and divided up land, they pushed American Indians farther west and onto reservations. Many died from warfare or from diseases carried by settlers.

**Economic Development** By 1830 the northeastern United States was industrializing. Industries and railroads spread. In the South, however, the economy was based on export crops like tobacco and cotton. Farmers grew these crops on **plantations**—large farms that produce one major crop. Many southern plantations used the labor of enslaved Africans. Economic differences between the North and South, and the South's insistence on maintaining slavery, eventually led to the Civil War. This war lasted from 1861 to 1865 and ended with the defeat of the southern, or Confederate, states. The federal government then moved to end slavery throughout the country.

After the Civil War, improvements in technology encouraged rapid westward migration. The transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869. This railroad made it much easier to move goods and people across the country.



Railroads also allowed major cities to develop far from navigable waterways. With new agricultural machinery, farms could produce more food using fewer people than ever before. Irrigation and better plows allowed farmers to grow crops in the Great American Desert. As a result, people's perceptions of the region changed, and they began to settle the area.

The development of industry attracted more people to the country's growing cities. Some came from rural areas. However, many were immigrants, mostly from Europe. Many European immigrants settled in the industrial cities of the Northeast. By 1920 more Americans lived in cities than in rural areas.

**The 1900s** In the 1900s the United States experienced major social, economic, and technological changes. The country fought in World War I in 1917 and 1918 and suffered through the Great Depression in the 1930s. U.S. forces also fought in World War II from 1941 to 1945. Since then, the United States has been one of the richest and most powerful countries in the world.

After World War II, the United States and the Soviet Union became rivals in the Cold War. Both countries built huge military forces and developed nuclear weapons. The two countries never formally went to war against each other. However, they supported different sides in small wars around the world. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the United States and Russia have had friendlier relations.

✓ **READING CHECK:** **Human Systems** Why did many Americans and immigrants move westward during the 1800s?

## Culture

Because of its long history of immigration, American culture includes traditions, foods, and beliefs from all over the world. In fact, the United States is one of the world's most culturally diverse countries.

**People and Languages** The diversity of the American people is perhaps their major characteristic. More than 99 percent of Americans are either immigrants or the descendants of immigrants. American Indians make up less than 1 percent of the population. Today immigrants from all over the world continue to arrive in the country.

Most Americans are of European descent. This group includes people whose ancestors came from Britain, Germany, France, and other European countries. About 12 percent of Americans trace their origins to Africa. Slightly more people identify themselves as Hispanic. Hispanics and Asians are the most rapidly growing parts of the population.

Since colonial times, English has been the main language of the United States. However, the United States has no official language. The second most widely spoken language in the country is Spanish. Spanish is particularly common along the U.S.-Mexico border. Many Spanish speakers are also **bilingual**, which means they are able to speak two languages. Hundreds of other languages are spoken in the United States, particularly in large cities.

## American Slang

American slang words have diverse and sometimes remote origins. Some slang words originate in a certain geographical area or social group and change meaning as they diffuse to other groups. For example, the word *funky* originated from British English, where it first meant "musty or foul-smelling." Over time people began to use the term to mean "filthy." Eventually the word crossed the Atlantic to the United States. African Americans adopted the word, which evolved a variety of new meanings. By the 1930s *funky* had come to mean "excellent" or "deeply satisfying." In the 1950s it was applied to a type of music. In the 1980s it acquired the meaning of "odd or strange." Today the word *funky* is used throughout the United States by many different ethnic and social groups and has a variety of meanings.

**Preparing Maps** Draw a sketch map tracing the diffusion of the word *funky* from Britain to the United States. How has the word been used over time?



*These schoolchildren in Florida illustrate the cultural and ethnic diversity of the United States. Immigration has long shaped the human geography of the country.*





Diverse foods and cooking styles in the United States reflect regional and cultural differences. For example, the Cajuns of southern Louisiana are known for their spicy and flavorful dishes. Here, a restaurant owner in New Orleans shows off a dish of boiled crawfish, a local specialty.

**Religion** The cultural diversity of the United States can also be seen in its many religions. There are more than 1,200 religious groups in the country. Immigrants introduced many of these religions. Other religions were founded in the United States.

Christianity is the major religion in the country. European settlers brought it to North America. More than half of all Americans are Protestant Christians. Major Protestant groups include Baptists, Lutherans, and Methodists. About 25 percent of Americans are Roman Catholic Christians. Many American Catholics have Spanish, Italian, or Irish ancestors. Some 6 million Jewish Americans live in the United States—more than live in Israel. In recent years, immigration has increased the numbers of people who practice Buddhism, Hinduism, and Islam.

**Settlement and Land Use** The population of the United States is concentrated in the Northeast. (See the unit population map.) This pattern reflects the history of the country's settlement. Early European settlement was concentrated in the Northeast, and the first large U.S. cities were located there. Later, settlers moved westward.

Although the Northeast is still the most concentrated area of settlement, the country's population has been moving to the South and West. (See the map.) This shift in settlement reflects the decline of the country's old industrial region, once known as the Rust Belt. At the same time, warmer areas in the South and West, known as the Sun Belt, have attracted many people.

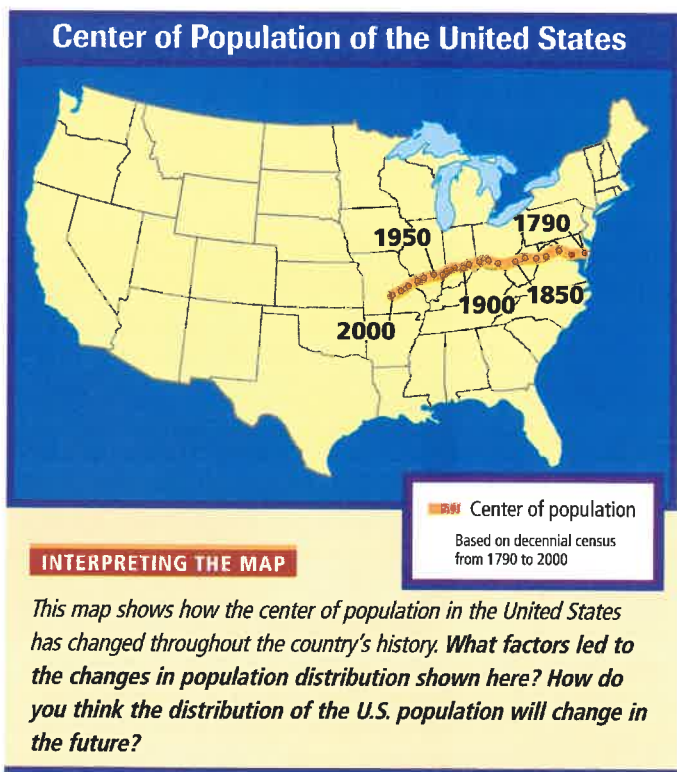
Settlement patterns also reflect land use in the country. For example, the most densely populated regions include the urban areas of the Northeast, Midwest, and Pacific coast. Less densely populated are the rich farmlands and ranch areas of the Midwest and West. The most sparsely populated areas are desert and mountain regions of the West.

✓ **READING CHECK: Human Systems** How has America's long history of immigration shaped its culture?

**Education** Education has been an important factor in the development of the U.S. economy. It has also helped create a high standard of living. Basic education is free and is required of all citizens. Nearly all children complete elementary school, and more than 80 percent graduate from high school. Many go on to study at colleges and universities.

The United States has one of the largest and best systems of higher education in the world. More than 3,000 colleges and universities are located in the country. Many, such as Harvard and the University of California at Berkeley, are world leaders in research and teaching. In fact, tens of thousands of students from all over the world come to study at universities in the United States.

✓ **READING CHECK: Places and Regions** How does the U.S. education system make the country a distinctive region?



**The Arts, Customs, and Traditions** Americans have many different traditions and customs. In the arts, American writers, artists, musicians, filmmakers, and sculptors are internationally famous. The United States helped pioneer the development of motion pictures and still dominates the industry. American movies are shown all over the world. In architecture, the United States was the first country to build skyscrapers. This style of architecture has now diffused throughout the world. Well-known American writers and poets include Edgar Allan Poe, Mark Twain, Emily Dickinson, Ernest Hemingway, Maya Angelou, and many others.

The many ethnic and cultural groups that came to the United States brought their own musical styles. For example, Africans brought the rhythms of West African music. Europeans brought instruments and harmonies from their native lands. As many African Americans migrated to cities in the early 1900s, the musical traditions of Africans and Europeans blended together to form jazz. Jazz later diffused from cities such as New Orleans to the rest of the country. In fact, jazz is now popular around the world.

Other musical styles that originated in the United States include blues, country, rock 'n' roll, and rap. These styles have spread around the world through recordings, radio, and television. American music is a major influence on globalization and the diffusion of American culture.

Widely celebrated holidays in the United States include Christmas and Easter, which reflect America's Christian religious heritage. Many Americans celebrate other religious holidays. Americans also mark Independence Day, July 4, with fireworks and picnics. In addition to national celebrations, many towns and communities celebrate local historical events and personalities.

People in the United States enjoy watching and playing baseball, basketball, football, golf, and other sports. American athletes compete in international sporting events such as the Olympics. In fact, popular American sports such as baseball and basketball have diffused to other parts of the world and contributed to the spread of American culture.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Human Systems* How did the distinctive cultural patterns of the United States lead to the innovation and diffusion of jazz?



*Louis Armstrong (1901–71) was one of the most popular and influential jazz musicians of all time. Nicknamed Satchmo, he was a gifted trumpet player, singer, and bandleader. Armstrong's brilliant performances changed the way jazz was played and sung.*



## Review

**Define** colonies, plantations, bilingual

**Working with Sketch Maps** On a map of the United States that you draw or that your teacher provides, label Alaska, Florida, California, Mississippi River, and Texas. Which state are the ancestors of Native Americans believed to have crossed into from Asia?

### Reading for the Main Idea

1. **The Uses of Geography** How did migration over an Ice-Age land bridge affect the history and culture of the United States?

2. **Human Systems** How did American Indians and descendants of Europeans view land ownership differently?
3. **Environment and Society** How did irrigation and better plows change settlers' perceptions of the Great American Desert between the Mississippi River and the Rocky Mountains?

### Critical Thinking

4. **Comparing** How do you think patterns of land use might lead to cultural differences between urban areas and rural farming areas?

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### Organizing What You Know

5. Copy the graphic organizer below. Use it to describe important cultural features that make the United States distinctive.

People and languages	
Religion	
Settlement and land use	
Education	
The arts, customs, and traditions	



# Geography for Life

## A Small World after All?

Have you ever heard the expression, “the world is getting smaller”? Have you wondered what this expression means? As technology and transportation improve, it becomes easier and quicker to move people, products, and information to distant places. As a result, these places begin to seem closer because they become more accessible. However, these places are the same distance apart as they were before.

Many geographers are interested in the relationship between changes in technology, movement, and perception. They use the term *time-space convergence* to refer to the increasing nearness of places that happens as transportation and communication technologies improve. These improvements can steadily reduce the amount of time it takes to travel from place to place.

For example, imagine you lived in the mid-1800s and wanted to travel from New York to San Francisco. How long do you think it would take? What route would you follow? How difficult would the journey be? Most importantly, how would you perceive the journey? As you can see from the diagram, it took three to five months to travel from New York to San Francisco in 1849. Today, however, it is just a five or six hour flight. What was once a long, difficult ocean voyage is now a comfortable flight complete with dinner and a movie. In fact, some people now travel from coast to coast for weekend vacations or one-day business meetings.

Other modern technologies are also tying distant places closer together. For example, faxes, the Internet, and e-mail all help the free flow of information between some of the most isolated places. The same technologies

Travel Times from New York to San Francisco



**INTERPRETING THE DIAGRAM** As this diagram shows, changes in technology have dramatically reduced travel times between New York and San Francisco over time. **How have new forms of transportation altered travel routes? How do you think these changes in transportation technology affect the country’s cultural geography?**

also encourage the diffusion of culture traits and globalization. Together with modern travel, these technologies are helping make the world seem smaller and smaller.

### Applying What You Know

- 1. Summarizing** How can improvements in technology and transportation make the world seem smaller?
- 2. Drawing Inferences and Conclusions** How do you think improvements in technology and transportation can change people’s perceptions of geographic features? How might these changes lead to changes in human societies?

Section  
**2**

# Regions of the United States

## READ TO DISCOVER

1. What is the economy of the Northeast like?
2. Why is the Midwest such an important farming area?
3. How is the geography of the South changing?
4. How have environmental conditions influenced the history of the West?

## Reading Strategy

### READING ORGANIZER

Before you read, create a spider map. Label the map Regions of the United States. Create a leg for each of the four regions in the section. As you read the section, fill in the map with details about each region.

## IDENTIFY

Megalopolis  
Corn Belt  
Dairy Belt  
Wheat Belt  
Silicon Valley

## LOCATE

Washington, D.C.  
Boston  
New York  
Chicago  
Detroit  
St. Louis  
Dallas  
Houston  
Miami  
Los Angeles  
Seattle  
San Francisco

## DEFINE

textiles  
metropolitan area  
arable  
smog

## The Northeast

The Northeast is the smallest and most densely populated region in the United States. It includes Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Washington, D.C. D.C. is the abbreviation for “District of Columbia.” The Northeast is home to about a fifth of the country’s population. Most of that population is concentrated in an urban corridor known as **Megalopolis**. A megalopolis is a group of cities that have grown into one large, built-up area. Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and their suburbs form the Megalopolis. A web of highway, rail, and air routes links these urban areas.

The Northeast is the political and financial center and **most industrialized** region of the United States. In fact, the country’s first industries developed there. These early industries used running water from rivers to power machinery and produce **textiles**, or cloth products. A wide variety of manufacturing

## INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

*New York is located in the heart of Megalopolis. The term Megalopolis was used in the 1960s by a French geographer to describe the huge urban area stretching from Boston to Washington, D.C. Today it is used to describe other massive urban areas around the world. What other large urban area would you describe as a megalopolis?*





industries developed later. They developed in places favorable to certain industries, such as steelmaking. For example, consider Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh is located at the junction of two rivers and is near rich iron ore and coal deposits. This location helped make the city a major early center of the steel industry.

Good transportation connections were very important to industrial growth in the Northeast. The early growth of the region's cities was made possible by their good port sites, which allowed the movement of people and products. The completion of the Erie Canal in the 1820s provided access to the Great Lakes and the interior United States. Today a dense network of roads, railroads, and air routes crisscrosses the region and connects it to the rest of the country.

In the late 1900s manufacturing in the Northeast declined. Cheaper labor in other places forced many factories to close. Because of its declining older industries, the region became known as the Rust Belt. Meanwhile, economic growth and warm climates attracted people and industries to the South and West. The Northeast is still a major industrial area and has attracted newer industries. However, the region has lost the economic dominance it once enjoyed.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *The Uses of Geography* What features helped Pittsburgh grow as a major steel center?

**Cultures** The Northeast is home to many different cultures. Until the mid-1960s most immigrants came from Europe. As a result, some cities in the region have large Greek, Irish, and Italian neighborhoods. In recent decades most immigrants have come from Latin America and Asia. These immigrants bring different cultures and ways of life with them, reshaping the region's cultural geography. For example, many Northeastern cities now host parades celebrating the Chinese New Year. Other neighborhoods are alive with the sounds of Latin American music and people speaking Spanish.

**Cities** The New York City area is the largest **metropolitan area** in the United States. A metropolitan area is a city and its surrounding built-up areas. More than 20 million people live in the New York area. Dutch colonists settled at the site of New York in the 1620s and called it New Amsterdam. The English renamed the city New York later after acquiring it from the Dutch. New York's excellent natural harbor at the mouth of the Hudson River makes it an ideal location for a port and trading center. Today New York is America's leading center of commerce, banking, advertising, fashion, and media.

Other cities in the Megalopolis have long been important commercial centers. Boston and Philadelphia date back to colonial times. Baltimore, on the western shore of Chesapeake Bay, was founded on the fall line. Baltimore became a major port because of its rail connections to interior coal mines, steel mills, and farming areas. Washington, D.C., is unique among the country's cities because it was planned and built to serve as the U.S. capital. Construction of the city began in the late 1700s.

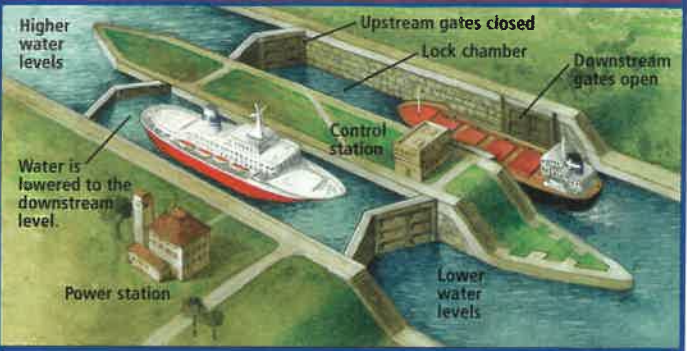
Many farmers in the Northeast grow specialty crops that are shipped overnight to the region's large urban markets. In this photo, cranberries are being grown in southern New Jersey.



## The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway



## Moving through a Canal Lock



**INTERPRETING THE DIAGRAM** A system of locks along the St. Lawrence Seaway connects the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. Locks raise and lower ships so they can sail between areas with different water levels. Why and how have the United States and Canada altered the natural environment by building the St. Lawrence Seaway? How was technology used?

Government employment is the largest source of income today, followed by tourism.

**READING CHECK:** *Places and Regions* How is the character of the Northeast related to its cultural characteristics?

## The Midwest

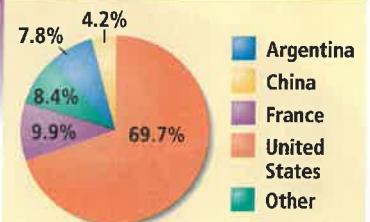
The Midwest is this country's major farming region and a leading producer of industrial goods. The region includes Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Missouri. The combined population of these states is slightly smaller than that of the Northeast. The Great Lakes and Mississippi River link the Midwest's major cities to each other and to other regions. (See the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway map.) Railroads and highways are also major transportation connections.

Many settlers moved into the Midwest as transportation routes from the East Coast developed during the 1800s. Excellent farmland and growing cities attracted many of these settlers. In addition, between 1915 and 1930 hundreds of thousands of African Americans migrated to the region from the South. They came to find work in cities like Chicago and Detroit.

**Agriculture** The Midwest is one of the most productive farming regions in the world. Most of the region's land is **arable**, or fit for growing crops. In fact, some areas specialize in certain crops. One such region is the **Corn Belt**, which stretches from Nebraska to Ohio. Within the Corn Belt, Illinois and Iowa are the country's leading corn-producing states. Most of this corn is used to feed livestock such as beef cattle and hogs. The United States is also the world's major exporter of corn. Soybeans are another important Corn Belt crop. Soybeans are used to make margarine, vegetable oil, and bean curd (tofu).

The **Dairy Belt** is located north of the Corn Belt, where summers are cooler and soils are rockier and less fertile. The Dairy Belt includes Wisconsin and most of Minnesota and Michigan. Wisconsin—"America's Dairyland"—produces more butter and cheese than any other state. These dairy products are sold in the Midwest's cities and are shipped by refrigerated trucks to the rest of the country.

## World's Major Exporters of Corn



Source: Rand McNally Goode's World Atlas

## INTERPRETING THE GRAPH

Farmers in the United States grow more corn than any other crop, producing about 40 percent of the world's total and nearly 70 percent of world exports. Besides the United States, what other countries are major exporters of corn?





The Gateway Arch stands next to the Mississippi River in St. Louis. The arch is 630 feet (192 m) high and symbolizes the historical importance of St. Louis as the Gateway to the West.

**Cities** Chicago is the largest city in the Midwest and the third-largest U.S. metropolitan area. Chicago's location in the interior of North America has made it a major transportation center. The city has a port on Lake Michigan and is the country's most important railroad hub. Chicago's largest airport, O'Hare, is one of the busiest in the world. The city is also an important cultural center and is home to excellent universities and museums.

Other large cities located along the shores of the Great Lakes are Cleveland, Detroit, Milwaukee, and Toledo. Their locations gave the cities access to coal from the Appalachians and iron ore from upper Michigan, northern Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Each is a major manufacturing center. For example, Detroit has been the center for automobile manufacturing in the United States.

The Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul are located on the upper Mississippi River. They are major distribution centers for the agricultural products of the upper Midwest. St. Louis, Missouri, is located near the area where the Mississippi, Missouri, and Illinois Rivers flow together. The city began as a French fur-trading post in 1764. In the 1800s St. Louis was the center for pioneers heading west and was a major river port known as the Gateway to the West.

✓ **READING CHECK:** **Places and Regions** How did access to resources help the development of cities like Cleveland, Detroit, Milwaukee, and Toledo?

## The South

The South stretches in a great arc from Virginia to Texas. The region includes Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. These states are home to a little more than 30 percent of the country's population, more than any other region.

Historically, the South was mainly rural and agricultural. The majority of the population lived on farms. Enslaved Africans worked on large cotton, rice, and tobacco plantations. The Civil War wrecked the South's economy. The South became the poorest region in the country. Its economy lacked the industries and railroads that were so important to the development of the Northeast and Midwest. As a result, many southerners migrated to northern cities in search of factory jobs.

The South has attracted new industries in recent decades. Since the 1960s many people have migrated back to the region. In addition, new immigrants have moved to the South from the Caribbean, Mexico, and other areas in Latin America. In parts of southern Florida, for example, Hispanics make up a majority of the population. Spanish is more widely spoken than English in some places.



Stately oak trees and large plantation homes are common in the South. This plantation house north of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, has columns and balconies typical of plantation architecture.



**Economy** Primary industries based on local raw materials are important in the South. For example, the region is a major source of lumber. In turn, forestry supports paper, pulp, and furniture industries. Farm products, particularly cotton and tobacco, are still important. Cotton provides raw material for a large textile industry. The textile industry is concentrated in the Piedmont of Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia. Southern states, particularly Texas and Louisiana, are major producers of mineral and energy resources.

In recent years, many new industries have developed in the South. These new industries take advantage of the region's lower wages, cheap land, and favorable laws and regulations. For example, high-tech and aerospace industries have been growing. Foreign automobile makers have also built factories here. The headquarters of several large banks are located in North Carolina. That state has also become an important center for the biotechnology industry.

The South's warm climate has made the region a popular tourist destination. For example, Orlando and other places in Florida rely heavily on tourism. The South attracts retirees from colder parts of the country. Some cities, such as Tampa, have become popular places for retired people to live.

**Cities** The Dallas–Fort Worth metropolitan area is the largest in the region. Dallas was founded in 1841 as a railroad shipping stop for cattle and cotton. Fort Worth was an early cattle-marketing center and is sometimes considered part of the West. Today it is a center for oil, grain, and aerospace industries. Houston and surrounding cities make up the second-largest metropolitan area in the South. Atlanta, Miami, and New Orleans are also transportation and commercial centers.

✓ **READING CHECK:** **Human Systems** What has attracted new industries to the South in recent years?

## The West

The West is the largest and most sparsely populated region of the United States. About a quarter of the country's population lives in this huge area. The interior West includes the Great Plains, Rocky Mountains, and an intermountain region west of the Rockies. States there include North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah, Nevada, and Arizona. Farther west are the Pacific states: California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and Hawaii.

Environmental conditions have played an important role in the history of the West. Much of the area consists of dry plateaus, deserts, and high mountains.



*Warm tropical weather and sandy beaches draw millions of people to Florida. Tourism is an important part of the state's economy.*

*The San Juan Mountains, a range in the Rockies, rise dramatically in southern Colorado. The West has long been known for its spectacular scenery and natural landscapes.*







#### INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

*In 1872 the U.S. Congress established Yellowstone National Park. Yellowstone was the world's first national park. Since then, the national park concept has spread around the world. How might the diffusion of the national park concept have caused cultural change in the United States and elsewhere?*

Early pioneers found the region difficult to travel across, inhospitable to live in, and almost impossible to farm. However, the opening of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 made travel much easier. As a result, many settlers moved into the region. In the 1900s aqueducts and irrigation systems opened up even more areas to settlement and farming.

**The Interior West** Historically, raising livestock has been a major economic activity in the interior West. In many areas, raising livestock is combined with wheat farming. The **Wheat Belt** stretches across the Dakotas, Montana, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Texas. Irrigation water from the Ogallala Aquifer allows farmers to grow wheat and other crops. Overuse of this water, however, has lowered the water table of the aquifer. As a result, some farmers have begun to use more-efficient irrigation methods to try to preserve valuable groundwater.

Mining is a key economic activity in the Rocky Mountains. Early prospectors struck large veins of gold and silver there. Today Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah are leading copper-producing states. Nevada is the leading gold-mining state. Lead and many other ores are also found in the interior West. Tourism is also important. Attractions include ski resorts like Aspen and Vail in Colorado and Taos in New Mexico. Each year millions of people visit the region's stunning national parks. These parks include Glacier in Montana, Grand Canyon in Arizona, and Grand Teton and Yellowstone in Wyoming.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Environment and Society* How did environmental conditions influence past migrations and settlement patterns in the West?

**The Pacific States** Most people in the West live in the Pacific states. California is home to some 34 million people, more than any other state. Today the Pacific Coast ranks second only to Megalopolis in economic importance.

Before World War II the economy of the Pacific states was based mostly on farming, forestry, and the film industry in Los Angeles. The growth of military bases in the region during World War II boosted the economy. This growth also drew migrants to the region. After the war, dams were built on the Columbia River to provide cheap hydroelectricity for aluminum smelters and other growing industries. Aircraft manufacturing in Seattle became Washington's largest industry.

In much of California, the warm Mediterranean climate allows a year-round growing season. However, rainfall is rare in the summer, which means crops must be irrigated. Building aqueducts to carry water from the mountains of northern California and the Colorado River to central and southern California created a boom in farming. Today agriculture uses about 80 percent of California's water supply. City residents must compete with farmers for scarce water resources.

In the late 1900s the development of computer technologies brought new industries to the Pacific states. **Silicon Valley**, located south of San Francisco, became the country's leading center of computer technology. Many software companies are located in the San Francisco Bay and Seattle areas.



The oldest known living tree is a bristlecone pine in Nevada that is thought to be about 4,900 years old.

The economies of Alaska and Hawaii depend heavily on their states' locations, natural resources, and scenery. The United States bought Alaska from Russia in 1867. It became a state in 1959. Alaska is the country's largest and least densely populated state. Its economy was initially based on fishing. However, after the discovery of large North Slope oil deposits, oil became Alaska's most valuable natural resource. Hawaii also became a state in 1959. Because of its strategic Pacific location, Hawaii is home to many military facilities. The state's tropical climate and fertile soils are used to grow crops like pineapples and sugarcane. Tourism is also a major industry.



**Cities** Los Angeles is the largest metropolitan area in the West and the second-largest in the country. The city began as a Spanish settlement in 1781. Railroad connections boosted the town's economy in the late 1800s. However, lack of water made further growth difficult. In 1913 a new aqueduct brought water from the slopes of the Sierra Nevada nearly 250 miles (400 km) away. As a result, the city grew rapidly. Major industries today include entertainment, oil refining, chemicals, and manufacturing. Because most of its growth has occurred during the automobile era, Los Angeles is a vast sprawling city. Automobile and factory exhaust creates **smog**, which often hangs over the city. Smog results from chemical reactions involving sunlight and pollutants from automobiles and industries.

Other big cities in the region include San Francisco, Seattle, San Diego, Phoenix, and Denver. San Francisco is located on an excellent deepwater harbor. It has long attracted immigrants and is one of the most diverse cities in the country. Seattle is an important port for trade with Asia. San Diego is also a port and is home to the most important naval base on the west coast.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Environment and Society* How have southern Californians modified their physical environment to make farming productive?

**INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD**

*Located in northeastern Alaska, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is one of the most pristine ecosystems on Earth. However, there is growing pressure to open the area to oil exploration and production. Some people worry that oil production might cause environmental damage. Supporters of this development believe the environment can be protected at the same time. How do you think oil production might change this natural environment? Which point of view on oil production here do you agree with? Why?*

**Section 2 Review**

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Keyword: SW3 HP8

**Identify** Megalopolis, Corn Belt, Dairy Belt, Wheat Belt, Silicon Valley

**Define** textiles, metropolitan area, arable, smog

**Working with Sketch Maps**  
On the map you created in Section 1, label Washington, D.C., Boston, New York, Chicago, Detroit, St. Louis, Dallas, Houston, Miami, Los Angeles, Seattle, and San Francisco. Which cities make up Megalopolis? Which city is the largest metropolitan area in the West?

**Reading for the Main Idea**

- Places and Regions** How has urban growth and industrialization in the Northeast been tied to the region's good transportation connections?
- Environment and Society** What makes the Midwest such an important agricultural region?
- Places and Regions** How have new technologies affected the economies of Silicon Valley and the San Francisco Bay area in recent decades?

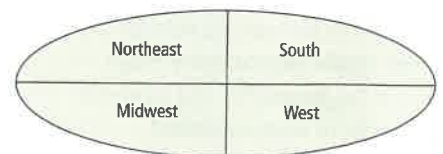
**Critical Thinking**

- Comparing** How do you think life for people in Megalopolis might be similar to life in rural parts of the United States? How do you think cultural or

social attitudes might differ between people who live in such different places?

**Organizing What You Know**

- Copy the chart below. Use it to describe some of the major political, economic, social, and cultural characteristics of the Northeast, Midwest, South, and West.





# Section 3

## Geographic Issues

### READ TO DISCOVER

1. What are some important environmental issues in the United States?
2. What natural hazards affect the lives of Americans?
3. How are cities and population patterns in the United States changing?
4. How is the U.S. economy tied to other countries around the world?

### Reading Strategy

**READING ORGANIZER** Before you read this section, draw a concept map (a circle with rays that attach smaller circles). In the large circle write Geographic Issues. As you read, write in the smaller circles the information you learn about geographic issues. Include key terms and their definitions.

### IDENTIFY

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

### DEFINE

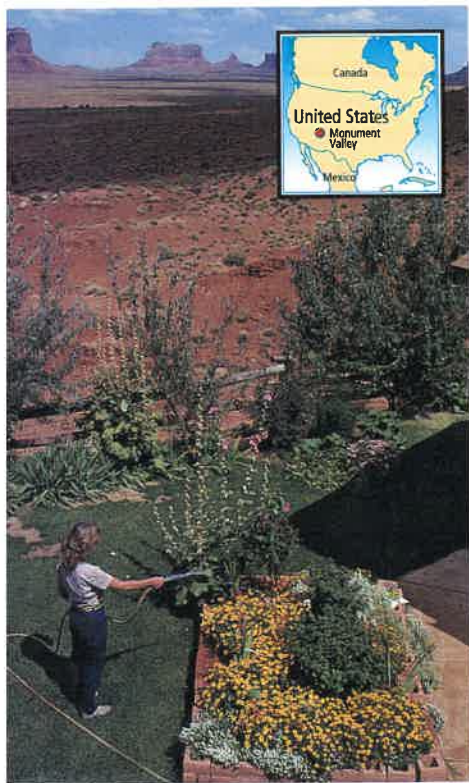
gentrification  
superpower

trade deficit

### LOCATE

Gulf of Mexico  
Columbia River

Colorado River



### INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

*Demand for water is high in parts of the western United States. However, state regulations often limit the amount of water available for personal use. How do you think regulations on water usage shape the geographic and economic character of western states?*

## Environmental Issues

The United States consumes more energy than any other country. As a result, the country produces huge amounts of waste, automobile exhaust, and other pollutants. A major challenge has been finding ways to reduce pollution and protect the environment.

Population growth and economic development have contributed to this challenge. For example, power plants and factories that burn coal and oil cause acid rain. This pollution kills trees and contaminates rivers and lakes. The problem has been particularly serious in parts of upstate New York and New England. Older factories in the Ohio River Valley produce pollution that reaches these areas. Laws restricting the emissions of pollutants reduced levels of acid rain in the 1990s. However, the problem has not been resolved.

The use of fertilizers has created problems in some places. For example, the Mississippi River carries fertilizers from farms to the Gulf of Mexico. These chemicals promote the growth of algae. Then bacteria that consume the algae use oxygen that marine life needs to live. This has created a “dead zone” in the waters off the Louisiana coast. Fertilizers used in Florida’s sugarcane fields have also killed plants and wildlife in the Everglades.

In the West, dams on the Columbia and Snake Rivers produce hydroelectricity. However, they also block the path of migrating salmon. Dams are one of the main causes for a dramatic decline in the salmon population. A growing population and rapid economic development have also strained water resources in the West. Competition for the limited water resources of the Colorado River has been intense. Growing populations in both Arizona and California want the water. So much water is now drawn from the Colorado River that almost none reaches the Gulf of California.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Environment and Society* What are four examples of environmental challenges in the United States? What factors have contributed to these challenges?

## Natural Hazards

Natural hazards present other challenges in regions around the country. For example, some large cities on the west coast are vulnerable to earthquakes. In fact, powerful earthquakes in recent years have caused serious damage in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle. Scientists predict that more large quakes will strike in the future. In areas where earthquakes are common, developers must follow strict building codes designed to limit earthquake damage. Many use building techniques and materials that can limit damage even to large structures.

Flooding threatens many parts of the United States. In some places, dams and levees have helped control the flow of rivers and have reduced flooding. However, heavy rains and snowmelt still cause major floods. Some engineers think that by controlling rivers too much, the potential for dangerous floods actually increases.

Tornadoes are threats in the Midwest and South, particularly in spring and summer. Hurricanes threaten areas along the east coast and Gulf of Mexico. Strong hurricane winds damage buildings and vegetation and reshape barrier islands. However, the greatest danger posed by hurricanes is flooding, as occurred in New Orleans with Hurricane Katrina. High seas whipped up by a hurricane's winds can flood lowlying coastal areas. The barrier islands of Texas, Florida, and the Carolinas are particularly at risk. Governments enforce strict building codes in many areas, and seawalls and other devices also limit damage. However, coastal buildings are still damaged and destroyed.

✓ **READING CHECK:** *Environment and Society* What are some natural hazards that threaten parts of the United States?



### INTERPRETING THE VISUAL RECORD

*People in Oakland, California, work to make a house safer in the event of an earthquake. Some engineering practices designed to make buildings more resistant to earthquakes include bolting homes to their foundations, strengthening supporting walls, and installing gas shut-off valves. How might these measures help houses resist earthquake damage?*

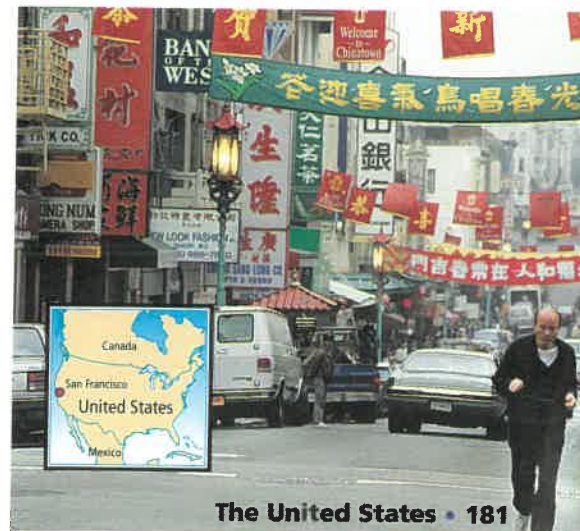
## Cities and Population

The residents of U.S. cities have seen major changes over the last 50 years. Many people have moved from inner cities to the suburbs. As a result, the populations of some large cities have dropped significantly, particularly in the Northeast. Businesses also began moving to suburban shopping malls and edge cities. Because of these shifts in population, many cities are unable to collect as much money from taxes. In fact, some cities find it difficult to provide basic services to poor and minority residents who remain.

In some urban areas wealthier people have been moving back to inner cities. They are often young professionals who buy run-down houses and restore them, a process known as **gentrification**. However, this process has its opponents. These opponents argue that gentrification increases property values and property taxes. These factors in turn push out low-income residents.

Immigration and changing population patterns have also greatly affected the United States. Historically, most immigrants to the country came from Europe and settled in the Northeast. However, most immigrants today come from Asia and Latin America. These immigrants settle in many different places. As a result, the ethnic and cultural composition of the country has changed significantly. This is the case particularly in the West and in parts of the South.

*San Francisco's Chinatown is the largest Chinese community outside of Asia. Most Chinese there have maintained their language and customs.*





## Voting Patterns and the Distribution of Political Power

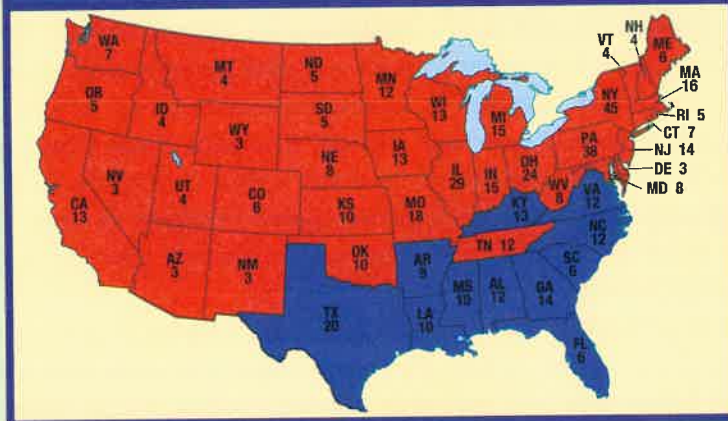
In the U.S. system of government, the states play an important role. This is particularly true in presidential elections. When a state's voters cast ballots for president in November, they are really choosing members of the electoral college, or electors. The number of electors from each state is equal to its members in the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. To win the election, a presidential candidate must win at least 270 of the possible 538 electoral votes.

The size of a state's population determines how many seats that state gets in the U.S. House. As a result, states with the largest populations have the most seats. It follows, then, that they also have the most electoral votes. Therefore, changes in the population of each state affect the distribution of political power in the country. In fact, political power in the United States continues to shift as the population of the country moves westward and southward.

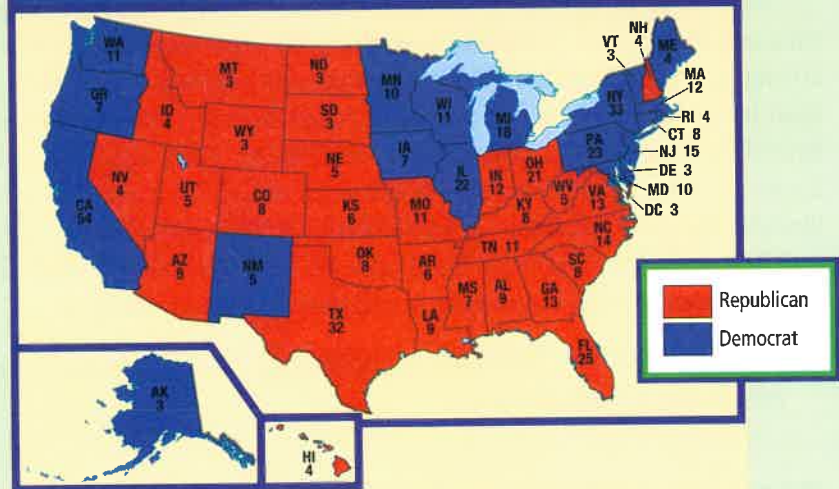
Look at the maps from the 1920 and 2000 presidential elections. These maps show the number of electoral votes each state had in each election. In 1920 several Northeast and Midwest states had the most electoral votes. This was because they had the largest populations. However, by 2000 California, Texas, and Florida each had more electoral votes than any other state but New York.

**Analyzing** What role do you think immigration might play in the distribution of political power in this country? How might these maps support your answer?

Presidential Election 1920  
(Electoral College Vote Distribution)



Presidential Election 2000  
(Electoral College Vote Distribution)



**INTERPRETING THE MAPS** These maps show how voting patterns in the United States have changed over time. Democrats once dominated elections in the South. Republicans did better in the Northeast and West. Those voting patterns have changed somewhat. Shifts in migration patterns, political attitudes, and regional economics have all played roles in this change. **What does the 2000 map indicate about the relative strengths of the two major U.S. political parties today?**

Changing population patterns have been a source of conflict in some places. Some people argue that the United States has historically been an English-speaking country, and they want it to remain so. They oppose bilingual education and think that new immigrants should be required to learn English. Also, some people think high levels of immigration keep wages down and make it harder for people to find jobs. Other people point to the long history of immigration to the United States. They say that immigration has strengthened the country and is needed to fill jobs.

✓ **READING CHECK: Human Systems** How has the character of major U.S. cities been changing over the last 50 years?



The Port of Houston is one of the busiest in the United States. Billions of dollars worth of goods pass through it each year. These goods include automobiles, chemicals, grain, machinery, and oil.

## Economy and Trade

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991 the United States became the world's only **superpower**. A superpower is a huge powerful country. The United States has the world's largest economy and is also the most powerful country politically and militarily.

However, the U.S. economy also relies on global trade. For example, the United States imports many raw materials and manufactured goods. In most years, the country has a **trade deficit**. A country has a trade deficit when the value of its exports is less than the value of its imports. In the past the government supported American industries by imposing tariffs on many imported goods. In recent years, however, the U.S. government has moved to lower barriers to free trade. For example, in 1992 the United States, Canada, and Mexico signed the **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)**. NAFTA eliminates many tariffs on products flowing between these countries. Since NAFTA took effect in 1994, trade between the three countries has boomed. Supporters argue that free trade will help American companies sell more products and create more jobs. Opponents say free trade allows American companies to move factories to countries with lower wages and business costs, causing unemployment in the United States.

✓ **READING CHECK:** **Human Systems** How have shifts in U.S. government policies affected trade practices?



The United States contains roughly 5 percent of the world's population but consumes 27 percent of the world's energy production.



## Review

**Identify** North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

**Define** gentrification, superpower, trade deficit

**Working with Sketch Maps** On the map you created in Section 2, label the Gulf of Mexico, Columbia River, and Colorado River. Which river is a major water source for California and Arizona?

### Reading for the Main Idea

- Environment and Society** How has the use of fertilizers affected the environment along the Louisiana coast?
- Physical Systems** How do natural hazards such as hurricanes affect the environment?

### Critical Thinking

- Drawing Inferences and Conclusions** How might this country's history of immigration influence immigration policies today?
- Identifying Points of View** How might people worried by the negative effects of gentrification in inner cities influence local public policies? In what ways might gentrification help people in inner-city neighborhoods?

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Keyword: SW3 HP8

### Organizing What You Know

- Copy the chart below. Use it to explain how technological innovations have helped Americans adapt to natural hazards.

Natural hazards	Innovations
Earthquakes	
Floods	
Hurricanes	



# CASE STUDY

## Creating Congressional Voting Districts

**Human Systems** Every 10 years the U.S. Census Bureau counts the population of the United States. The government then uses this data to create new election boundaries for the 435 U.S. congressional districts and state legislative districts. This process is called redistricting. Guiding the redistricting process is the “one person, one vote” principle. This principle requires that each congressman or state legislator represent roughly the same number of people. As a result, states with large populations receive more members in the U.S. House of Representatives than states with fewer people. Also, more densely populated regions of a state get more representatives.

### Gerrymandering

Even guided by the “one person, one vote” principle, redistricting officials still have many decisions to make. In fact, the redistricting process is a lesson in how the forces of conflict and cooperation play out in the U.S. political system. Members of rival political parties often work to draw district boundaries that are most favorable to their own party. Even moving district boundaries slightly can shift the political balance of power within the affected districts. Sometimes the process of redistricting creates some messy district maps. Boundaries might jut out here or there, creating districts with odd shapes. These odd shapes may be the result of a redistricting technique called gerrymandering.

Gerrymandering gets its name partly from that of Elbridge Gerry, a governor of Massachusetts in the early 1800s. In 1812 Gerry’s administration enacted a law that divided his state into new senatorial districts. The new boundaries placed most of the supporters of Gerry’s opponents into a few districts. This process helped ensure victory for members of Gerry’s party in the remaining districts. It also created some rather oddly shaped districts. One district looked something like a salamander—or, as the governor’s critics wryly noted, a “gerrymander.” People now use the term *gerrymander* to describe the process of drawing district boundaries that unfairly favor a political party or group.



THE GERRY-MANDER.

The term gerrymander originated from this political cartoon. The cartoonist drew salamander features on a map of Boston-area voting districts to highlight their odd shapes. Since the districts’ boundaries had been drawn by Governor Elbridge Gerry, the cartoon became known as the *Gerry-mander*.

### One Person, One Vote

Gerrymandering has not been the only way to unfairly favor a political party or group. During the first half of the 1900s, many states did not redraw electoral boundaries after each census. The boundaries did not move, but the people within them did. For example, many rural Americans migrated to cities, but the number of representatives from rural areas stayed the same. As a result, rural areas had relatively more political power than urban areas.

Some of the most extreme examples of political inequality between rural and urban areas occurred in the South. In 1960 just one quarter of Alabama residents elected a majority of the state’s legislators. As a result, rural districts had more power than urban districts. For example, lawmakers in some urban districts of Alabama represented about 100,000 people each. In contrast, some rural legislators represented as few as 7,000 people. Tennessee’s voting districts were also unfairly drawn. Populations in state senatorial

districts ranged from 131,971 to 25,190. The most crowded representative district had 42,298 people. The smallest had only 2,340.

Over time, people in urban areas challenged the way these districts were created. They argued that the U.S. Constitution guaranteed equal representation in government—one person, one vote. Eventually, a series of U.S. Supreme Court cases forced states to redraw their electoral maps. Now all districts must contain about the same number of people.

### Redistricting Today

Other laws and court cases in the last half of the 1900s further shaped redistricting processes. Officials must now take care not to create districts that dilute the voting strength of racial and ethnic minority groups. These officials use census data and sophisticated software and mapping programs, such as a geographic information system (GIS). Some states created districts to ensure the election of more minority candidates. For example, after the 1990 census, Georgia officials stretched the 11th Congressional District along a narrow strip. Snaking across 260 miles (418 km) of the state, the new district linked African American communities in Atlanta and Savannah. As the planners had intended, voters in the new district elected an African American congressman in 1994.

Critics call such redistricting practices gerrymandering. Some also argue that grouping many minority voters into a few districts dilutes their strength in

#### Georgia's 11th District, 1992



#### INTERPRETING THE MAP

*In 1995 the U.S. Supreme Court declared Georgia's 11th District unconstitutional because it concluded that race was the driving force behind its boundaries. How do you think this conflict reshaped Georgia's political geography?*

### Changes in Apportionment Resulting from the 2000 Census



#### INTERPRETING THE MAP

*Congressional districts are redrawn after each census to reflect changes in the distribution of the U.S. population. Based on the map, which regions of the United States do you think are gaining population? Which are losing population?*

other districts. In addition, the U.S. Supreme Court later ruled that districts cannot be based mainly on racial and ethnic characteristics. Courts still sometimes step in to resolve disputes because electoral maps can be very controversial.

As you can see, the redistricting process has become quite complicated. Still, despite the challenges, the new maps must be drawn. With Census Bureau data in hand, geographers and demographers play a role in congressional redistricting. By working with government officials and citizen groups, they help redraw our country's political geography every 10 years.

### Applying What You Know

- Summarizing** How do officials create congressional voting districts?
- Analyzing** How do you think the forces of conflict and cooperation influenced the creation of Georgia's 11th Congressional District?



# CHAPTER 8

# Review

HOLT

## Geography's Impact Video Series

Review the video to answer the closing question:  
*What do you think it would be like to live in a country that had no cultural diversity?*

### Building Vocabulary

On a separate sheet of paper, explain the following terms by using them correctly in sentences.

colonies	arable	superpower
plantations	Corn Belt	trade deficit
bilingual	Dairy Belt	North American
Megalopolis	Silicon Valley	Free Trade
textiles	smog	Agreement
metropolitan area	gentrification	(NAFTA)

### Locating Key Places

On a separate sheet of paper, match the letters on the map with their correct labels.

Alaska	Miami	Chicago
Washington, D.C.	Los Angeles	
New York	Seattle	



### Understanding the Main Ideas

#### Section 1

- Environment and Society** How did changing perceptions of the Great American Desert lead to changes in society?
- Human Systems** How has immigration to the United States influenced the diffusion of religions and cultural change?

#### Section 2

- Places and Regions** Which states are part of the Corn Belt, the Dairy Belt, and the Wheat Belt?

#### Section 3

- Environment and Society** How has competition for water resources from the Colorado River affected California and Arizona? How has the river itself been affected?

- Places and Regions** When did the United States become the world's only superpower? Why?

### Thinking Critically

- Making Generalizations** Do you think a megalopolis is a formal, functional, or perceptual region? Why?
- Analyzing** How could the Northeast be described as an important economic, political, and cultural center?
- Identifying Points of View** What restrictions, if any, do you think should be placed on immigration to the United States? Why? Why might immigration be such a controversial issue?

### Using the Geographer's Tools

- Analyzing Maps** Look at the Section 1 map showing place-names in the United States. How does the map reflect French, Spanish, and English settlement patterns?
- Analyzing Maps** Look at the Section 1 map showing U.S. expansion. During which century did the United States acquire most of its territory?
- Preparing Maps** Map the locations of different types of economic activities in your state. You can use the unit land use and resources map, the chapter, and other resources.

### Writing about Geography

Imagine that you are writing a script for a documentary about how life in Los Angeles has changed over time. Use the information in this chapter and in other sources to write a short introduction to your script. Be sure to answer the following questions: When was Los Angeles founded, and by whom? What resources have been important in the city's history and economic development? How big is the Los Angeles metropolitan area today? What challenges does the city face?

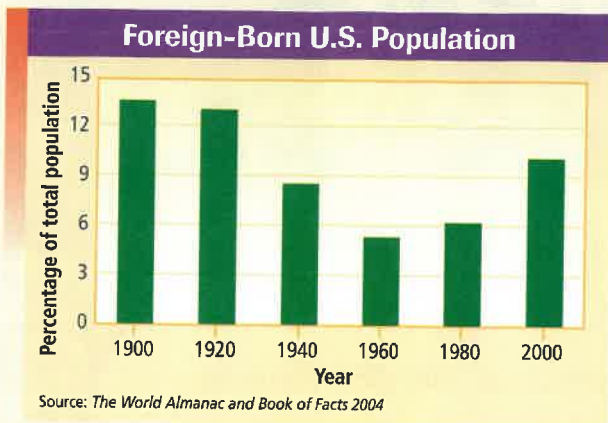
### SKILL BUILDING



## Geography for Life

### Analyzing Primary Sources

**Human Systems** Use your local library to find firsthand accounts about the exploration, settlement, and westward expansion of the United States. What can these accounts teach us about American history and geography? What types of information do they contain? What types of information are they lacking? When might researchers want to study firsthand accounts?



### Interpreting Graphs

Study the bar graph above. Then use the information from the graph to help you answer the questions that follow.

- In which year was the percentage of the U.S. population that was foreign-born highest?
  - 1900
  - 1920
  - 1940
  - 2000
- Did immigration appear to increase or decrease in the middle part of the 1900s? How can you tell?

### Analyzing Primary Sources

Read what historian William Cronon has to say about the Midwest. Then answer the questions that follow. Mark your answers on a separate sheet of paper.

*"I came to know and care for a landscape that few who are not midwesterners ever call beautiful. Travelers, whether in the air or on the ground, usually see the Middle West less as a destination than as a place to pass through. Only after a long while does one appreciate that the very plainness of the countryside is its beauty. . . . When people speak . . . of the American heartland, this is one of the places they mean."*

- According to Cronon, what is the source of the Midwest's beauty?
  - its airports
  - its travelers
  - its plainness
  - its cities
- Why do you suppose Cronon thinks that travelers see the Midwest as simply a place to pass through?

## Alternative Assessment

### PORTFOLIO ACTIVITY

#### Learning about Your Local Geography

##### Individual Project: Research

People, places, and environments are connected and interdependent. For example, resources may attract people to a new place, and their activities may change it. Study your local town or community to learn about the relationship between its people and environment. What was the area like before it was settled? What is it like now? How have settlement and population growth affected the environment? How has economic development affected it?

#### internet connect

**Internet Activity:** [go.hrw.com](http://go.hrw.com)

**KEYWORD:** SW3 GT8

Choose a topic on the United States to:

- take the GeoMap challenge to test your knowledge of U.S. geography.
- learn how people from different cultures celebrate holidays in the United States.
- create a brochure on national parks of the United States.

