

GRADE 4, UNIT 5

Regions of the United States



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National Land Cover Database (NLCD) 2021: Conterminous U.S. Land Cover



A land cover map of the United States with classifications including forest, water, grasslands, wetlands, and developed areas. Image by U.S. Geological Survey, public domain.

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Unit 5, Cluster 1 Inquiry Chart

Unit EQ	How do the people, the land, and the challenges of a place shape each region of the United States?
Cluster SQ	How have diverse cultures influenced regions in the United States?
What questions will we ask?	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
Lesson 2: We read a book and asked questions about how people express their cultures.	
Lesson 3: We examined evidence from maps to see where different immigrant groups settled in the United States.	
Lesson 4: We read cuisine cards about some of the cultural groups that shaped the food of our region and recorded what we learned.	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
Lesson 5: We closely observed and analyzed three pieces of art from our region.	
Lesson 6: We compared videos of music from different cultural groups to see how one can influence another.	

Name: _____ Date: _____

Notice and Wonder Chart

Directions: You will browse a gallery of images from the Northeast region of the United States. Jot down what you notice and what you wonder about this region.

What I Notice	What I Wonder

Blank Word Wall Vocabulary Cards

Directions: These cards are designed to support students with learning key vocabulary in their home language(s). Edit this document to create as many cards as you need, then use a translation resource to translate each word and definition. Print and cut out these vocabulary cards to use on the Word Wall in the classroom. Translated cards should be paired with the English version on the Word Wall to support students with translanguageing.

Blank Word Wall Cards

vocabulary word

definition

vocabulary word

definition

vocabulary word

definition

Northeast Gallery Walk Images





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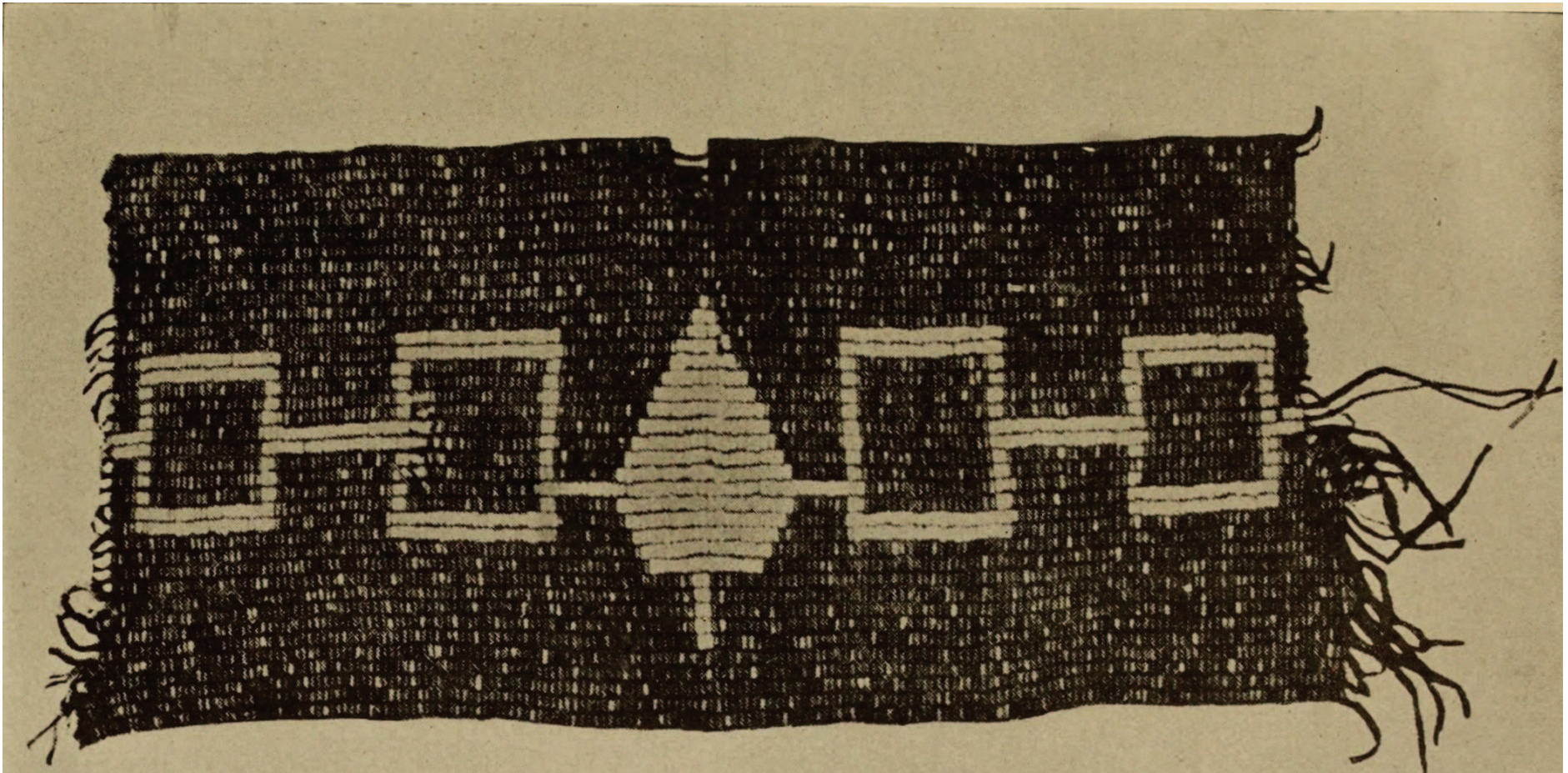
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Unit 5 Know and Wonder Chart

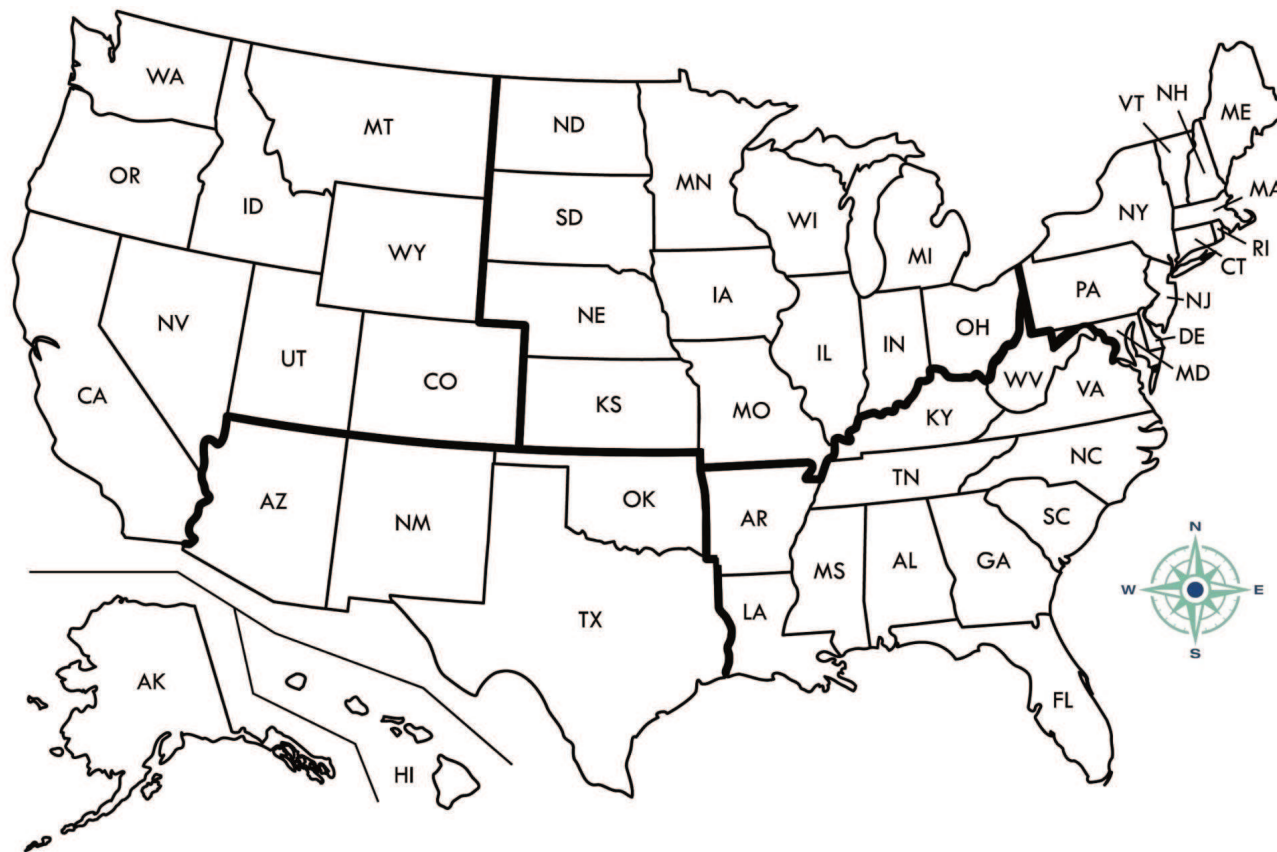
Unit 5 Essential Question: How do the people, the land, and the challenges of a place shape each region of the United States?

What do you already know?	What do you wonder?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cultural Movement Notes Organizer

Directions: As you learn about different cultural groups, circle the region where most people from that country were located in the United States in 1860. Label the name of the group when you circle the region.



Directions: Answer the questions below with your regional expert groups. Support your answers with evidence from the map you just created and the 2016 ancestry map.

1. My assigned region is: _____

2. Look at the map you just created. Which cultural groups are represented in your region?

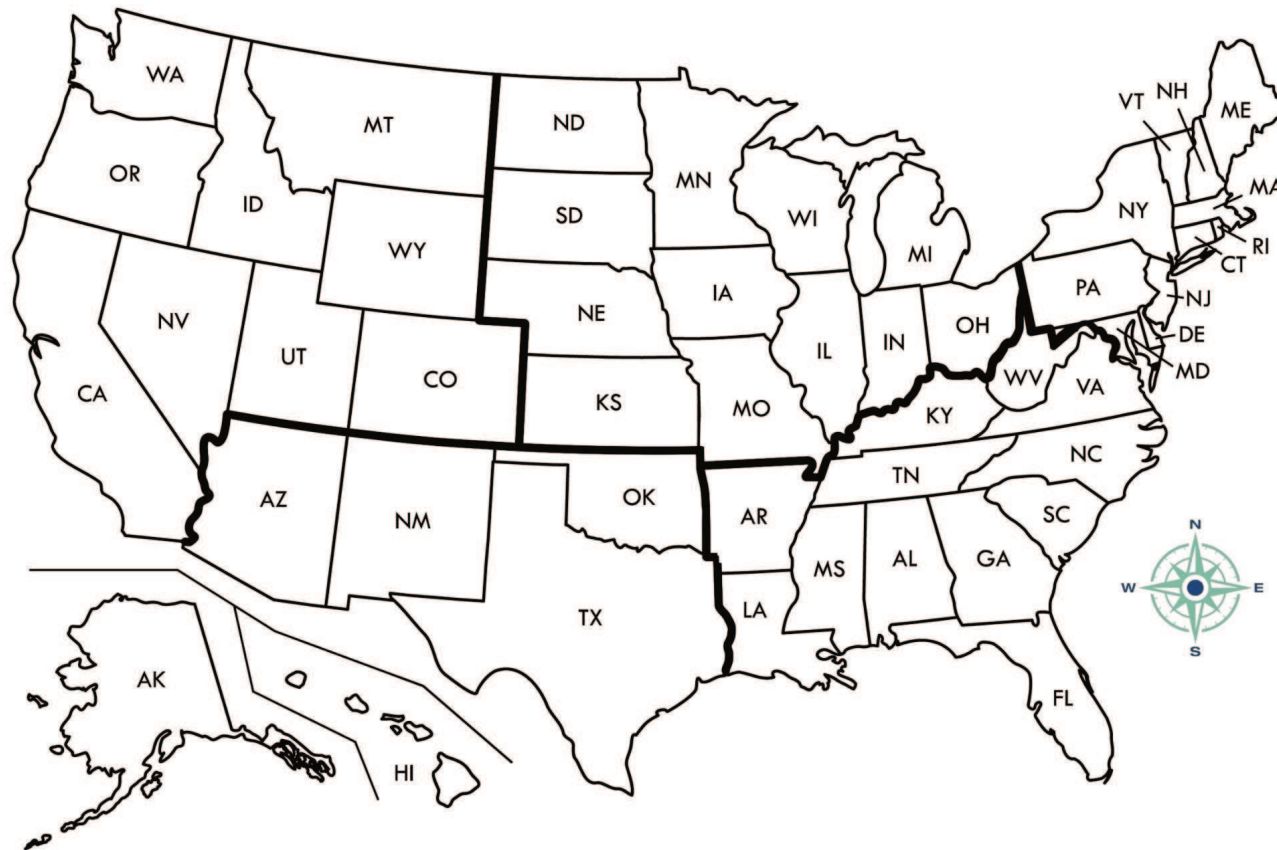
3. Now look at the 2016 map. Which cultural group(s) are represented in your region? Is it the same as or different from the map you created?

4. Based on what you see, what questions do you have about how these groups shaped the culture of your region?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cultural Movement Notes Organizer (Sentence Frames)

Directions: As you learn about different cultural groups, circle the region where most people from that country were located in the United States in 1860. Label the name of the group when you circle the region.



Directions: Answer the questions below with your regional expert groups. Support your answers with evidence from the map you just created and the 2016 ancestry map. Use the sentence frames to help you write your answers.

1. Circle your assigned region:

Northeast

Southeast

Southwest

Midwest

West

2. Look at the map you just created. Which cultural groups are represented in your region?

The cultural group(s) represented in my region emigrated from ____.

3. Now look at the 2016 map. Which cultural group(s) are represented in your region? Is it the same as or different from the map you created?

*In 2016, the cultural groups represented in my region are people of ____ ancestry.
This is [similar to / different from] the map I created because ____.*

4. Based on what you see, what questions do you have about how these groups shaped the culture of your region?

How did ___?

Why did ___?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Regional Cuisine Notes Organizer

Directions: Read each cuisine card with your regional expert group. For each card, sketch and label one dish or ingredient and write one interesting fact about that cultural group’s cuisine.

Write the name of the cultural group.	Sketch and label one dish or ingredient from this cuisine.	Write one interesting fact about this cultural group’s cuisine.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Regional Art Notes Organizer

Directions: Study each artwork and read its caption. Complete one row for each artwork. Use evidence from both the artwork and the caption to support your thinking.

What is the art form?	Who created it?	What do you notice in the art?	What does this artwork tell you about this group's or artist's culture, tradition, values, or daily life?

What is the art form?	Who created it?	What do you notice in the art?	What does this artwork tell you about this group's or artist's culture, tradition, values, or daily life?

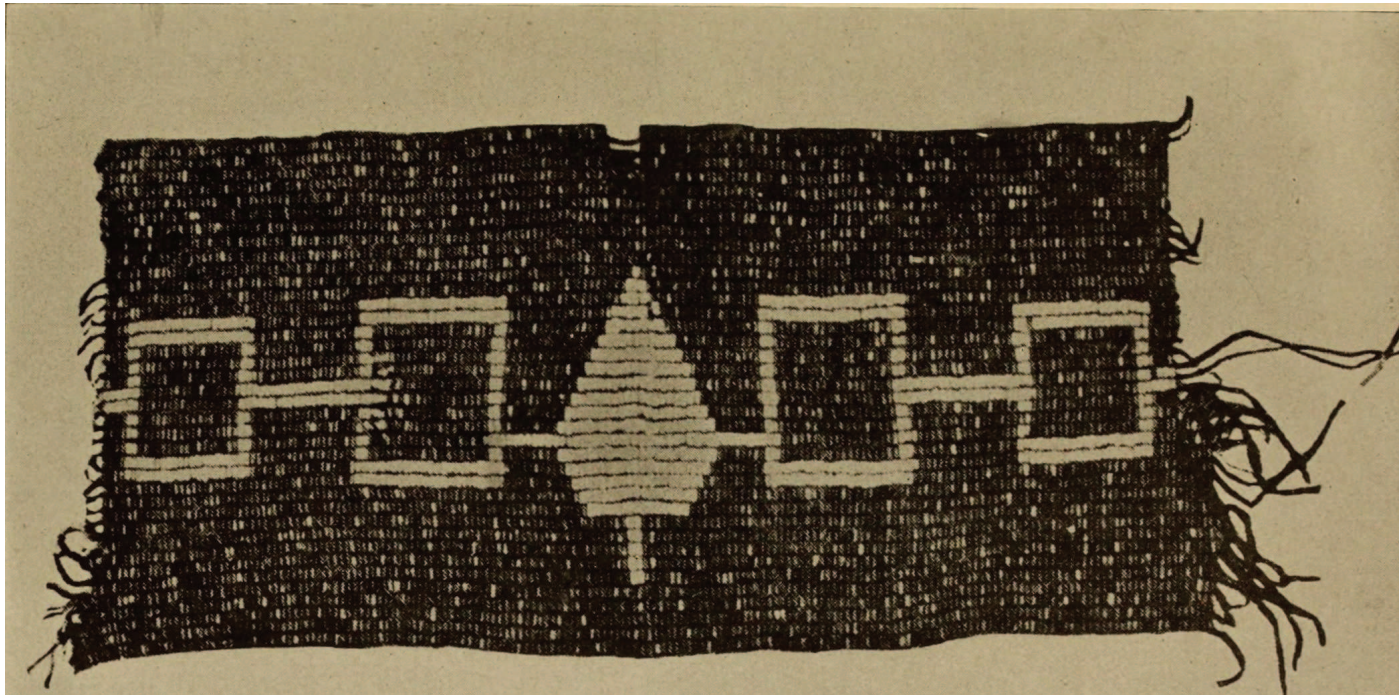
Regional Artwork

Northeast: Celebration Mural by Charles Searles



Charles Searles was an African American artist born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1937. In 1970, he took part in a street festival in North Philadelphia, where drummers played and dancers filled the streets. Two years later, he traveled to West Africa, where he studied African art and was inspired by its bold patterns and colors. In 1974, he was asked to paint a large mural for a building in Philadelphia. He called it *Celebration*. The mural combines the energy of a Philadelphia street festival with the patterns and colors he found in Africa. Today the mural still hangs in the building's lobby.

Northeast: Hiawatha Wampum Belt



The Hiawatha Wampum Belt is a sacred object of the Haudenosaunee, whose ancestral lands stretch across what is now New York State and beyond. Wampum beads are cut from clam shells, and each white and purple bead is shaped by hand. The Haudenosaunee use wampum belts to record important events, agreements, and values to be passed down to future generations. This belt records the founding of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, when five nations agreed to stop fighting and unite under the Great Law of Peace. Today, the belt serves as a flag and national symbol of the Haudenosaunee.

Northeast: Pennsylvania Dutch Dower Chest



German-speaking families moved to Pennsylvania in the 1700s. Over time, they developed a culture known as Pennsylvania Dutch, a name that comes from an old English word for people who spoke German. One of their traditions is the dower chest, a painted wooden chest given to a young woman before her marriage. Craftsmen decorated each chest with symbols from their homeland, including tulips, birds, and flowers. The unicorns and horsemen on this chest are traditional designs from Berks County, Pennsylvania. Today, artists in Pennsylvania still paint these designs on furniture, pottery, and paper.

Southeast: Gee's Bend Quilts



Gee's Bend is a small community in a bend of the Alabama River. Many people who live there are descendants of people once enslaved on the land. For generations, women in Gee's Bend have made quilts to keep their families warm. They use whatever materials they can find, including scraps of old work clothes. The shapes are simple and geometric. These designs are passed down from mother to daughter for generations. Today, Gee's Bend quilters still sew together, and their quilts hang in major museums as some of the most important works in American art.

Southeast: Sweetgrass Basket



Gullah Geechee people have made sweetgrass in South Carolina since the 1700s. The Gullah Geechee descend from enslaved Africans brought from West Africa's "Rice Coast." They carried the tradition of basket weaving with them. Basket makers gather sweetgrass, bulrush, and palmetto by hand and then coil the grasses tightly into shape. The first baskets were tools for rice farming. After the Civil War, basket weaving became a way for Gullah Geechee families to make money. Today, sweetgrass baskets are one of the oldest West African art forms still practiced in the United States.

Southeast: Seminole Patchwork Clothing



The Seminole people have lived in what is now Florida for centuries. In the early 1900s, Seminole women began using sewing machines to create a new kind of clothing. They cut brightly colored fabric into strips and sewed them into geometric patterns inspired by fire, rain, forests, and animals. By the 1920s, patchwork became central to Seminole identity. Women made clothes for their families and sold others to visitors, turning their artistry into income. Today, Seminole women still design and sew patchwork clothing, and it remains a source of tribal and creative pride.

Midwest: Social Dance by Black Hawk (Ledger Art)



Black Hawk was a medicine man and artist of the Sans Arc Lakota, whose ancestral lands are in what is now South Dakota. For centuries, Lakota men recorded history in images painted on buffalo hides. As buffalo were hunted nearly to extinction and paper became available, artists moved the tradition onto paper and into the pages of old ledgers (record books), a practice that became known as ledger art. In the winter of 1880, Black Hawk was hired by a federal trader to document Lakota life. Using colored pencil and pen, he made 76 drawings depicting ceremonies, dances, warrior life, and visions. Today, Indigenous artists across the Midwest still create ledger art.

Midwest: Grottoes



In the early 1900s, many German Catholic immigrants came to the Midwest. They brought a tradition of building grottoes. Grottoes are cave-like structures made of stone. One immigrant, a priest named Paul Dobberstein, built the Grotto of the Redemption in West Bend, Iowa. He worked on it for more than 40 years. He traveled thousands of miles to gather rocks and minerals. He covered the grotto in geodes, quartz, shells, and colored glass, many of them specific to the Midwest region. Today, people still travel to see these grottoes.

Midwest: Hmong Story Cloth



The Hmong people are indigenous to South China. Over centuries, many moved to Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand to escape unfair treatment. They have a long tradition of needlework called Paj Ntaub, meaning “flower cloth.” During the war in Southeast Asia, the United States recruited Hmong soldiers in Laos. After American forces left in 1975, Hmong families were targeted and had to flee their homes. In refugee camps, women began sewing story cloths that recorded what they had lived through. Many families resettled in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and Hmong artists there still stitch story cloths today.

Southwest: Navajo Weaving



The Navajo, or Diné, have lived in what is now New Mexico and Arizona for centuries. According to Navajo oral history, Spider Woman taught the people to weave. Over time, Navajo women also adopted techniques and materials from Pueblo neighbors and Spanish colonists. Each weaving is made on an upright loom, with every thread carefully pressed into place by hand. The bold geometric designs pass from mother to daughter, and they shape what people around the world now call Southwestern style. Today, some sellers copy those designs and sell them as Navajo when they are not.

Southwest: Pueblo Pottery



Pueblo peoples of the Southwest have made pottery for thousands of years. The Zuni, also known as A:shiwi, are one Pueblo nation, and they have lived in what is now New Mexico and Arizona for centuries. Zuni women dig their own clay from the earth and grind paints from local minerals and plants. Each pot is built by hand and fired outdoors over an open fire. This water jar from the 1880s is painted with symbols for water, plants, and animals that matter to Zuni life. Today, Pueblo pottery remains both a sacred tradition and a celebrated art form.

Southwest: Our Lady of Sorrows Santo Bulto



Spanish colonizers arrived in what is now New Mexico in the late 1500s. They brought their Catholic faith and their artistic traditions. By the 1700s, local artists, called santeros, carved and painted sacred figures known as santos. They used earth pigments and techniques they learned in part from their Pueblo neighbors. Santos stood in nearly every Spanish and Mexican home in the area. Families prayed before them for protection and healing. This carved figure, called a bulto, shows the Virgin Mary as Our Lady of Sorrows. Today, santeros and santeras in New Mexico still carve and paint in this tradition.

West: Carved Poles (Totem Poles and Story Poles)



For many generations, Indigenous nations of the Pacific Northwest coast have carved tall poles from giant cedar trees, called totem poles. These nations include the Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian, whose ancestral lands lie along the coast of what is now Alaska and Canada. Each pole tells the story of a family or clan, using animals such as Raven, Eagle, and Whale as symbols of their history and identity. Coast Salish artists in Washington carve their own poles, called story poles, that share legends and important events. Today, carved poles are known around the world as a symbol of the Pacific Northwest.

West: Dragon Gate (Architecture)



The Dragon Gate stands at the entrance of San Francisco's Chinatown, the oldest Chinese neighborhood in North America. Even after the 1906 earthquake destroyed Chinatown, the community rebuilt and stayed. In 1970, Chinese American architect Clayton Lee designed the gate in a traditional Chinese style called a paifang, using materials given by Taiwan. Dragons on the gate symbolize strength and good fortune. Stone guardian lions stand for protection. Today, the gate welcomes visitors into a neighborhood Chinese families have called home since the 1850s.

West: Japanese Gardens



Japanese gardens are an art form that began in Japan more than a thousand years ago. Gardeners arrange stones, water, and plants to create a calm space in harmony with nature. In 1927, a Japanese immigrant named Fujitaro Kubota began building a garden in Seattle. Unfair laws kept Japanese immigrants from owning land, so a friend helped him buy it. During World War II, the United States forced Kubota and thousands of other Japanese Americans into prison camps, and the garden sat empty. Afterward, he returned and rebuilt it, blending Japanese design with Northwest trees like cedar and fir. Today it is a public park and one of many Japanese gardens across California, Oregon, and Washington.

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Regional Art Notes Organizer (Sentence Frames)

Directions: Study each artwork and read its caption. Complete one row for each artwork. Use evidence from both the artwork and the caption to support your thinking. Use the sentence frames below to help you answer the question in the last column..

- *This artwork tells me that the group valued/believed ____.*
- *This artwork shows that ____ was important in the group's culture.*
- *I know this because ____.*

What is the art form?	Who created it?	What do you notice in the art?	What does this artwork tell you about this group's or artist's culture, tradition, values, or daily life?

What is the art form?	Who created it?	What do you notice in the art?	What does this artwork tell you about this group's or artist's culture, tradition, values, or daily life?

Name: _____

Date: _____

Regional Music Map

Part 1: Map

Directions: Draw on the map to show where different musical styles are located, and write down the places that influenced each kind of music. Use a different color for each type of regional music, and fill in the map key with those colors.



Part 2: Exit Ticket

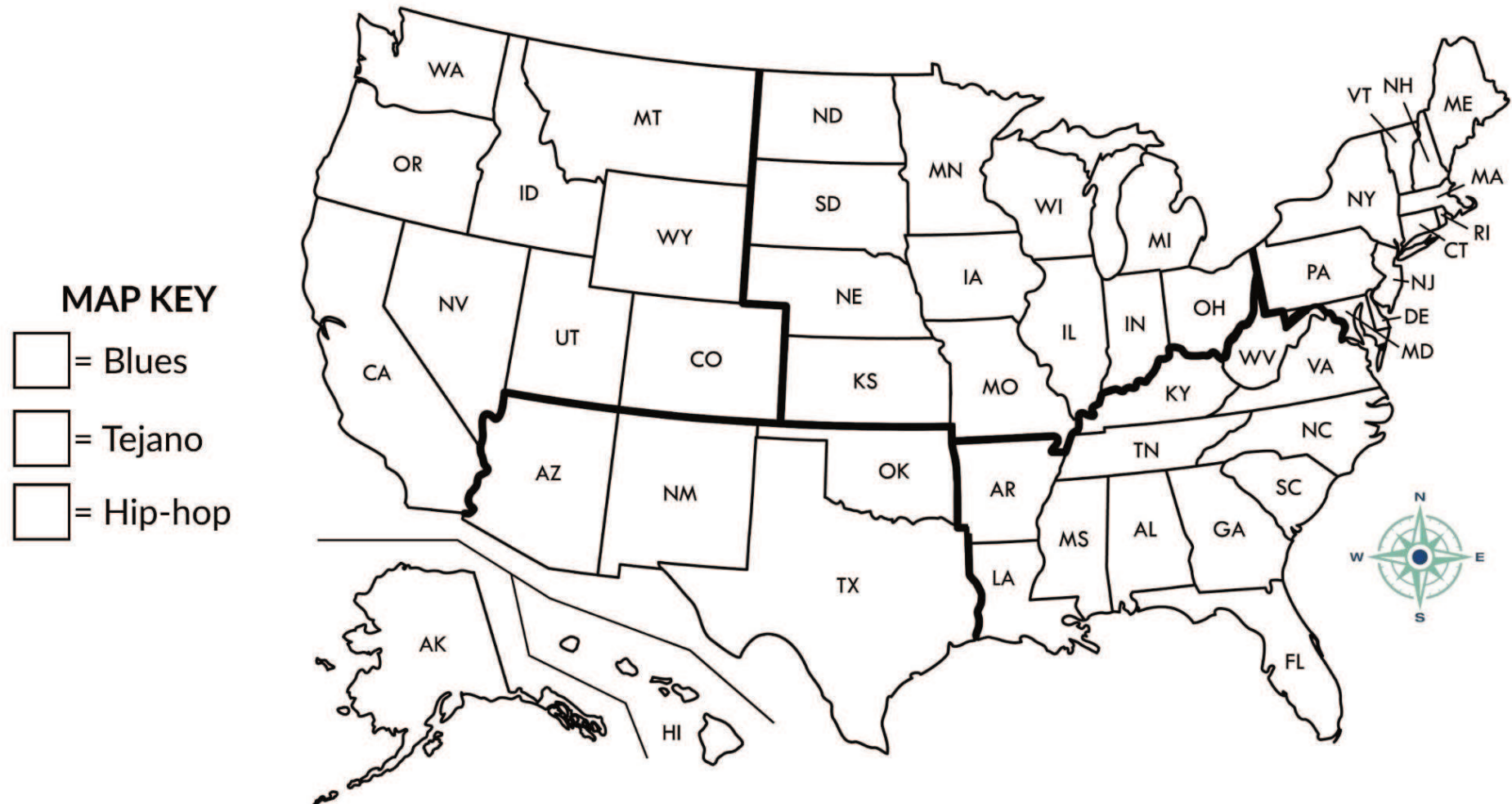
Directions: Describe how music from other places shaped the music in your assigned region. Name where it came from and how it changed as it traveled.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Regional Music Map (Sentence Frames)

Part 1: Map

Directions: Draw on the map to show where different musical styles are located, and write down the places that influenced each kind of music. Use a different color for each type of regional music, and fill in the map key with those colors.



Part 2: Exit Ticket

Directions: Describe how music from other places shaped the music in your assigned region. Name where it came from and how it changed as it traveled. You can use the sentence frames below you to write your response. You may not need all of them.

- *One musical tradition in my region is ____.*
- *It traveled from ____ to ____.*
- *It blended ____ and ____ to make a new sound.*
- *As it changed, it became ____.*

Name: _____ Date: _____



Cultural Traditions Exit Ticket

Directions: Use the space below to sketch and label cultural contributions from your region. Start with your three sticky notes, and add more if you can. For each one, draw a quick picture, write its name, and name the cultural group it came from. Write the label first and then think about a respectful way to show it.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cluster 1 Formative Assessment Task

Directions: Work with your regional expert group to answer Question 1. Then, work individually on Questions 2 and 3.

1. Decide which cultural contributions you want to use to represent your region. You will need one per person in your group. Write them below and circle the one that you are responsible for.

2. Explain what cultural contribution you chose and which cultural group it comes from. How has it become part of your region’s culture?

3. Where should your cultural contribution live on the map? In what state? Write the location below and explain why. (For example, the blues began in Mississippi.)

When you have finished answering the questions, you are ready to start sketching your cultural contribution using the art materials your teacher has provided.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cluster 1 Formative Assessment Task (Sentence Frames)

Directions: Work with your regional expert group to answer Question 1. Then, work individually on Questions 2 and 3. Use the sentence frames to help you write your responses.

1. Decide which cultural contributions you want to use to represent your region. You will need one per person in your group. Write them below and circle the one that you are responsible for.

2. Explain what cultural contribution you chose and which cultural group it comes from. How has it become part of your region's culture?

*The cultural contribution I chose is _____. It comes from _____.
It became part of my region's culture because _____.*

3. Where should your cultural contribution live on the map? In what state? Write the location below and explain why. (For example, the blues began in Mississippi.)

My cultural contribution should go in ____.

I chose this place because ____.

When you have finished answering the questions, you are ready to start sketching your cultural contribution using the art materials your teacher has provided.

Name: _____ Date: _____

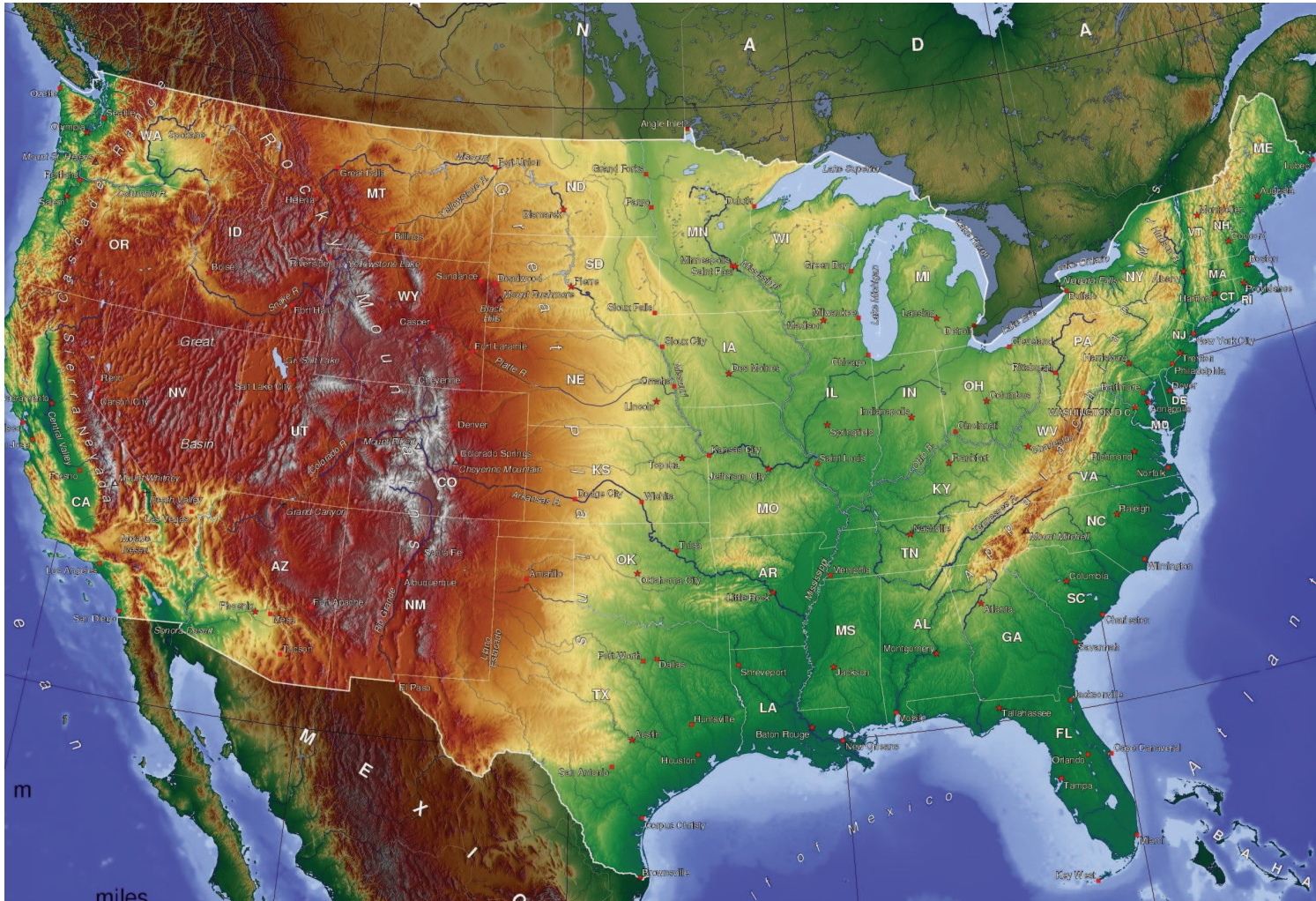
Unit 5, Cluster 2 Inquiry Chart

Unit EQ	How do the people, the land, and the challenges of a place shape each region of the United States?
Cluster SQ	How have people adapted to and shaped the land in different regions?
What questions will we ask?	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
Lesson 9: We looked at maps of population density and land cover and asked questions about where and how people have settled in different regions.	
Lesson 10: We explored maps of climate and natural resources and predicted how people have adapted to the land in different regions.	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
Lesson 11: We investigated photo cards showing natural resources that Indigenous peoples could use to build homes.	
Lesson 12: We used a map to find the farming areas in our region and then we read an article about one of them.	
Lesson 13: We did a stations activity and made a map showing where minerals, coal, petroleum, and wood are found and then explored the industries that grow there and how extracting these resources shapes the land.	

Topography and Population Density Maps

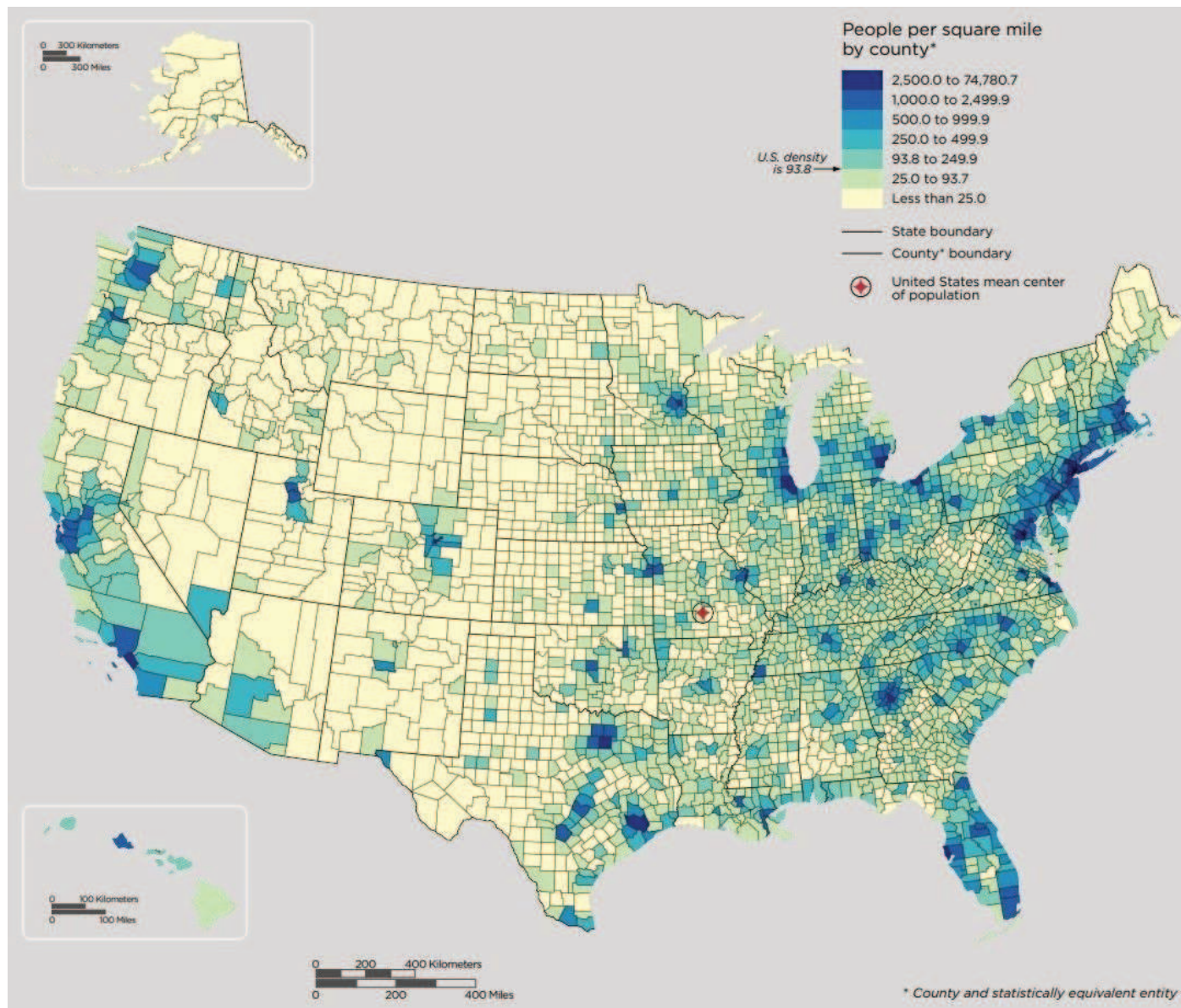


Map of U.S. topography. Image via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

Grade 4, Unit 5: Regions of the United States

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Map of U.S. population using data from the 2020 census. Image via the U.S. Census Bureau, public domain.

Grade 4, Unit 5: Regions of the United States

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Climate and Natural Resources Notes Organizer

Directions: With your group, choose one state in your region to focus on. Then, use the temperature, precipitation, and natural resources maps to answer the questions about that state. You should work together but each fill out your own notes organizer.

Our region: _____

The state we chose: _____

Climate: Some states have more than one kind of climate. You can describe the range or you can focus on one part of the state (like “the coast”).

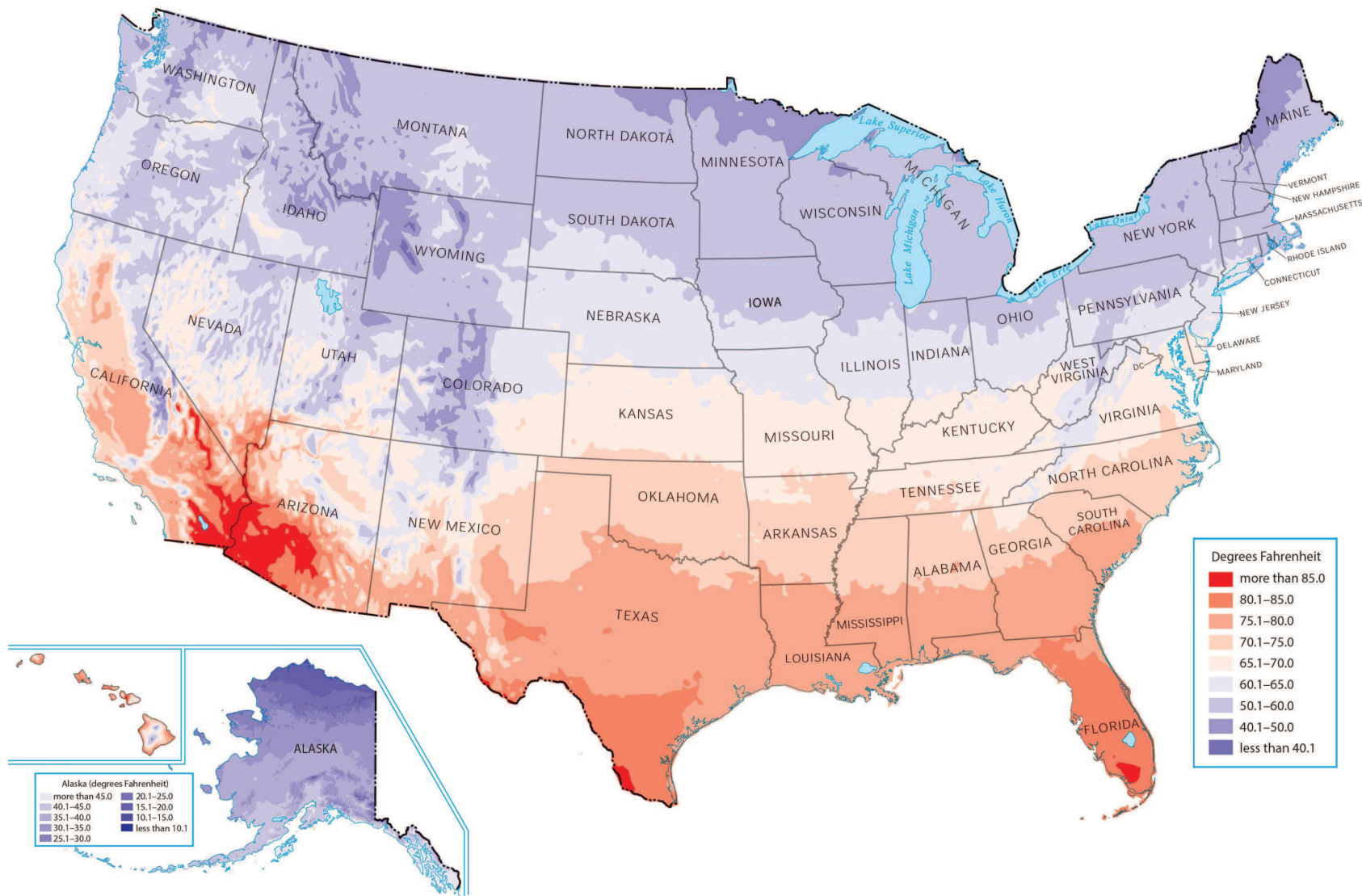
What is the temperature like in this state?

What is the precipitation like in this state?

Natural resources: What natural resource(s) are in this state?

Predict: How might the people who have lived here have adapted to this land? Use evidence from the maps to explain your thinking.

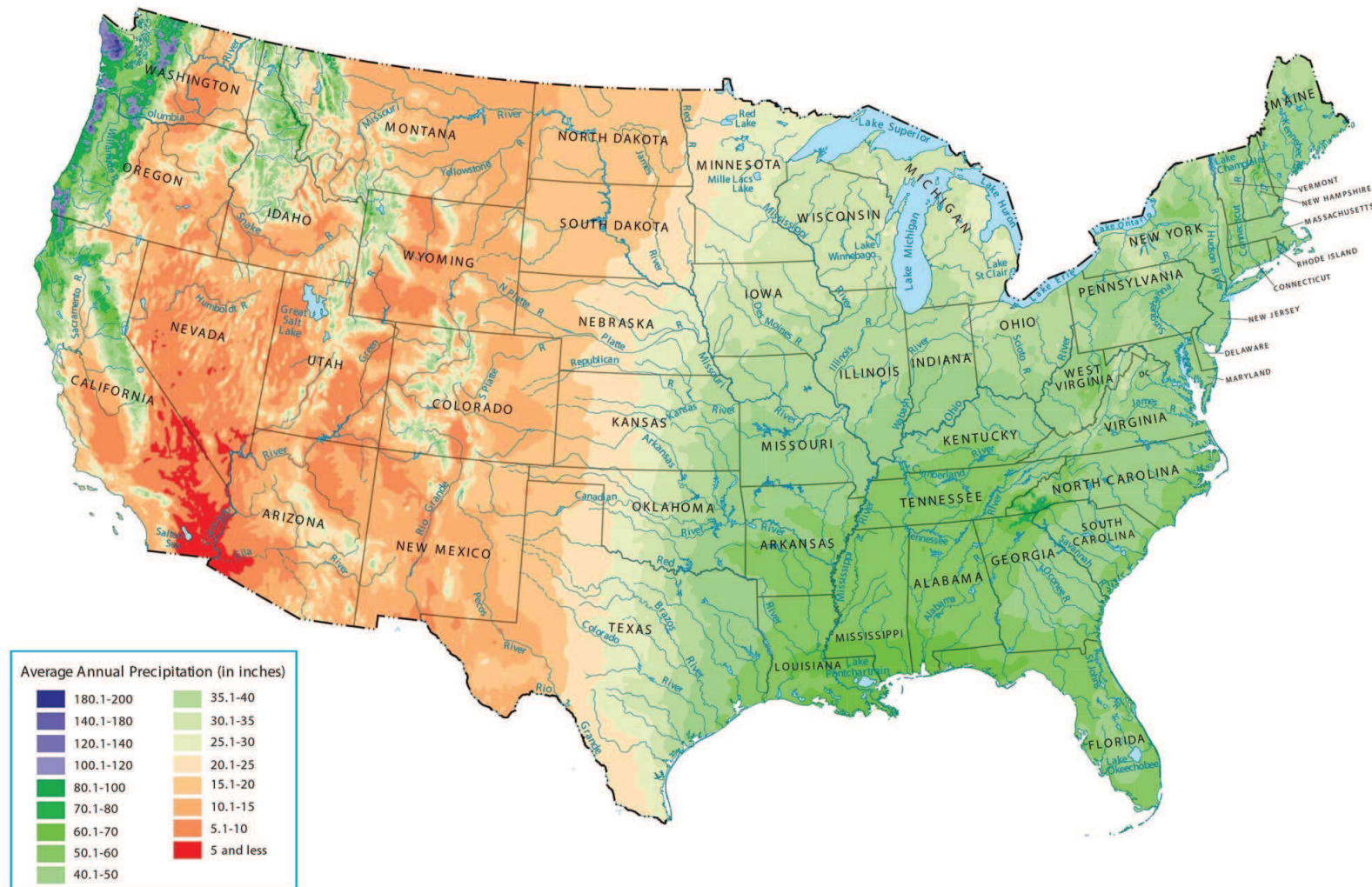
Climate and Natural Resource Maps



Grade 4, Unit 5: Regions of the United States

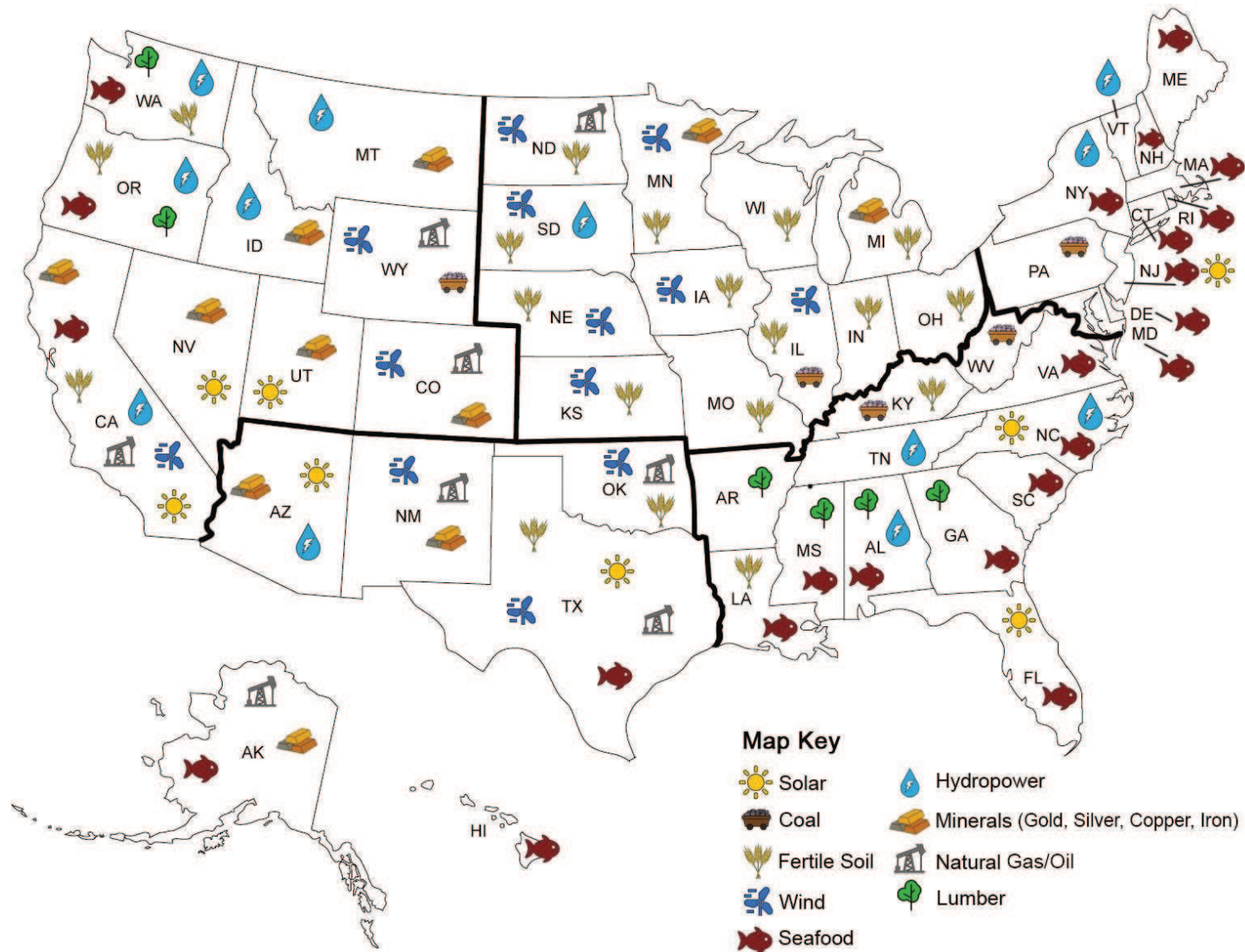
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**Grade 4, Unit 5: Regions of the United States**

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**Grade 4, Unit 5: Regions of the United States**

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Image sources:

- U.S. temperature map via GIS Geography, free to use for educational purposes.
- U.S. precipitation map via GIS Geography, free to use for educational purposes.
- U.S. natural resources map created by Educurious for Investigating History.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Climate and Natural Resources Notes Organizer (Frames and Word Bank)

Directions: With your group, choose one state in your region to focus on. Then, use the temperature, precipitation, and natural resources maps to answer the questions about that state. You should work together but each fill out your own notes organizer. You can use the sentence frames below to help you.

Our region: _____

The state we chose: _____

Climate: Some states have more than one kind of climate. You can describe the range or you can focus on one part of the state (like “the coast”).

What is the temperature like in this state?

The average daily high temperature in ___ is around ___.

What is the precipitation like in this state?

___ gets about ___ of precipitation each year.

Natural resources: What natural resource(s) are in this state?

The natural resources in ____ are ____.

Predict: How might the people who have lived here have adapted to this land? Use evidence from the maps to explain your thinking. You can also use the word bank and sentence frames below to help you write your answer.

Word Bank: Ways People Adapt			
building	farming	hunting	fishing
gathering	traveling	storing	inventing

People probably adapted by ____.

The maps show this because ____.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Indigenous Homes Notes Organizer

Directions: Look at the images on your group’s card. These are natural resources Indigenous peoples in your region have long used as building materials. With your group, talk about how each resource could be used to build a home. Write your ideas below. You may not need all the spaces.

Natural Resource	How could it be used to build a home?

Now, put your ideas together. Describe or sketch the home your group imagined building from these resources using the space below:

Indigenous Homes and Natural Resources Cards

Northeast Natural Resources



elm bark



cattails



saplings (young trees)

Northeast Home

The Wampanoag Nation traditionally built homes called wetu. They bent saplings to make a frame, then covered the walls and roof with sheets of elm bark or woven cattail mats. The bark and cattail coverings helped keep the wetu warm in cold months and cooler in warm ones.



Wetu are built from natural materials found in the Northeast region of the United States, such as elm trees and cattails.

Northwest Coast Natural Resources



cedar bark



cedar bark (made into rope)



cedar trees

Northwest Coast Home

The Chinook Nation traditionally built cedar plankhouses. They made a frame from logs and then split cedar logs into planks with a rock wedge. They tied the planks to the frame with rope made from cedar bark. It rains a lot in this region, so the overlapping cedar planks helped keep the water out.



Plankhouses are built from cedar trees commonly found in the Northwest region of the United States. Many parts of the cedar tree are used in the building.

Southwest Natural Resources



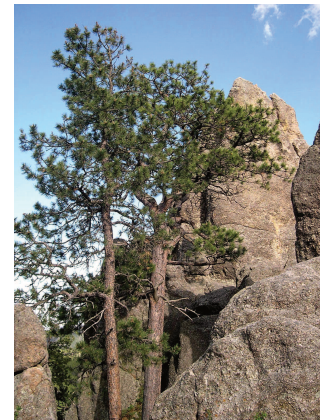
straw



sand



clay



ponderosa pine trees

Southwest Home

The people of Taos Pueblo traditionally built homes from adobe, a mix of sand, clay, and straw. They shaped the adobe into bricks, let them dry hard in the sun, and then stacked the bricks and held them together with more adobe. Logs from ponderosa pine trees held up the flat roofs. The thick adobe walls kept the inside cool on hot days and warm on cold nights.



Traditional Taos Pueblo homes are made from clay, straw, and sand, materials that are easy to find in the Southwest region of the United States.

Plains Natural Resources



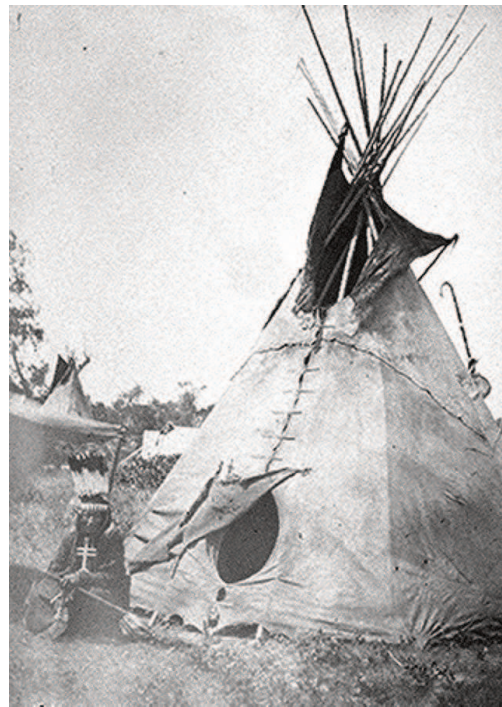
lodgepole pine trees



buffalo

Plains Home

The Cheyenne Nation traditionally built tipis. They made poles out of lodgepole pine trees, which grow tall and straight. They tied 13 to 15 wooden poles together at one end, raised them with a twist, and then spread the lower ends into a circle. They covered the frame with buffalo hides that women sewed together using sinew thread, made from dried buffalo muscle tendons. At the top, they left a hole to let smoke out. A tipi could be taken down and moved quickly, which let people follow the buffalo herds they depended on.



Tipis are built from locally grown lodgepole pine trees, surrounded by buffalo hides.

Southeast Natural Resources



palmetto leaves



cypress trees



vines

Southeast Home

The Seminole Nation traditionally built homes called chickees. They made a frame from logs made from cypress trees and raised it on posts, leaving the sides open. They wove palm fronds into a roof and tied the structure together with vines. The raised floor kept the home above the wet, swampy ground, and the open sides let air flow through in the hot, damp climate.



Chickees are built from cypress trees and palmetto leaves, materials that are easy to find in the Southeast region of the United States.

Text sources:

- Butler, Deanna. 2023. "[Seminole Spaces: Chickees](#)." Florida Seminole Tourism.
- Burke Museum. n.d. "[Burke From Home: Home](#)."
- Deaver, Ken, and Sherri Deaver. n.d. "[Tipis](#)." Encyclopedia of the Great Plains.
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- Wikipedia. n.d. "[Pueblo Architecture](#)."

Image sources:

- "Elm Bark 1" by Ptelea via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Typha latifolia 02" by Bogdan via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA.
- "Birch Bundles for Besoms" by Colin Grice via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0.
- "Thuja Bark Łazienki" by Crusier via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 3.0.
- "Piece of Cedar Bark Rope" via Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Open Access Initiative for educational use.
- "Thuja plicata Vancouver" by abdallahh via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0.
- "Rice Straw" by Green via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA, 3.0.
- "Lower San Juan River" by MostlyDeserts via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Aerial View of Dunefield, White Sands National Park" from the National Park Service via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Pinus ponderosa scopulorum Custer State Park SD" by Jason Sturner via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0.
- "Lodgepole Pine Forest 1965" from the National Park Service via Wikimedia Commons.
- "American Bison" by Jack Dykinga for USDA via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Saw Palmetto (Serenoa repens) in Manatee Springs State Park" by Miguel Vieira via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 2.0.
- "Vine" by Jon Sullivan via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Bald Cypress" by Kej605 via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Wetu Recreation at Fruitlands" by victorgrigas via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.
- "Cathlapotle Plankhouse" by A. Davey via the National Park Service, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.
- "Taos Pueblo 2017-05-05" by John Mackenzie Burke via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.
- "LittleBigMouth.1869" by William S. Soule from the National Archives via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Chickee in the Dania Reservation 1960" from Hialeah Public Libraries Digital Collections via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Indigenous Homes Notes Organizer (Sentence Frames)

Directions: Look at the images on your group’s card. These are natural resources Indigenous peoples in your region have long used as building materials. With your group, talk about how each resource could be used to build a home. Write your ideas below. You may not need all the spaces. You can use the provided sentence frames to write your predictions:

- *There was ___, so people could ___.*
- *People probably used the ___ to ___ because ___.*

Natural Resource	How could it be used to build a home?

Now, put your ideas together. Describe or sketch the home your group imagined building from these resources using the space below:

Name: _____

Date: _____

Sustainable Farming Notes Organizer

Part 1: Analyze Map

Directions: Look at the map of farm resource regions. Find the farming areas inside your U.S. region. Record up to three of them and the main products of each.

Farming Area	Main Products

Part 2: Study One Farming Region

Directions: Your group will read about one of these farming regions. Take notes on the article using the table below.

Farming area: _____

Climate	
Soil	
Topography	
Major Product(s)	
How can farming harm the land in your region?	
What is one sustainable practice farmers use to protect the land?	

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Fruitful Rim Article

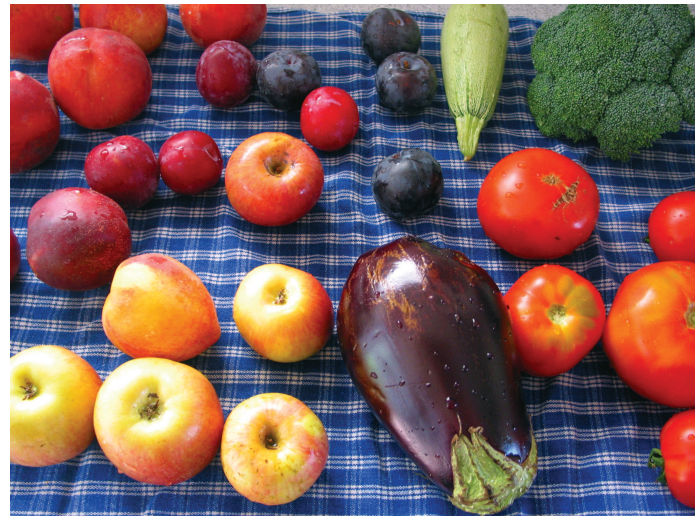
Directions: Read the article and underline the information you need for your notes organizer.

Introduction

In every region, the climate, soil, and topography (whether the land is flat or hilly) decide what farmers can grow. Farmers must adapt to the land in order to successfully grow crops and raise farm animals. Farming can also harm the land. For example, farming can damage the soil so plants no longer grow. But farmers can use sustainable practices that protect the land so it stays healthy for the future.

How Farmers Adapt to the Land

The Fruitful Rim is one of several farming areas in the West. It runs along the Pacific Coast. The land is a mix of hills and flat valleys, and the soil is fertile. The climate is mild, but it changes from place to place. Some parts are cooler, some parts are warmer, and some parts are dry. Farmers grow crops that fit the climate where they live. In Washington and Oregon, where it is cooler, they grow apples, pears, and cherries. In California, where it is warmer, they grow grapes, tomatoes, and oranges. Where the land is dry, farmers bring in water to help their crops grow. This is why the Fruitful Rim grows most of America's fruits and vegetables.



Different crops are grown in different states. Farmers decide what to grow based on the local climate.

How Farmers Care for the Land

One way farming can harm the land is by using chemicals called pesticides to kill insects. Pesticides are supposed to kill pests that damage the crops farmers are trying to grow. However, pesticides can also kill helpful insects, like the bees and other pollinators that many plants need.

A more sustainable way to control pests is to let nature help. Some helpful insects eat the pests that damage crops. For example, ladybugs eat the tiny insects that destroy plants. If farmers let wild plants grow near their fields, ladybugs and other helpful insects have a place to live, and they move into the fields to eat the pests. This protects the crops without chemicals that harm the ecosystem. When farmers work with nature this way, they care for the land instead of hurting it.

Image source: "Fruits Veggies" by Emerika via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.

Text sources:

- Bodreau, Diane, Melissa McDaniel, Erin Sprout, and Andrew Turgeon. 2025. "[North America: Resources](#)." National Geographic.
- Gross, Liza. 2024. "[California's Sustainable Farms, Models for Agriculture in Warming World, Need Help Surviving It](#)." KQED.
- Miller, Bradley A., Randall J. Schaetzl, and Frank Krist Jr. 2009. "[The Soil Fertility and Drainage Indexes: Taxonomically Based, Ordinal Estimates of Relative Soil Properties](#)." Michigan State University.
- Needham, Alison. n.d. "[The Central Valley: A Great Place for Farming in California](#)." CA GROWN Blog.
- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE). 2005. "[Manage Insects on Your Farm, Strategies to Enhance Beneficials](#)."
- U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2000. "[Farm Resource Regions](#)." Economic Research Service.

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Northern Crescent Article

Directions: Read the article and underline the information you need for your notes organizer.

Introduction

In every region, the climate, soil, and topography (whether the land is flat or hilly) decide what farmers can grow. Farmers must adapt to the land in order to successfully grow crops and raise farm animals. Farming can also harm the land. For example, farming can damage the soil so plants no longer grow. But farmers can use sustainable practices that protect the land so it stays healthy for the future.

How Farmers Adapt to the Land

The Northern Crescent is located in the Northeast region of the country. It is the main farming area in the Northeast. It curves along the northern border from New England to Minnesota. Some areas are hilly and some are flat, and the climate is cool and humid with plenty of rain. The soil here is rocky. During the last Ice Age, huge ice sheets broke the rock into sand, gravel, and stones, which makes the land hard to farm. Farmers adapt by using the land for small dairy and vegetable farms. Dairy farming works well because cows can graze on local grasses, and farmers can grow their own feed. In New England, some farmers grow cranberries in bogs, which are wet, low areas they flood with water. The region is also close to cities, where farmers can sell milk and other dairy products.



Holstein cows are commonly used for dairy farming because they produce more milk than any other breed.

How Farmers Care for the Land

One way farming can harm the land is by wearing out the soil. Every time crops are grown and harvested, they take nutrients out of the soil. If farmers keep taking nutrients without putting any back, the soil slowly becomes too poor for plants to grow well.

Farmers in the Northern Crescent have a sustainable way to put nutrients back into the soil, and it comes from their dairy cows. They use cow manure to make compost. They mix the manure with wood ash, paper, and wood chips and let air reach it. The pile heats up enough to kill germs, then cools, and after about two months, it is ready to spread on the fields. The compost feeds the soil, so farmers do not need to buy chemical fertilizers, and it also keeps the raw manure from washing into local water. By putting back what they take, farmers care for the land instead of wearing it out.

Image source: "Cow Female Black White" by Keith Waller/USDA via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.

Text sources:

- Bassett, Christy. 2020. "[When Waste Is Not Wasted: Dairy Farmers Leading the Way on Responsible Manure Management.](#)" Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA), Massachusetts Chapter.
- Bodreau, Diane, Melissa McDaniel, Erin Sprout, and Andrew Turgeon. 2025. "[North America: Resources.](#)" National Geographic.
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- Miller, Bradley A., Randall J. Schaetzl, and Frank Krist Jr. 2009. "[The Soil Fertility and Drainage Indexes: Taxonomically Based, Ordinal Estimates of Relative Soil Properties.](#)" Michigan State University.
- Teacher-Friendly Guides. n.d. "[Glacial Deposit Resources of the Northeast.](#)"
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- Undeniably Dairy. 2016. "[What Do Cows Like to Eat?.](#)"
- U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2000. "[Farm Resource Regions.](#)" Economic Research Service.

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Mississippi Portal Article

Directions: Read the article and underline the information you need for your notes organizer.

Introduction

In every region, the climate, soil, and topography (whether the land is flat or hilly) decide what farmers can grow. Farmers must adapt to the land in order to successfully grow crops and raise farm animals. Farming can also harm the land. For example, farming can damage the soil so plants no longer grow. But farmers can use sustainable practices that protect the land so it stays healthy for the future.

How Farmers Adapt to the Land

The Mississippi Portal is one of several farming areas in the Southeast. It sits along the lower Mississippi River, where the land is very flat. For thousands of years, the river flooded and left behind rich soil, so the land here is some of the most fertile in the country. The climate is warm and wet, with a long growing season and plenty of rain. Farmers grow rice in fields they flood with water. The flat land helps hold the water in place so the rice can grow. They also grow cotton, and they raise farm animals like chickens and hogs. Because the land is flat and the soil is rich, farmers here can grow large amounts of food.



Rice grows in flooded fields known as paddies. Most rice in the United States is grown in Arkansas.

How Farmers Care for the Land

On flat farmland near rivers, rain can wash soil and farm chemicals off the fields and into the water. This can wear away the good soil and pollute nearby rivers and streams.

One sustainable practice is planting buffer strips. Buffer strips are rows of grasses, shrubs, and trees that farmers plant between their fields and the water. The roots of the plants hold the soil in place, and the plants catch the soil and chemicals before they reach the river. By using buffer strips, farmers protect the water and keep their soil healthy instead of letting it wash away.

Image source: "Rice Fields" by formulaone via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0.

Text sources:

- Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality. n.d. "[Buffer Strips: Common Sense Conservation](#)."
- Self, Brady, and John D. Kushla. n.d. "[Forest Soils of Mississippi](#)." Mississippi State University Extension.
- Snipes, Charles E., Steve P. Nichols, Daniel H. Poston, Tim W. Walker, Lisa P. Evans, and Heather R. Robinson. 2005. "[Current Agricultural Practices of the Mississippi Delta](#)." Mississippi Agricultural & Forestry Experiment Station.
- Steve, Gene, and Henry Krusekopf. 2020. "[Delta Soils of Southeast Missouri](#)." University of Missouri Extension.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2000. "[Farm Resource Regions](#)." Economic Research Service.
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2026. "[Nonpoint Source Agriculture](#)."

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Heartland Article

Directions: Read the article and underline the information you need for your notes organizer.

Introduction

In every region, the climate, soil, and topography (whether the land is flat or hilly) decide what farmers can grow. Farmers must adapt to the land in order to successfully grow crops and raise farm animals. Farming can also harm the land. For example, farming can damage the soil so plants no longer grow. But farmers can use sustainable practices that protect the land so it stays healthy for the future.

How Farmers Adapt to the Land

The Heartland is one of several farming areas in the Midwest. The land is flat, which makes it easy to farm, and the soil is some of the most fertile in the country. The climate brings enough rain to grow important crops.

Because the soil and the climate are so good for growing, farmers in the Heartland raise huge amounts of corn and soybeans. These crops are used in many ways. Most corn and soybeans are used for animal feed. Corn can also be turned into cooking oil and fuel for cars, and soybeans can be made into foods like tofu and soy milk.



Corn is indigenous to the Americas. Today, the United States is the largest corn producer in the world.

How Farmers Care for the Land

One way farming can harm the land is by tilling the soil. Tilling means digging up and turning over the soil to get it ready for planting. Over time, this wears the soil out. It dries the soil, lets it wash or blow away, and disturbs the insects and small animals that keep the soil healthy.

A more sustainable choice is called no-till farming. Instead of turning over the whole field, farmers use special equipment to cut narrow channels just wide enough for the seeds. This leaves the rest of the soil and the leftover plant cover in place, which protects the soil and recycles nutrients back into it. By leaving the soil undisturbed, farmers care for the land instead of wearing it out.

Image source: “Corn Stalk” via Pixabay, free for use under the Pixabay Content License.

Text sources:

- Bodreau, Diane, Melissa McDaniel, Erin Sprout, and Andrew Turgeon. 2025. “[North America: Resources.](#)” National Geographic.
- Creech, Elizabeth. 2017. “[Saving Money, Time, and Soil: The Economics of No-Till Farming.](#)” U.S. Department of Agriculture.
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- U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2000. “[Farm Resource Regions.](#)” Economic Research Service.
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- Wade, Tara. 2016. “[Tillage Practices Vary Across the United States.](#)” U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Prairie Gateway Article

Directions: Read the article and underline the information you need for your notes organizer.

Introduction

In every region, the climate, soil, and topography (whether the land is flat or hilly) decide what farmers can grow. Farmers must adapt to the land in order to successfully grow crops and raise farm animals. Farming can also harm the land. For example, farming can damage the soil so plants no longer grow. But farmers can use sustainable practices that protect the land so it stays healthy for the future.

How Farmers Adapt to the Land

The Prairie Gateway is one of several farming areas in the Southwest. It covers the dry prairies in the middle of the country. The climate is warm and dry, because the Rocky Mountains to the west block much of the rain. With so little rain, trees cannot grow into forests, so the land is covered in grasses instead. The soil is fertile and the land is flat, which is good for growing crops that do not need much rain, like wheat. The



Cattle may graze on wild grasses for many hours per day.

grasses are also perfect for raising cattle. Cattle eat the prairie grasses, which is called grazing, and in winter they eat grass that has been dried into hay.

How Farmers Care for the Land

Grazing can maintain the prairie ecosystem and keep trees from competing with the grasses. However, farmers can also harm the land by letting the cattle eat too much of the grass. This is called overgrazing. When cattle eat the grass faster than it can grow back, the prairie ecosystem is damaged, and the plants and animals that live there suffer.

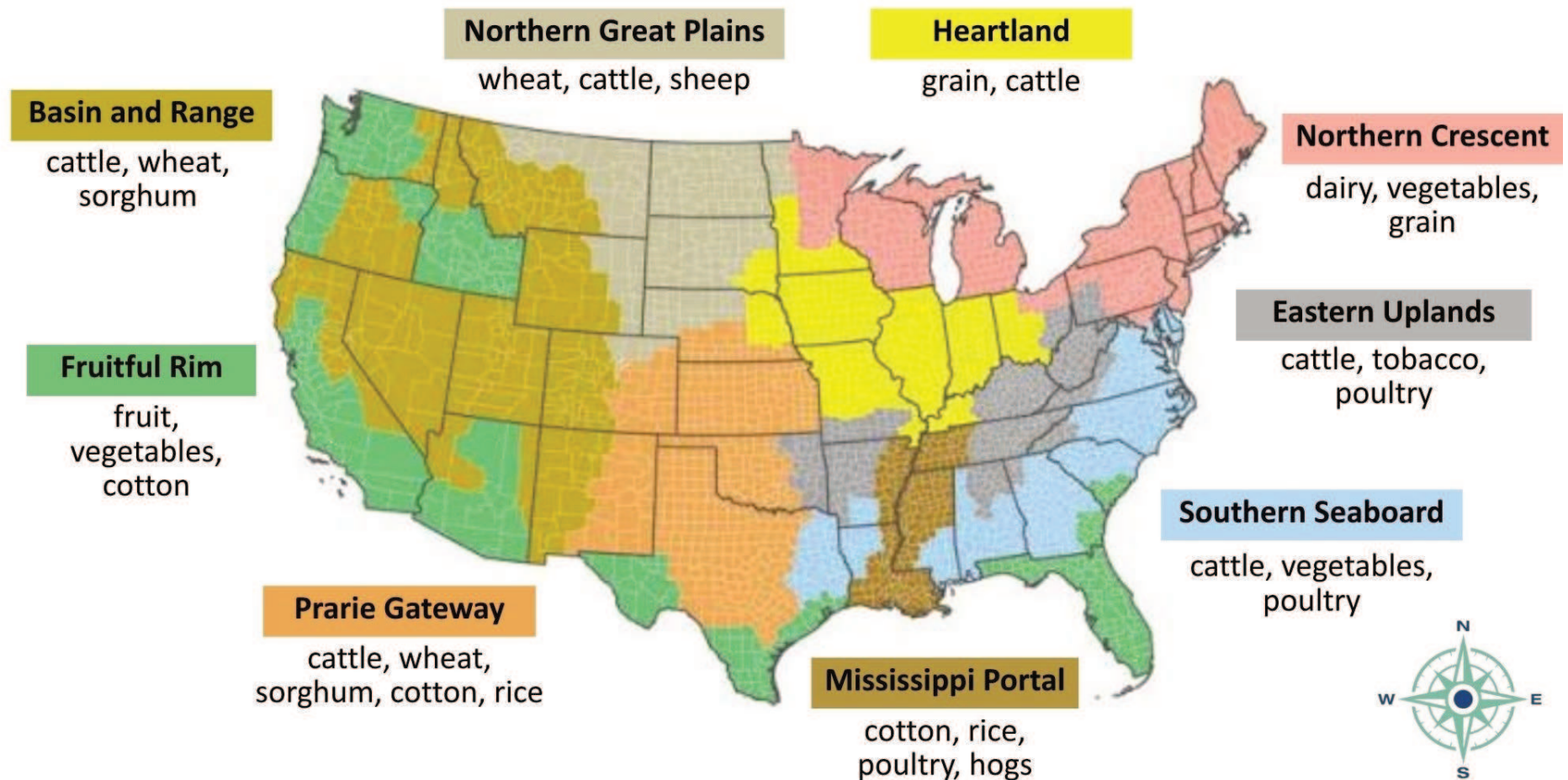
A more sustainable way is called grazing management. Farmers plan how much grass their cattle can eat and move the cattle from place to place, so the grass always has time to grow back. When grazing is managed well, the cattle are fed and the prairie stays healthy. By balancing the needs of their cattle with the needs of the land, farmers care for the prairie instead of harming it.

Image source: "A Cow in the Tall Grass Field of Montague County" by USDA NRCS Texas via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.

Text sources:

- Armstrong, Joe, and Brad Heins. 2026. "[Grazing and Pasture Management for Cattle](#)." University of Minnesota Extension.
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- U.S. Federal Government Agencies. 2009. "[Ecoregion: Prairie Grasslands](#)." Climate Change, Wildlife, and Wildlands: A Toolkit for Formal and Informal Educators.

Farm Resource Regions Map



Map of agricultural regions and products. Image by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Economic Research Service, public domain.

Image source: Map of agricultural regions and products via the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Economic Research Service, public domain.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Farm Region Articles (Underlined Text)

The Northern Crescent Article

Directions: Read the article and use the underlined information to fill out your notes organizer.

Introduction

In every region, the climate, soil, and topography (whether the land is flat or hilly) decide what farmers can grow. Farmers must adapt to the land in order to successfully grow crops and raise farm animals. Farming can also harm the land. For example, farming can damage the soil so plants no longer grow. But farmers can use sustainable practices that protect the land so it stays healthy for the future.

How Farmers Adapt to the Land

The Northern Crescent is located in the Northeast region of the country. It is the main farming area in the Northeast. It curves along the northern border from New England to Minnesota.

Some areas are hilly and some are flat, and the climate is cool and humid with plenty of rain.

The soil here is rocky. During the last Ice Age, huge ice sheets broke the rock into sand, gravel, and stones, which makes the

land hard to farm. Farmers adapt by using the land for small dairy and vegetable farms. Dairy farming works well because cows can graze on local grasses, and farmers can grow their own feed. In New England, some farmers grow cranberries in bogs, which are wet, low areas they flood with water. The region is also close to cities, where farmers can sell milk and other dairy products.



Holstein cows are commonly used for dairy farming because they produce more milk than any other breed.

How Farmers Care for the Land

One way farming can harm the land is by wearing out the soil. Every time crops are grown and harvested, they take nutrients out of the soil. If farmers keep taking nutrients without putting any back, the soil slowly becomes too poor for plants to grow well.

Farmers in the Northern Crescent have a sustainable way to put nutrients back into the soil, and it comes from their dairy cows. They use cow manure to make compost. They mix the manure with wood ash, paper, and wood chips and let air reach it. The pile heats up enough to kill germs, then cools, and after about two months, it is ready to spread on the fields. The compost feeds the soil, so farmers do not need to buy chemical fertilizers, and it also keeps the raw manure from washing into local water. By putting back what they take, farmers care for the land instead of wearing it out.

Image source: “Cow Female Black White” by Keith Waller/USDA via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.

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- Undeniably Dairy. 2016. “[What Do Cows Like to Eat?.](#)”
- U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2000. “[Farm Resource Regions.](#)” Economic Research Service.

The Mississippi Portal Article

Directions: Read the article and use the underlined information to fill out your notes organizer.

Introduction

In every region, the climate, soil, and topography (whether the land is flat or hilly) decide what farmers can grow. Farmers must adapt to the land in order to successfully grow crops and raise farm animals. Farming can also harm the land. For example, farming can damage the soil so plants no longer grow. But farmers can use sustainable practices that protect the land so it stays healthy for the future.

How Farmers Adapt to the Land

The Mississippi Portal is one of several farming areas in the Southeast. It sits along the lower Mississippi River, where the land is very flat. For thousands of years, the river flooded and left behind rich soil, so the land here is some of the most fertile in the country. The climate is warm and wet, with a long growing season and plenty of rain. Farmers grow rice in fields they flood with water. The flat land helps hold the water in place so the rice can grow. They also grow cotton, and they raise farm animals like chickens and hogs. Because the land is flat and the soil is rich, farmers here can grow large amounts of food.



Rice grows in flooded fields known as paddies. Most rice in the United States is grown in Arkansas.

How Farmers Care for the Land

On flat farmland near rivers, rain can wash soil and farm chemicals off the fields and into the water. This can wear away the good soil and pollute nearby rivers and streams.

One sustainable practice is planting buffer strips. Buffer strips are rows of grasses, shrubs, and trees that farmers plant between their fields and the water. The roots of the plants hold the soil in place, and the plants catch the soil and chemicals before they reach the river. By using buffer strips, farmers protect the water and keep their soil healthy instead of letting it wash away.

Image source: "Rice Fields" by formulaone via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0.

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- Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality. n.d. "[Buffer Strips: Common Sense Conservation.](#)"
- Self, Brady, and John D. Kushla. n.d. "[Forest Soils of Mississippi.](#)" Mississippi State University Extension.
- Snipes, Charles E., Steve P. Nichols, Daniel H. Poston, Tim W. Walker, Lisa P. Evans, and Heather R. Robinson. 2005. "[Current Agricultural Practices of the Mississippi Delta.](#)" Mississippi Agricultural & Forestry Experiment Station.
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The Heartland Article

Directions: Read the article and use the underlined information to fill out your notes organizer.

Introduction

In every region, the climate, soil, and topography (whether the land is flat or hilly) decide what farmers can grow. Farmers must adapt to the land in order to successfully grow crops and raise farm animals. Farming can also harm the land. For example, farming can damage the soil so plants no longer grow. But farmers can use sustainable practices that protect the land so it stays healthy for the future.

How Farmers Adapt to the Land

The Heartland is one of several farming areas in the Midwest. The land is flat, which makes it easy to farm, and the soil is some of the most fertile in the country. The climate brings enough rain to grow important crops.

Because the soil and the climate are so good for growing, farmers in the Heartland raise huge amounts of

corn and soybeans. These crops are used in many ways. Most corn and soybeans are used for animal feed. Corn can also be turned into cooking oil and fuel for cars, and soybeans can be made into foods like tofu and soy milk.



Corn is indigenous to the Americas. Today, the United States is the largest corn producer in the world.

How Farmers Care for the Land

One way farming can harm the land is by tilling the soil. Tilling means digging up and turning over the soil to get it ready for planting. Over time, this wears the soil out. It dries the soil, lets it wash or blow away, and disturbs the insects and small animals that keep the soil healthy.

A more sustainable choice is called no-till farming. Instead of turning over the whole field, farmers use special equipment to cut narrow channels just wide enough for the seeds. This leaves the rest of the soil and the leftover plant cover in place, which protects the soil and recycles nutrients back into it. By leaving the soil undisturbed, farmers care for the land instead of wearing it out.

Image source: "Corn Stalk" via Pixabay, free for use under the Pixabay Content License.

Text sources:

- Bodreau, Diane, Melissa McDaniel, Erin Sprout, and Andrew Turgeon. 2025. "[North America: Resources](#)." National Geographic.
- Creech, Elizabeth. 2017. "[Saving Money, Time, and Soil: The Economics of No-Till Farming](#)." U.S. Department of Agriculture.
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- Wade, Tara. 2016. "[Tillage Practices Vary Across the United States](#)." U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

The Prairie Gateway Article

Directions: Read the article and use the underlined information to fill out your notes organizer.

Introduction

In every region, the climate, soil, and topography (whether the land is flat or hilly) decide what farmers can grow. Farmers must adapt to the land in order to successfully grow crops and raise farm animals. Farming can also harm the land. For example, farming can damage the soil so plants no longer grow. But farmers can use sustainable practices that protect the land so it stays healthy for the future.

How Farmers Adapt to the Land

The Prairie Gateway is one of several farming areas in the Southwest. It covers the dry prairies in the middle of the country. The climate is warm and dry, because the Rocky Mountains to the west block much of the rain. With so little rain, trees cannot grow into forests, so the land is covered in grasses instead. The soil is fertile and the land is flat, which is good for growing crops that do not need much rain, like wheat. The grasses are also perfect for raising cattle. Cattle eat the prairie grasses, which is called grazing, and in winter they eat grass that has been dried into hay.



Cattle may graze on wild grasses for many hours per day.

How Farmers Care for the Land

Grazing can maintain the prairie ecosystem and keep trees from competing with the grasses. However, farmers can also harm the land by letting the cattle eat too much of the grass. This is called overgrazing. When cattle eat the grass faster than it can grow back, the prairie ecosystem is damaged, and the plants and animals that live there suffer.

A more sustainable way is called grazing management. Farmers plan how much grass their cattle can eat and move the cattle from place to place, so the grass always has time to grow back. When grazing is managed well, the cattle are fed and the prairie stays healthy. By balancing the needs of their cattle with the needs of the land, farmers care for the prairie instead of harming it.

Image source: "A Cow in the Tall Grass Field of Montague County" by USDA NRCS Texas via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.

Text sources:

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The Fruitful Rim Article

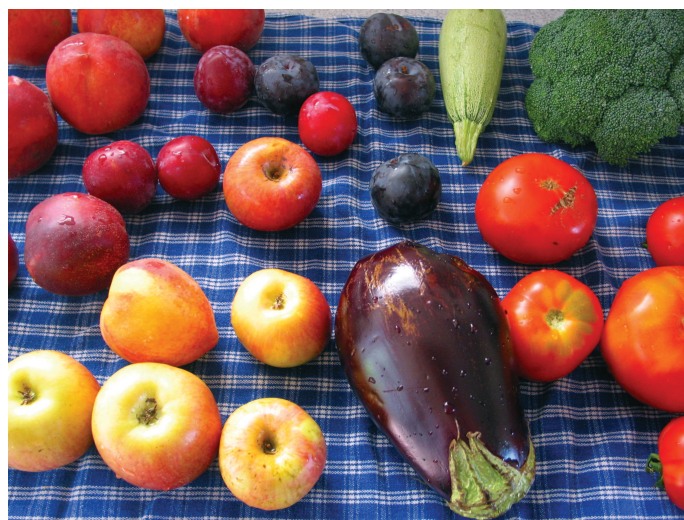
Directions: Read the article and use the underlined information to fill out your notes organizer.

Introduction

In every region, the climate, soil, and topography (whether the land is flat or hilly) decide what farmers can grow. Farmers must adapt to the land in order to successfully grow crops and raise farm animals. Farming can also harm the land. For example, farming can damage the soil so plants no longer grow. But farmers can use sustainable practices that protect the land so it stays healthy for the future.

How Farmers Adapt to the Land

The Fruitful Rim is one of several farming areas in the West. It runs along the Pacific Coast. The land is a mix of hills and flat valleys, and the soil is fertile. The climate is mild, but it changes from place to place. Some parts are cooler, some parts are warmer, and some parts are dry. Farmers grow crops that fit the climate where they live. In Washington and Oregon, where it is cooler, they grow apples, pears, and cherries. In California, where it is warmer, they grow grapes, tomatoes, and oranges. Where the land is dry, farmers bring in water to help their crops grow. This is why the Fruitful Rim grows most of America's fruits and vegetables.



Different crops are grown in different states. Farmers decide what to grow based on the local climate.

How Farmers Care for the Land

One way farming can harm the land is by using chemicals called pesticides to kill insects. Pesticides are supposed to kill pests that damage the crops farmers are trying to grow. However, pesticides can also kill helpful insects, like the bees and other pollinators that many plants need.

A more sustainable way to control pests is to let nature help. Some helpful insects eat the pests that damage crops. For example, ladybugs eat the tiny insects that destroy plants. If farmers let wild plants grow near their fields, ladybugs and other helpful insects have a place to live, and they move into the fields to eat the pests. This protects the crops without chemicals that harm the ecosystem. When farmers work with nature this way, they care for the land instead of hurting it.

Image source: "Fruits Veggies" by Emerika via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.

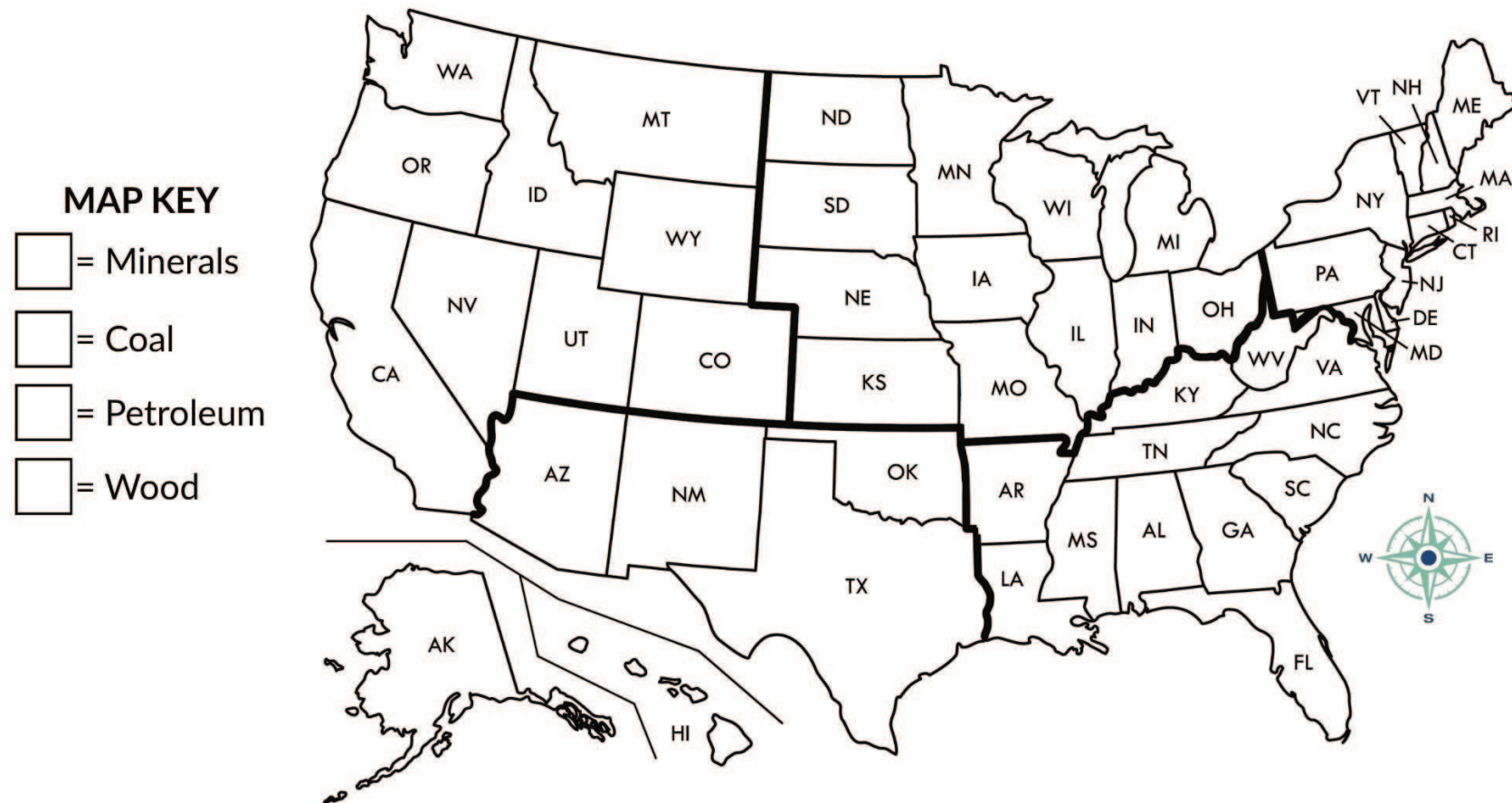
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Name: _____ Date: _____

Natural Resources and Industries Map

Directions: Shade the top five states that produce minerals, coal, petroleum, and wood. Choose a different color for each resource and indicate the color in the map key. Texas will be in the top five producers of two of these natural resources, so make stripes using both colors.



Name: _____ Date: _____



Lesson 13 Exit Ticket

Directions: Use your map and takeaways from the stations activity and class discussion to answer the questions below about your assigned region. Use at least one cause-and-effect connecting word or phrase (*because, so, as a result*) in your responses.

1. Circle the natural resources that are plentiful in your region:

Minerals

Coal

Petroleum

Wood

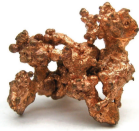
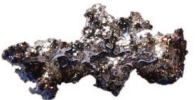
2. What industries and jobs might extracting these resources create and why?

3. How might extracting these resources shape the land in your region? Could those changes help the land, harm it, or both?

Industries and Resources Stations

What industries do you think use minerals?

Mineral Resources

	Iron: used to make steel for products like cars, beams for large buildings, bridges, and vitamins
	Copper: used for wiring and plumbing
	Silver: used for electronics and jewelry
	Gold: used for electronics, jewelry, saving money

Important Minerals

We know that iron, copper, silver, and gold are important minerals found in the Midwest and West.

Fun fact: The top mineral bringing money into the U.S. economy is none of those. It is crushed stone.



Uses of Crushed Stone

Crushed stone is used for asphalt, blacktop, concrete, and cement.

Look around you.
Where do you see products made from crushed stone?

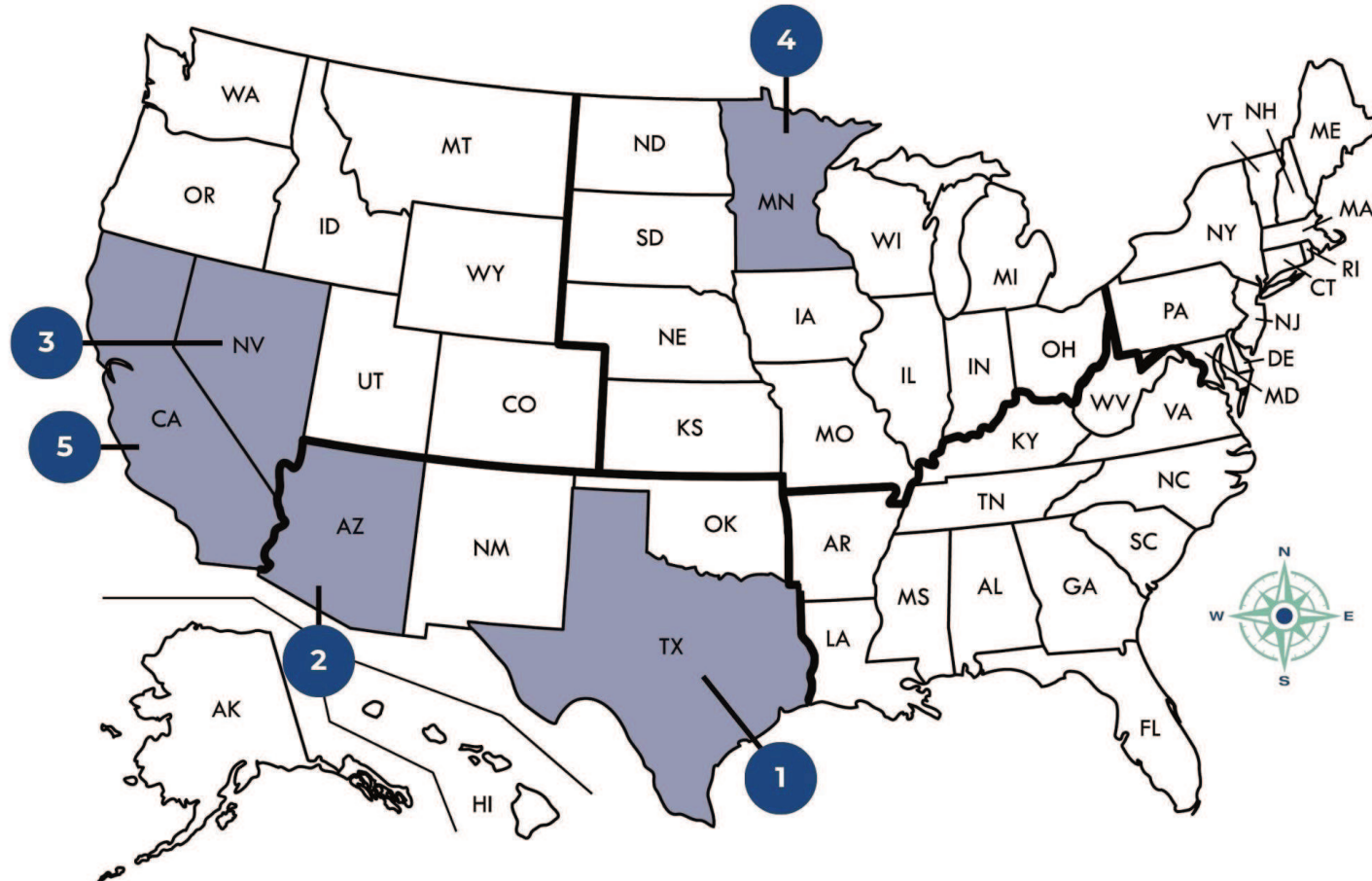


How Crushed Stone Is Mined

Rock used for crushed stone is dug from open pits called quarries. The rock is blasted from quarry walls and then crushed to different sizes. Crushed stone is heavy, so it's expensive to transport. States produce it locally if possible. The top state that produces crushed stone is Texas.



Top 5 Mineral-Producing States, 2023



What industries do you think use coal?

Coal Resources

Coal is a rock that
can be burned to
release energy.

It is a fossil fuel.

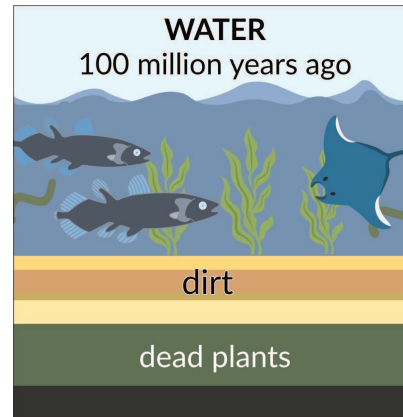


How Coal Was Formed

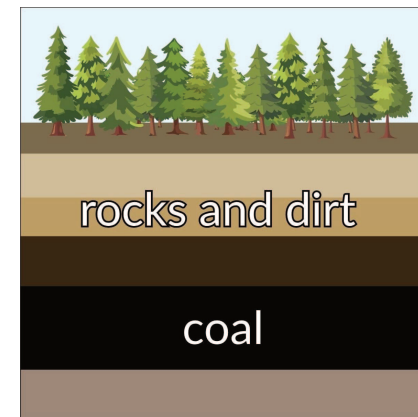
Before the dinosaurs lived, many giant plants died in swamps.



Over millions of years, the plants were buried under water and dirt.



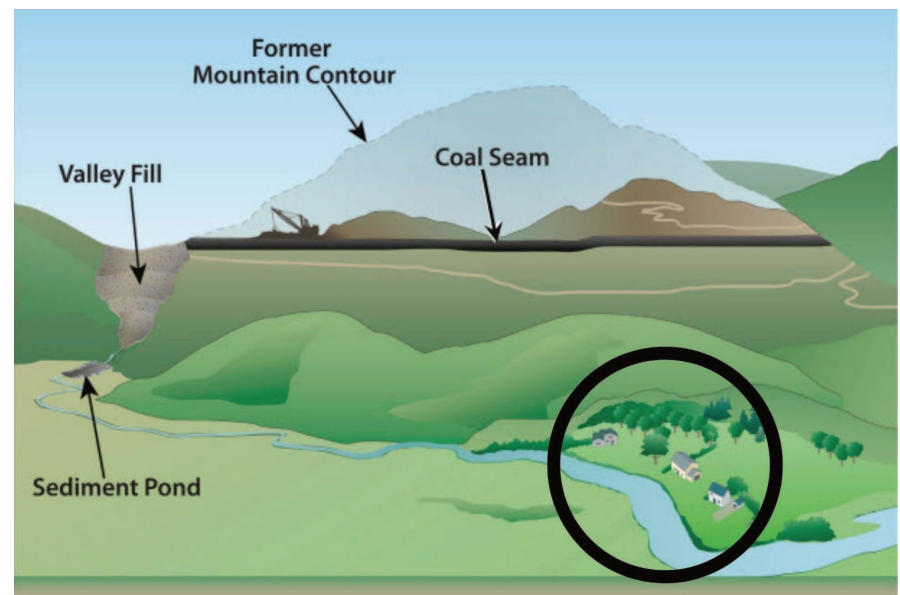
Heat and pressure turned the dead plants into coal.



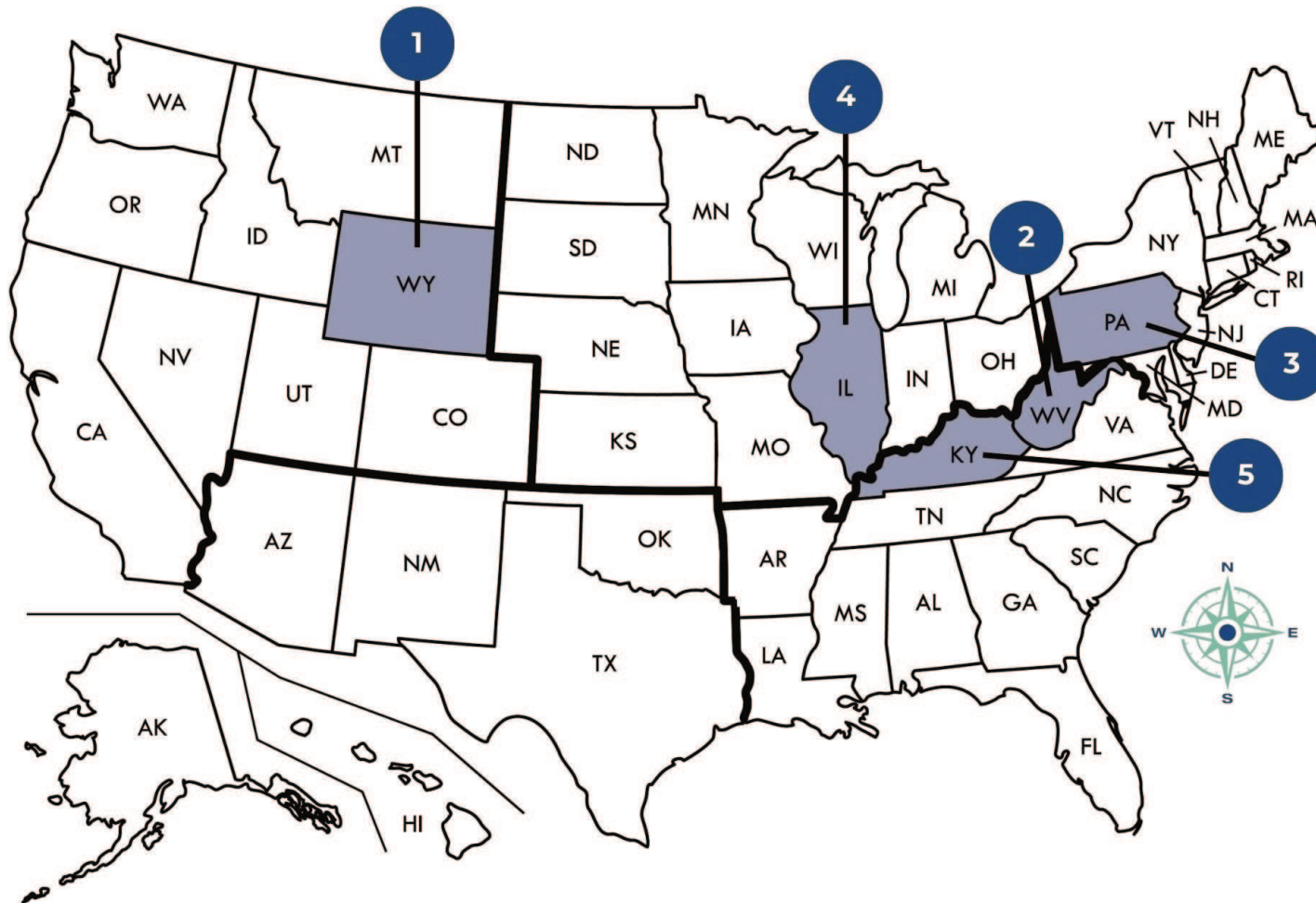
How Coal Is Mined

What is the impact on people living in the circled houses?

What is the impact on the ecosystem?



Top 5 Coal-Producing States, 2023



What industries do you think use petroleum?

Petroleum Resources

- Crude oil (liquid)
- Natural gas (gas)

These are also called “fossil fuels” because they are formed from the fossilized remains of ancient plants and animals.

Crude Oil

Crude oil is a liquid that can be processed into many products, including gasoline, heating oil, and plastic.

Crude oil is a fossil fuel found underground in areas that used to be covered by ancient seas. It is also found underwater in the Gulf of Mexico.



Natural Gas

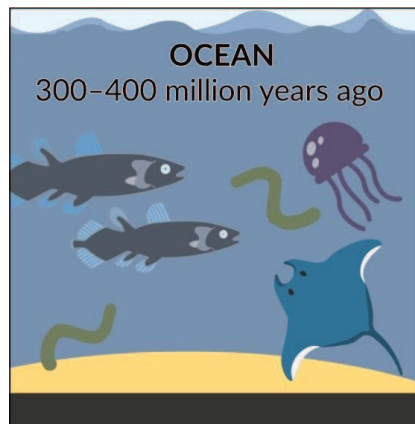
Natural gas is a gas made mostly of methane, which has no color or odor. It is formed when plant and animal remains break down under intense pressure and heat.

Natural gas is found where crude oil is found. Gas is lighter than liquid, so it is found above crude oil.

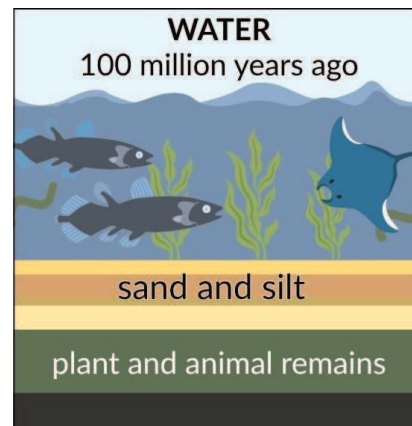


How Crude Oil and Natural Gas Were Formed

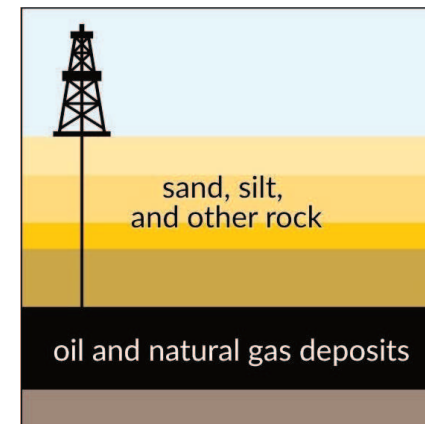
Tiny marine plants and animals died and were buried on the ocean floor. Over time, they were covered by layers of silt and sand.



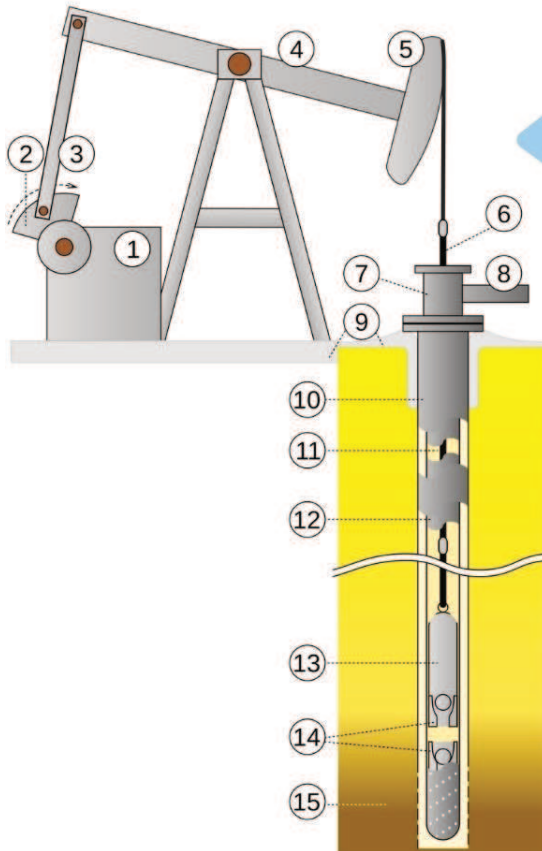
Over millions of years, the remains were buried deeper and deeper. The enormous heat and pressure turned the remains into oil and natural gas.



Today, we drill down through layers of sand, silt, and rock to reach the rock formations that contain oil and natural gas deposits.

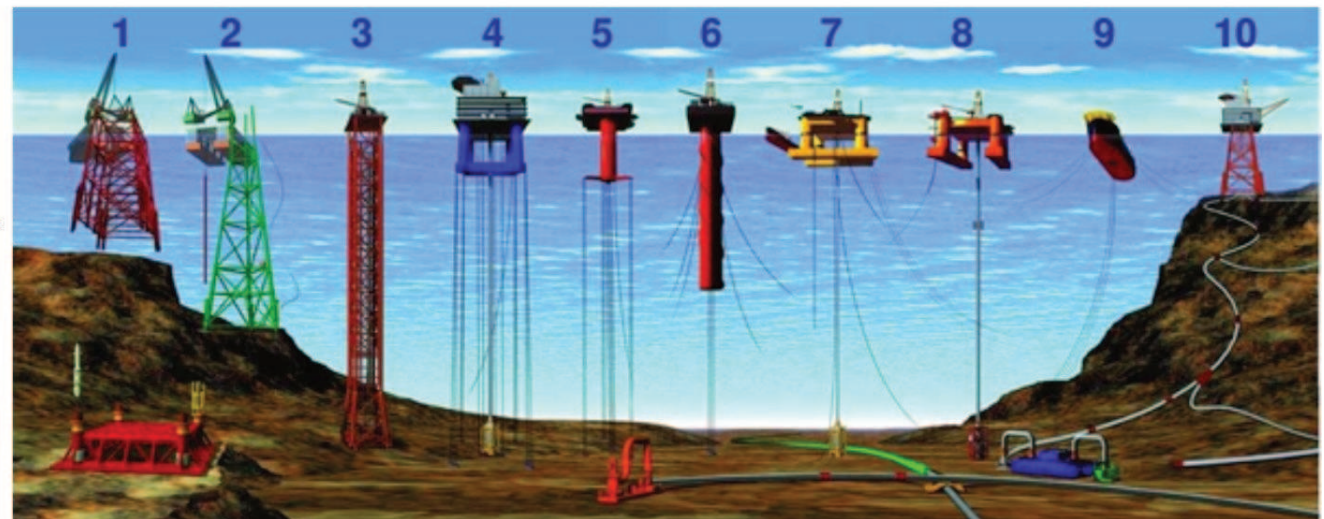


How Oil and Natural Gas Are Drilled

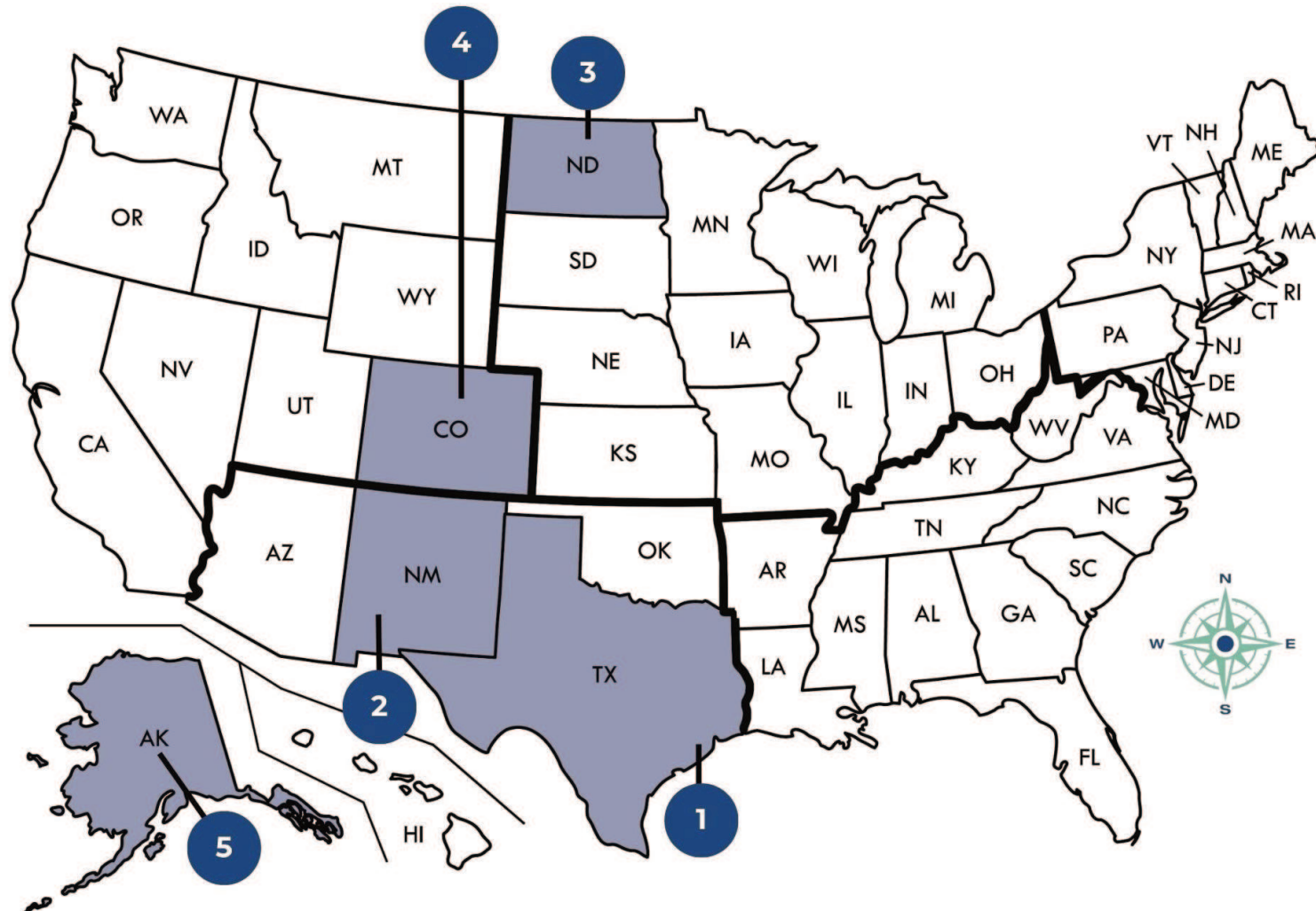


on the land

under the sea



Top 5 Crude Oil–Producing States, 2022



**What industries do you think
use wood?**

Wood Resources

Wood is a natural resource that comes from trees. Forests grow in many regions of the United States. In some states, people harvest wood from forests. They cut it into boards called lumber to sell.

The top states for lumber are in the Southeast and Northwest regions of the United States.



Wood Is a Renewable Resource

Good forest management means that new trees must be planted when mature trees are harvested.

In Oregon there is a law that three trees must be planted for every tree that is cut down.



How Wood Is Harvested

It used to take lots of lumberjacks to cut down trees by hand. Now, logging companies use large machines to do much of the work.

- **Cutting:** cutting down the tree and removing branches
- **Skidding:** dragging or lifting the tree out of the woods
- **Bucking:** cutting the tree into logs
- **Loading:** loading the logs onto trucks



Top 5 Wood-Producing States, 2021

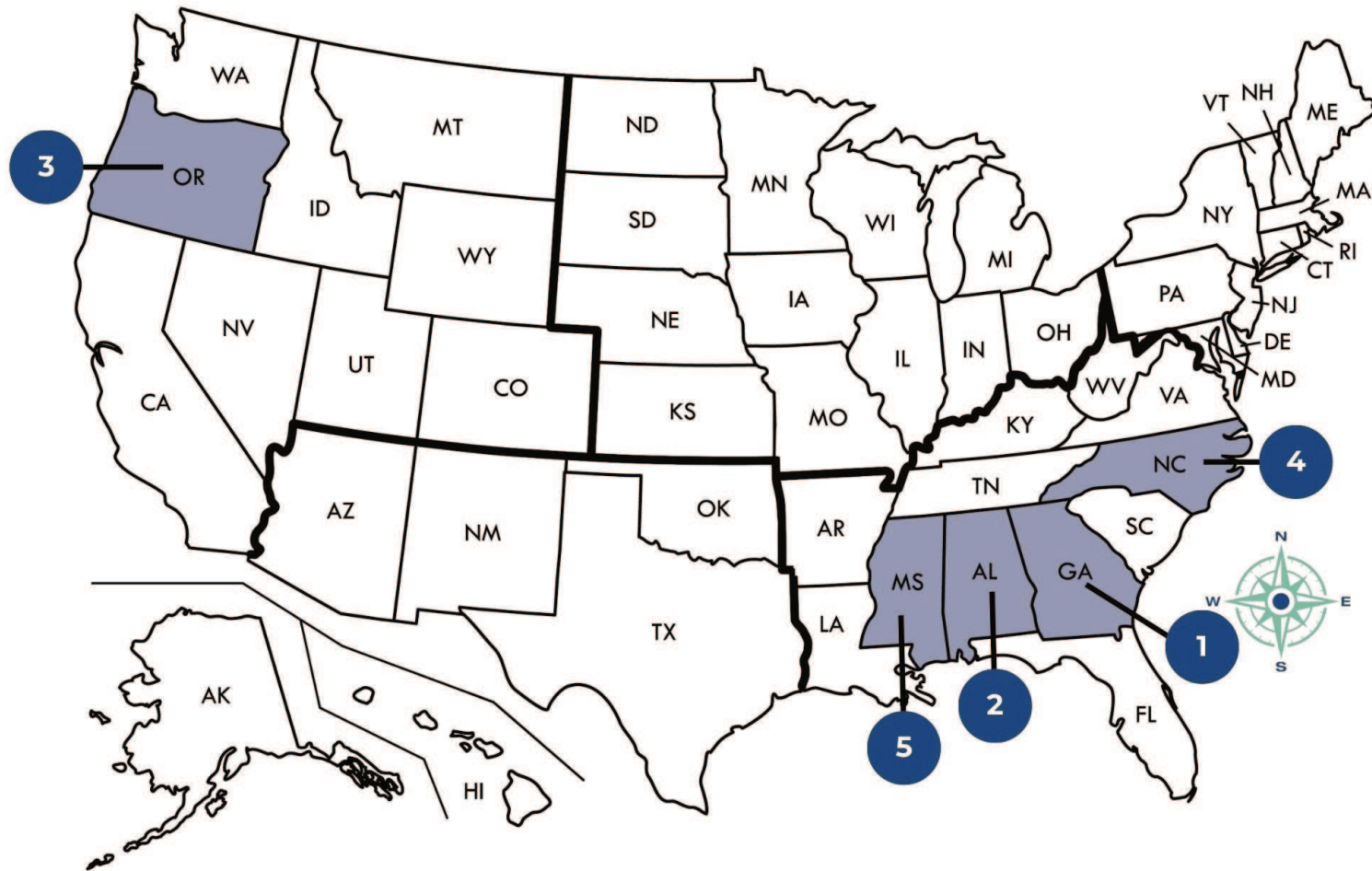


Image sources:

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- “Natural Copper Ore Macro 1” by Jon Zander (Digon3) via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.
- “Silver Sulfide” by Hi-Res-Images of Chemical Elements via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY 3.0.
- “Gold Nugget” by Cephas via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.
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- “Mineral Commodity Summaries 2024” by U.S. Geological Survey, public domain.
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- “A Watershed View of a Mountaintop Mine and Valley Fill” via the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, public domain.
- “Blank U.S. Map Borders Labels” by Kaboom88 via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- “Petroleum Sample” by Nefronus via Wikimedia Commons, CC0 1.0.
- “Burning Gas Stovetop in Darkened Room—Closeup” by Chiara Coetzee via Flickr, CC0 1.0.
- Recreated by Educurious based on “Petroleum and Natural Gas Formation” via U.S. Energy Information Administration from the National Energy Education Development Project, public domain.
- “Oil Well Scheme” via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.5.
- “Types of Offshore Oil and Gas Structures” by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office of Ocean Exploration and Research, public domain.
- “U.S. Crude Oil Production by State, 2022” via U.S. Energy Information Administration, public domain.
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- “Wiwtl6” by Rvanatta via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.
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Industries Word Bank

Directions: Use the list below to help you brainstorm which industries might depend on each resource. You can also add your own ideas.

- Mining
- Drilling
- Logging
- Construction (building houses, buildings, bridges, etc.)
- Making electricity (power plants)
- Jewelry-making
- Gasoline and fuel for cars and trucks
- Paper manufacturing
- Steelmaking
- Heating homes and buildings
- Furniture manufacturing
- Electronics (phones and computers)
- Plastic manufacturing
- Road and highway construction
- Car manufacturing
- Plumbing (water pipes)

manufacturing: the process of turning materials into finished products

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cluster 2 Formative Assessment Task

Part 1: Plan Your Ideas

Directions: Think about what you have learned about how people in your region have adapted to the land. Choose two adaptations to write about. Use the organizer below to plan your written response. Make sure to include evidence from at least one source.

The Land What is the land like in your region? Describe at least one feature (climate, topography, or natural resources).	
Adaptation 1 How have people adapted? Describe one way people in your region have adapted to the land or climate.	
Adaptation 2 How else have people adapted? Describe another way people have adapted to the land or climate.	

Part 2: Write a Paragraph

Directions: Use the ideas and evidence from your planning organizer to write a paragraph that explains how people have adapted to the land in your region. Your paragraph should do the following:

- Name the feature(s) of the land.
- Name two ways people have adapted to the land.
- Explain why people were able to do this.
- Use cause-and-effect words like *because*, *so*, or *as a result*.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cluster 2 Formative Assessment Task (Sentence Frames)

Part 1: Plan Your Ideas

Directions: Think about what you have learned about how people in your region have adapted to the land. Choose two adaptations to write about. Use the organizer below to plan your written response. Make sure to include evidence from at least one source. Use the sentence starters to help you get started.

The Land What is the land like in your region? Describe at least one feature (climate, topography, or natural resources). <i>The land in ___ is...</i> <i>The climate in ___ is...</i>	
Adaptation 1 How have people adapted? Describe one way people in your region have adapted to the land or climate. <i>One way people have adapted to the land is...</i> <i>People in my region...</i>	
Adaptation 2 How else have people adapted? Describe another way people have adapted to the land or climate. <i>Another way people have adapted to the land is...</i> <i>People also...</i>	

Part 2: Write a Paragraph

Directions: Use the ideas and evidence from your planning organizer to write a paragraph that explains how people have adapted to the land in your region. Your paragraph should do the following:

- Name the feature(s) of the land.
- Name two ways people have adapted to the land.
- Explain why people were able to do this.
- Use cause-and-effect words like *because*, *so*, or *as a result*.

You can use the sentence frames below to help you:

The land in the [region] is _____. The climate is _____.
As a result, people in this region _____.
They also _____ because _____.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Unit 5, Cluster 3 Inquiry Chart

Unit EQ	How do the people, the land, and the challenges of a place shape each region of the United States?
Cluster SQ	How do communities respond to regional challenges of the United States?
What questions will we ask?	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
Lesson 17: We used climate maps to predict which regions are most at risk for wildfires and then checked our predictions against a FEMA risk map. We took notes on a video about communities bringing back prescribed burns, an Indigenous practice.	
Lesson 18: We compared two ways that people work together to mitigate the effects of storm surge during a hurricane.	

What did we do?	What did we learn that helps us answer our question(s)?
Lesson 19: We analyzed a flood risk map, video, and article to identify the causes of coastal flooding in the Northeast and two strategies communities use to respond to it.	

Name: _____ Date: _____

Notice and Wonder Chart

Directions: You will see a series of three images. For each one, write what you notice from looking at the image and what you wonder about it.

What I Notice	What I Wonder
Image 1	Image 1
Image 2	Image 2
Image 3	Image 3

Name: _____ Date: _____

Wildfires Notes Organizer

Part 1: Stop and Jot

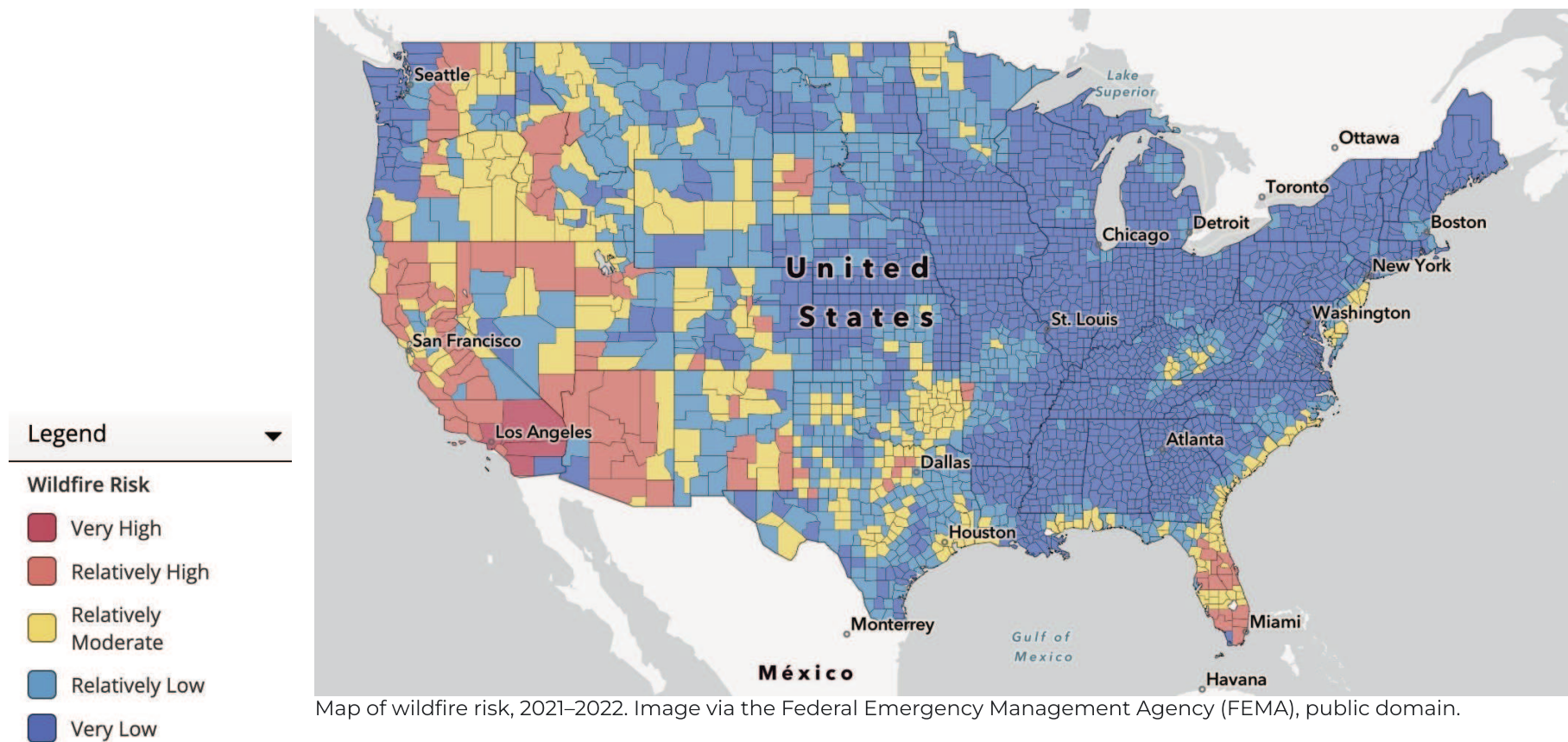
Directions: When the video pauses, jot down your thoughts on each question below. You do not need to write in complete sentences.

How would you describe Indigenous knowledge about fire?	
What is one benefit of having space between trees? pathogen = organism that can cause disease	
Why did prescribed burns or ("good fires") stop for a long time? Who stopped them?	
Why are firefighters worried about doing a prescribed burn?	
Why are some communities uncomfortable with the idea of a prescribed burn?	
What evidence shows that a prescribed burn is effective?	

Part 2: Reflection Question

How is Indigenous knowledge informing how communities respond to wildfires today?

Wildfire Risk Map



Name: _____ Date: _____

Wildfires Notes Organizer (Word Bank)

Part 1: Stop and Jot

Directions: When the video pauses, jot down your thoughts on each question below. You do not need to write in complete sentences. Use the word bank to help you answer each question.

Word Bank

prescribed burn	a planned and controlled fire that is lit for a special purpose
steward	to care for and protect something
resilience	the ability to adapt, recover, and grow
fire suppression	the practice of preventing all fires
liability	being responsible if something goes wrong
misinformation	false or inaccurate information
red flag	conditions that can cause dangerous fire behavior

How would you describe Indigenous knowledge about fire?

What is one benefit of having space between trees?

pathogen = organism that can cause disease

Why did prescribed burns or (“good fires”) stop for a long time? Who stopped them?	
Why are firefighters worried about doing a prescribed burn?	
Why are some communities uncomfortable with the idea of a prescribed burn?	
What evidence shows that a prescribed burn is effective?	

Part 2: Reflection Question

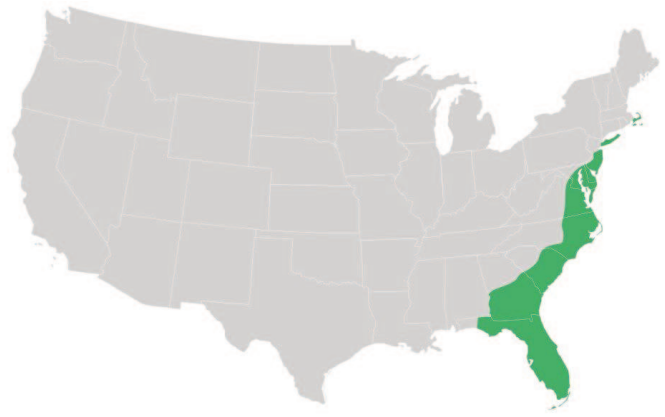
How is Indigenous knowledge informing how communities respond to wildfires today?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Storm Surge Article

What Are the Challenges of Storm Surge?

Storm surge is a rise in sea level that happens during hurricanes. Water is pushed in the direction that the wind is blowing. The water level can increase by 30 feet or more. This can be a big problem if the land on the coast is flat instead of steep. The Southeast region of the United States is on a coastal plain called the Atlantic Plain. The Atlantic Plain is also the part of the country that is hit with the most hurricanes.



The Atlantic Plain is marked in green.

Can Storm Surge Be Predicted?

A government agency called FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) uses computers to predict storm surge when a hurricane is approaching. The agency warns people to “run from the water and hide from the wind.” It is important that people take the warnings seriously to stay safe.

What Are Some Ways That People Can Mitigate the Effects of Storm Surge?

Engineered Solutions

Seawalls are hard structures that are built to protect the shore from damaging waves and storm surge. They are useful in areas where people have already built communities close to the coastline. Seawalls protect the land behind them from erosion. However, the force of the waves hitting the seawall erodes the beach in front of the seawall and on each side of the seawall. Seawalls are expensive to maintain, and they need repairs over time.



A concrete seawall along the beach.

Nature-Based Solutions



A mangrove forest near Florida.

Nature-based solutions use plants that are already adapted to the environment, like wetland plants. When people build communities near coastlines, they often destroy wetlands. This increases the risk of storm surge and flooding. One kind of wetland is a mangrove forest. Mangrove forests break up the force of waves with their stems and roots. They also hold the soil together, which prevents erosion. Mangrove forests get bigger and more useful to humans over time. Some communities are planting mangrove forests as protection from flooding. It takes a large area of mangroves to provide protection, so it is important not to cut them down when building a new community.

Text sources:

- Linham, Matthew M., and Robert J. Nicholls. n.d. "[Seawalls](#)." UN Climate Technology Centre & Network.
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). n.d. "[Hurricane Storm Surge](#)."
- Rutledge, Kim, Melissa McDaniel, Santani Teng, Hilary Hall, Tara Ramroop, Erin Sprout, Jeff Hunt, Diane Boudreau, and Hilary Costa. 2026. "[Storm Surge](#)." National Geographic Society.
- Wetlands International and The Nature Conservancy. 2014. "[Mangroves for Coastal Defence: Guidelines for Coastal Managers & Policy Makers](#)."

Image sources:

- "Atlantic Coastal Plain" by LoveTimmy via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.
- "View Along the Seawall" by Evelyn Simak via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0.
- "Mangrove Forest" by Ianaré Sévi via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Storm Surge Notes Organizer

Directions: Read an article about storm surge to help answer the question: What strategy would you propose to communities trying to mitigate storm surge? Read in three steps: observe the source, read closely and underline evidence, then connect the evidence to our question.

Observe: Look at visual clues.

What do the headings on the text tell you?

What is the purpose of the map?

Is the text informational or opinion?

Read: Underline important evidence.

- Underline why storm surge is a problem in the Southeast.
- Underline how the government predicts storm surge.
- Underline how seawalls and mangrove forests mitigate storm surge.
- Underline what happens to seawalls and mangroves over time.

Connect: Use the evidence you underlined to answer the questions.

What strategy would you propose to people trying to mitigate storm surge in communities with buildings **close** to the water? Why?

What strategy would you propose to people trying to mitigate storm surge in communities with buildings **far** from the water? Why?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Extension: Hurricane Katrina Notes Organizer

Directions: When the video pauses, jot down your thoughts on each question below. You do not need to write in complete sentences.

What happened to New Orleans musicians and their music after the storm?	
How did music help New Orleans recover and rebuild after the storm?	

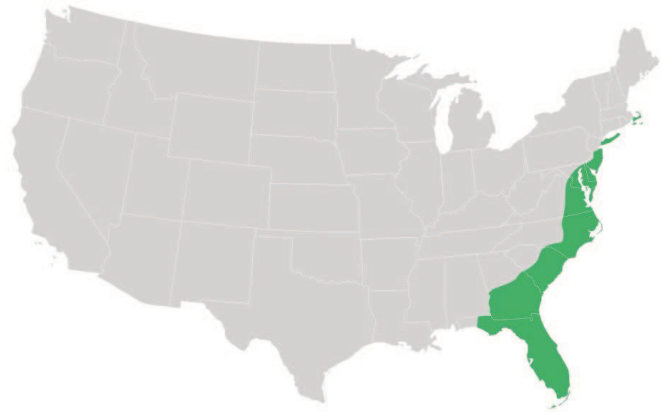
Name: _____ Date: _____

*Storm Surge Article (Word Bank)***Key Terms**

coastal plain	flat, low land next to the ocean
seawall	a strong wall built along the shore to block waves and protect the land behind it
erosion	when waves slowly wear away the land or sand and carry it away
wetland	low land that is covered with water or very wet
mangrove forest	a group of trees that grow along the coast in salty water, with thick roots that come up out of the ground

What Are the Challenges of Storm Surge?

Storm surge is a rise in sea level that happens during hurricanes. Water is pushed in the direction that the wind is blowing. The water level can increase by 30 feet or more. This can be a big problem if the land on the coast is flat instead of steep. The Southeast region of the United States is on a **coastal plain** called the Atlantic Plain. The Atlantic Plain is also the part of the country that is hit with the most hurricanes.



The Atlantic Plain is marked in green.

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A government agency called FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) uses computers to predict storm surge when a hurricane is approaching. The agency warns people to “run from the water and hide from the wind.” It is important that people take the warnings seriously to stay safe.

What Are Some Ways That People Can Mitigate the Effects of Storm Surge?

Engineered Solutions

Sea walls are hard structures that are built to protect the shore from damaging waves and storm surge. They are useful in areas where people have already built communities close to the coastline. Seawalls protect the land behind them from **erosion**. However, the force of the waves hitting the seawall erodes the beach in front of the sea wall and on each side of the seawall. Seawalls are expensive to maintain, and they need repairs over time.



A concrete seawall along the beach.

Nature-Based Solutions



A mangrove forest near Florida.

Nature-based solutions use plants that are already adapted to the environment, like **wetland** plants. When people build communities near coastlines, they often destroy wetlands. This increases the risk of storm surge and flooding. One kind of wetland is a **mangrove forest**. Mangrove forests break up the force of waves with their stems and roots. They also hold the soil together, which prevents erosion. Mangrove forests get bigger and more useful to humans over time. Some communities are planting mangrove forests as protection from flooding. It takes a large area of mangroves to provide protection, so it is important not to cut them down when building a new community.

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- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). n.d. "[Hurricane Storm Surge](#)."
- Rutledge, Kim, Melissa McDaniel, Santani Teng, Hilary Hall, Tara Ramroop, Erin Sprout, Jeff Hunt, Diane Boudreau, and Hilary Costa. 2026. "[Storm Surge](#)." National Geographic Society.
- Wetlands International and The Nature Conservancy. 2014. "[Mangroves for Coastal Defence: Guidelines for Coastal Managers & Policy Makers](#)."

Image sources:

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- "View Along the Seawall" by Evelyn Simak via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0.
- "Mangrove Forest" by Ianaré Sévi via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 3.0.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Storm Surge Notes Organizer (Sentence Frames)

Directions: Read an article about storm surge to help answer the question: What strategy would you propose to communities trying to mitigate storm surge? Read in three steps: observe the source, read closely and underline evidence, then connect the evidence to our question. Use the sentence frames to help you write your responses.

Observe: Look at visual clues.

What do the headings on the text tell you?

What is the purpose of the map?

Is the text informational or opinion? Circle one.

informational

opinion

Read: Underline important evidence.

- Underline why storm surge is a problem in the Southeast.
- Underline how the government predicts storm surge.
- Underline how seawalls and mangrove forests mitigate storm surge.
- Underline what happens to seawalls and mangroves over time.

Connect: Use the evidence you underlined to answer the questions.

What strategy would you propose to people trying to mitigate storm surge in communities with buildings **close** to the water? Why?

A ___ is the best way to mitigate storm surge in communities with buildings close to the water. This is because ___.

What strategy would you propose to people trying to mitigate storm surge in communities with buildings **far** from the water? Why?

A ___ is the best way to mitigate storm surge in communities with buildings far from the water. This is because ___.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Coastal Flooding Article

What Causes Coastal Flooding in the Northeast?

Nor'easters

Nor'easters form when cold air from the north meets warm, wet air from the ocean. They bring strong winds and rough waves that push ocean water onto the shore. Unlike hurricanes, which move quickly, nor'easters move slowly and can stay over the coast for many hours. This gives the water more time to flood roads, homes, and neighborhoods.



Sea Level Rise

The sea level off the coast of Massachusetts is about 8 inches higher today than it was in 1950. Scientists connect this rise to climate change, which is warming the oceans and melting ice. Even a small rise in sea level means storm waves start from a higher point and reach further inland than they used to. Scientists expect the sea level to keep rising, which means coastal flooding will happen more often and cause more damage over time.

Overdevelopment

Coastal wetlands like salt marshes once soaked up water from storms like a sponge, keeping it from reaching nearby communities. Oyster reefs also lined much of the coast, breaking up waves before they reached the shore. Over time, people built homes, roads, and buildings along the coast. People also took too many oysters from the water. As these natural protections disappeared, coastal communities lost some of their defenses against flooding.

How Are Communities Responding to Coastal Flooding?



Managed Retreat

Some communities are choosing a strategy called managed retreat, which means moving buildings and people away from the shore instead of trying to hold the water back. Local governments may create rules about where new buildings can and cannot be built or offer to buy homes from people in areas that often flood. Managed retreat can be hard because it means leaving homes and communities that people love. But in places where flooding keeps getting worse, some towns are choosing this strategy because it works with nature rather than against it.

Oyster Reef Restoration

Oysters were once a plentiful natural resource along the coast of the Northeast. Huge reefs covered the shoreline. Over time, people took too many oysters, and much of that natural protection disappeared. Oyster reefs can act like a natural seawall. They break up the force of waves before the waves reach the shore. A concrete seawall needs to be rebuilt over time, but an oyster reef keeps growing upward as sea levels rise. In Massachusetts, the Wampanoag Tribe of Cape Cod is restoring oysters to the waters of Cape Cod with the help of government funding. They are using knowledge of the land and water passed down over thousands of years.

Text sources:

- Columbia Climate School. 2022. "[Losing a Hectare of Wetlands Could Cost \\$8,000 Per Year in Flood Damages.](#)"
- Indian Country Today. 2026. "[Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Restores Water with Oysters](#)" [video].
- Office of Habitat Conservation. 2026. "[Oyster Reef Habitat.](#)" NOAA Fisheries.
- SeaLevelRise.org. n.d. "[Massachusetts' Sea Level Is Rising.](#)"
- University of Virginia. n.d. "[Nor'easters.](#)"
- Wolman, Jordan. 2026. "[Climate Reckoning: Mass. Communities Stare Down the Prospect—and Complications—of a Retreat from Rising Waters.](#)" *CommonWealth Beacon*.

Image sources:

- "Downtown Bound Brook, NJ Flooding from Spring Nor'easter" by Ekem via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Learning About Salt Marsh Restoration" by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Northeast Region, via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Coastal Flooding Notes Organizer

Directions: As you watch the video and read the article, use the organizer to take notes on the causes and impacts of coastal flooding and the strategies that communities are using to respond to coastal flooding.

Causes What causes coastal flooding?	
Impacts How does coastal flooding affect people and communities?	
Strategies How are communities working to mitigate coastal flooding?	

Name: _____ Date: _____

Coastal Flooding Notes Organizer (Word Bank)

Directions: As you watch the video and read the article, use the organizer to take notes on the causes and impacts of coastal flooding and the strategies that communities are using to respond to coastal flooding. Use the word bank to support your note-taking.

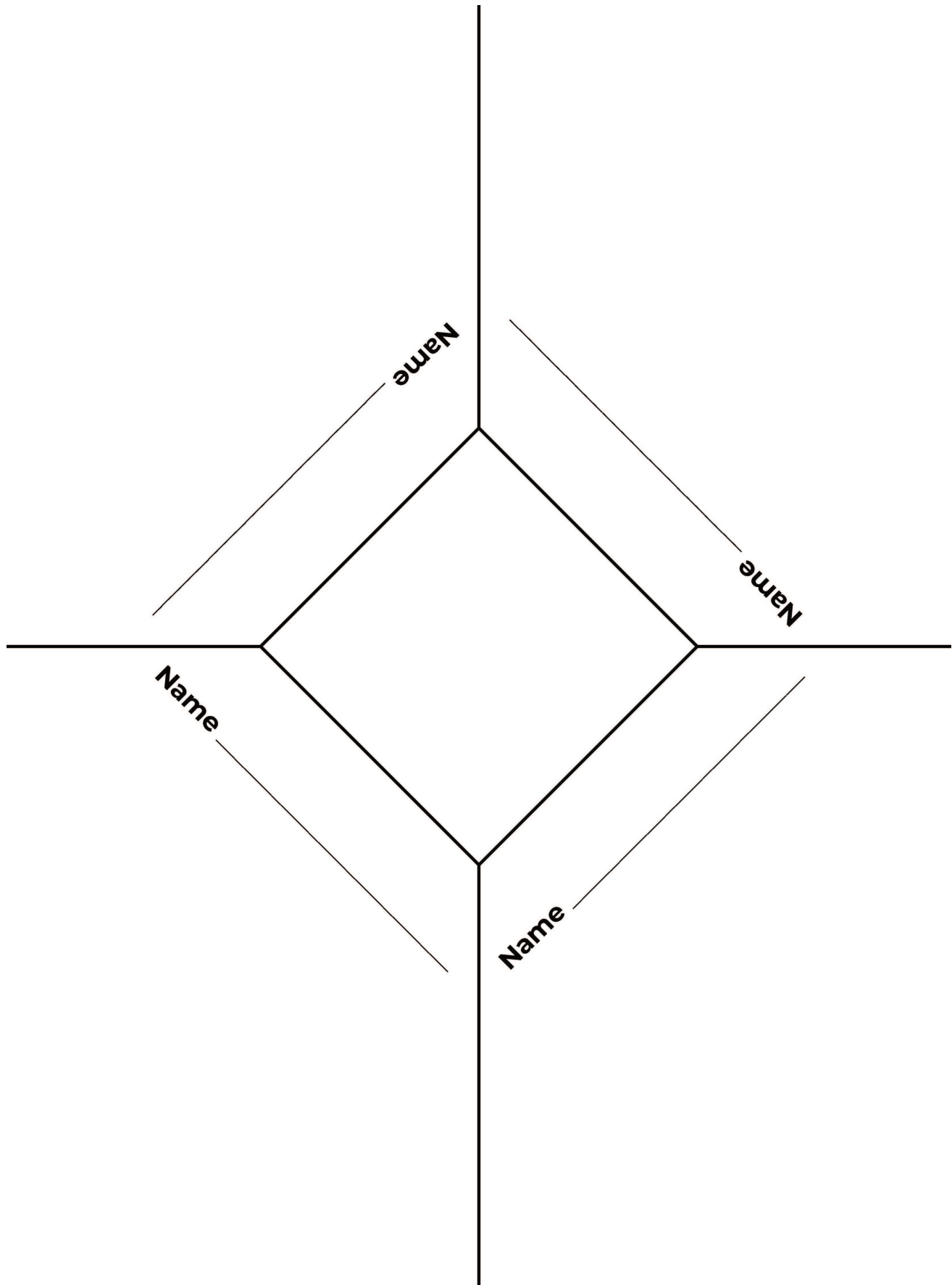
Word Bank			
nor'easter	storm surge	sea level rise	climate change
over-development	seawall	managed retreat	oyster reef restoration

Causes What causes coastal flooding?	
Impacts How does coastal flooding affect people and communities?	
Strategies How are communities working to mitigate coastal flooding?	

Discussion Diamond

Directions: Follow the steps below to answer the cluster's Supporting Question: How do communities respond to regional challenges in the United States?

1. Write your name on the line in the corner facing you.
2. Think silently about the question.
3. Write your answer to the question in your corner of the Discussion Diamond. Use evidence from at least one cluster source.
4. Share your response with the group. Listen to the other group members' responses.
5. Work together to summarize the group's discussion. Choose one group member to write that summary in the center of the Discussion Diamond.



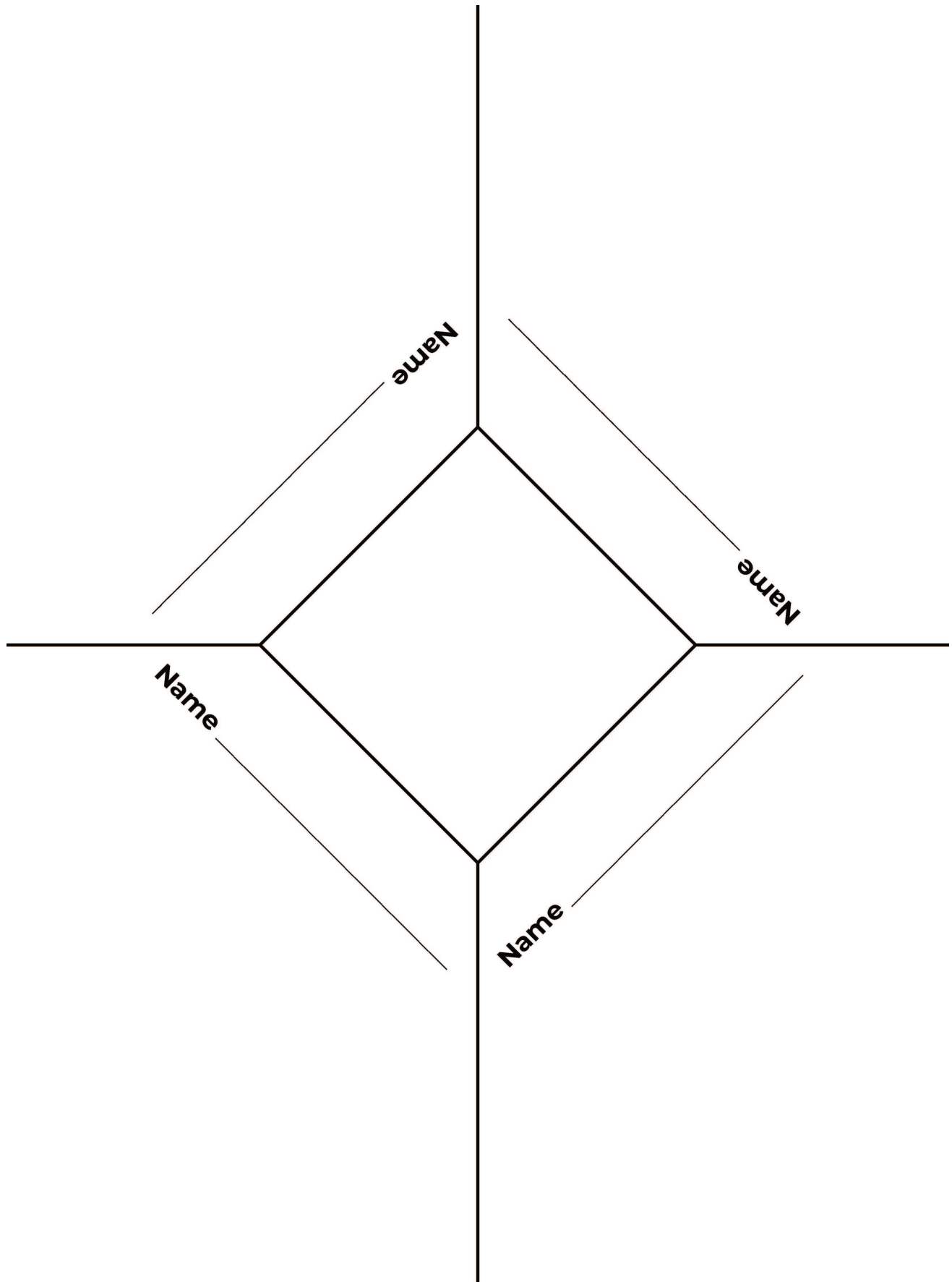
Discussion Diamond (Sentence Frames)

Directions: Follow the steps below to answer the cluster's Supporting Question: How do communities respond to regional challenges in the United States?

1. Write your name on the line in the corner facing you.
2. Think silently about the question.
3. Write your answer to the question in your corner of the Discussion Diamond. Use evidence from at least one cluster source.
4. Share your response with the group. Listen to the other group members' responses.
5. Work together to summarize the group's discussion. Choose one group member to write that summary in the center of the Discussion Diamond.

Use the sentence frames to help you write your response.

- *One way communities respond to ___ is ___.*
- *This strategy helps because ___.*
- *I found evidence of this in ___.*



Name: _____ Date: _____

Cluster 3 Formative Assessment Task

Directions: Imagine you are a community leader who wants to protect your community from a natural disaster. FEMA is a government agency that gives money, called a grant, to communities that need funding for strategies to reduce harm from future disasters. Choose one regional challenge to focus on and use the organizer below to write a grant proposal asking FEMA to fund your strategy.

To the FEMA Grant Review Committee,

Recommendation statement: Name the natural disaster and the strategy you are recommending that FEMA fund.

Why this challenge is serious: Describe the natural disaster, what causes it, and how it affects communities.

Why this strategy works: Explain how the strategy addresses the challenge and why it is most effective.

Who should receive funding: Name who the grant should go to and why.

Sincerely,

(your name)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Cluster 3 Formative Assessment Task (Sentence Frames)

Directions: Imagine you are a community leader who wants to protect your community from a natural disaster. FEMA is a government agency that gives money, called a grant, to communities that need funding for strategies to reduce harm from future disasters. Choose one regional challenge to focus on and use the organizer and sentence frames below to write a grant proposal asking FEMA to fund your strategy.

To the FEMA Grant Review Committee,

Recommendation statement: Name the natural disaster and the strategy you are recommending that FEMA fund.

I recommend FEMA fund ___ to address ___.

Why this challenge is serious: Describe the natural disaster, what causes it, and how it affects communities.

___ is a serious natural disaster that mostly impacts the ___ region.
It is caused by ___ and affects communities by ___.

Why this strategy works: Explain how the strategy addresses the challenge and why it is most effective.

This strategy is effective because ___. Evidence from ___ shows that ___.

Who should receive funding: Name who the grant should go to and why.

I recommend FEMA give this grant to ___ because ___.

Sincerely,

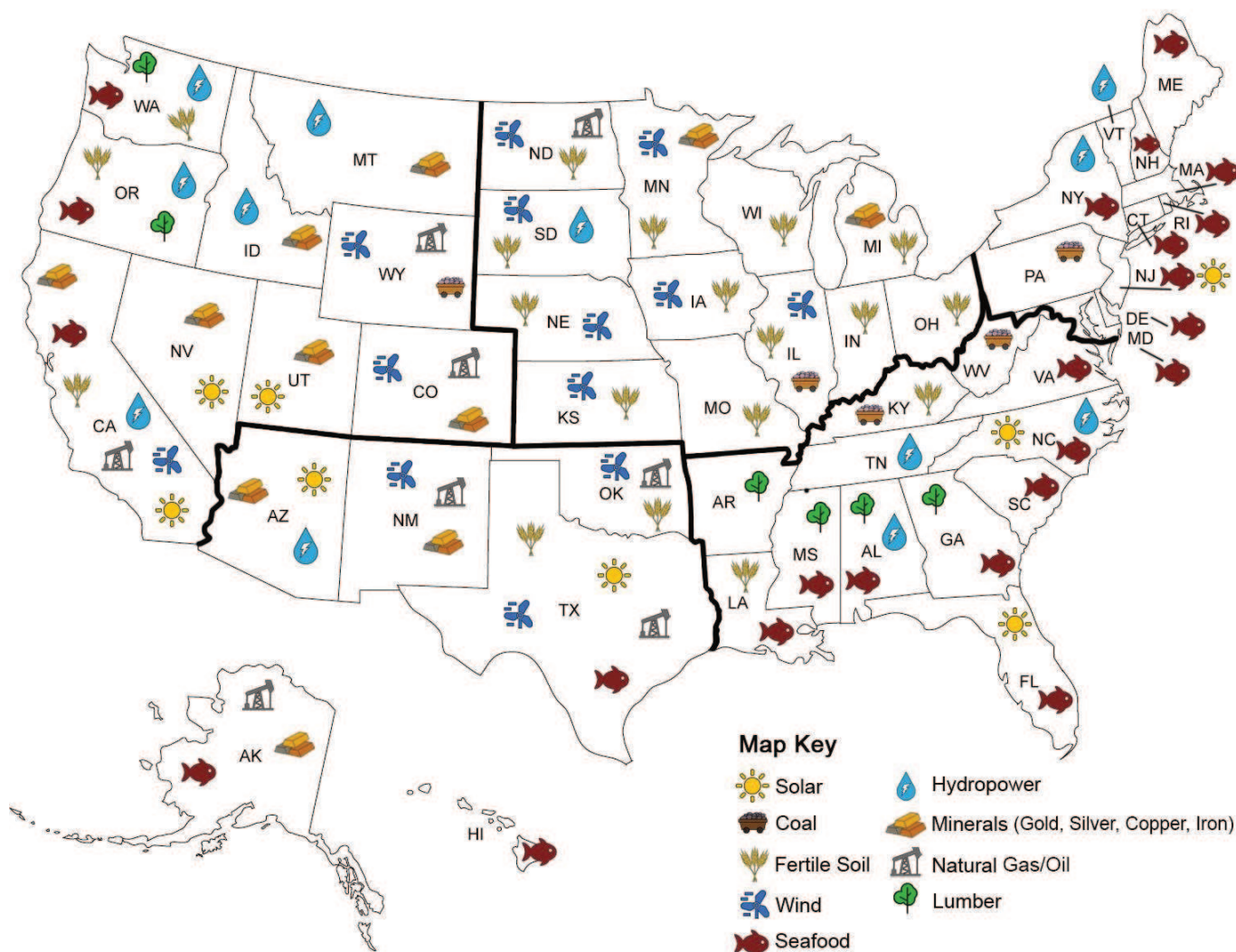
(your name)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Extension: Regions of the United States Content Assessment

Section 1: Geography

Directions: Below is a map of the United States showing natural resources found in the five United States regions you studied in this unit.



Map Identification

1. What natural resource appears in all states in the Midwest?

2. What natural resource appears in almost every state along the coast?

3. What natural resource does Massachusetts have?

Map Analysis

4. Choose one region. How have people there adapted to use a natural resource shown on the map?

Section 2: Vocabulary

Directions: Draw a line between the vocabulary word and the matching definition.

Vocabulary Word	Connection	Definition
adapt		a geographic area with common features
sustainable		to change to fit the environment
culture		a way of using a resource while leaving enough for the future
region		a sudden event in nature that causes a lot of damage, such as a flood, storm, drought, or wildfire
natural disaster		the knowledge, beliefs, and way of life shared by a group of people

Section 3: Social Studies Past and Present

Directions: Read the quote below from a resident of Scituate, Massachusetts, and answer the questions that follow.

"People in Scituate are more open to the reality of climate change and how it's impacting our coasts with these storms. There was always a debate as to okay, how fast is the sea level rising, do we really need to take these drastic steps? But I think this last storm in March definitely demonstrated that yes, the sea level has certainly risen to a level that needs addressing sooner rather than later."
—Resident of Scituate, Massachusetts

1. What regional challenge is this community facing? Use at least one detail from the quote in your answer.

2. What does the speaker think communities need to do in response to this challenge? Do you think this is the right response? Use evidence from the unit to support your answer.

Section 4: Paragraph Response

Directions: Choose one region of the United States that you studied. Write a paragraph explaining how diverse peoples, including Indigenous nations and at least one other group, have shaped the culture of that region. In your paragraph, be sure to explain:

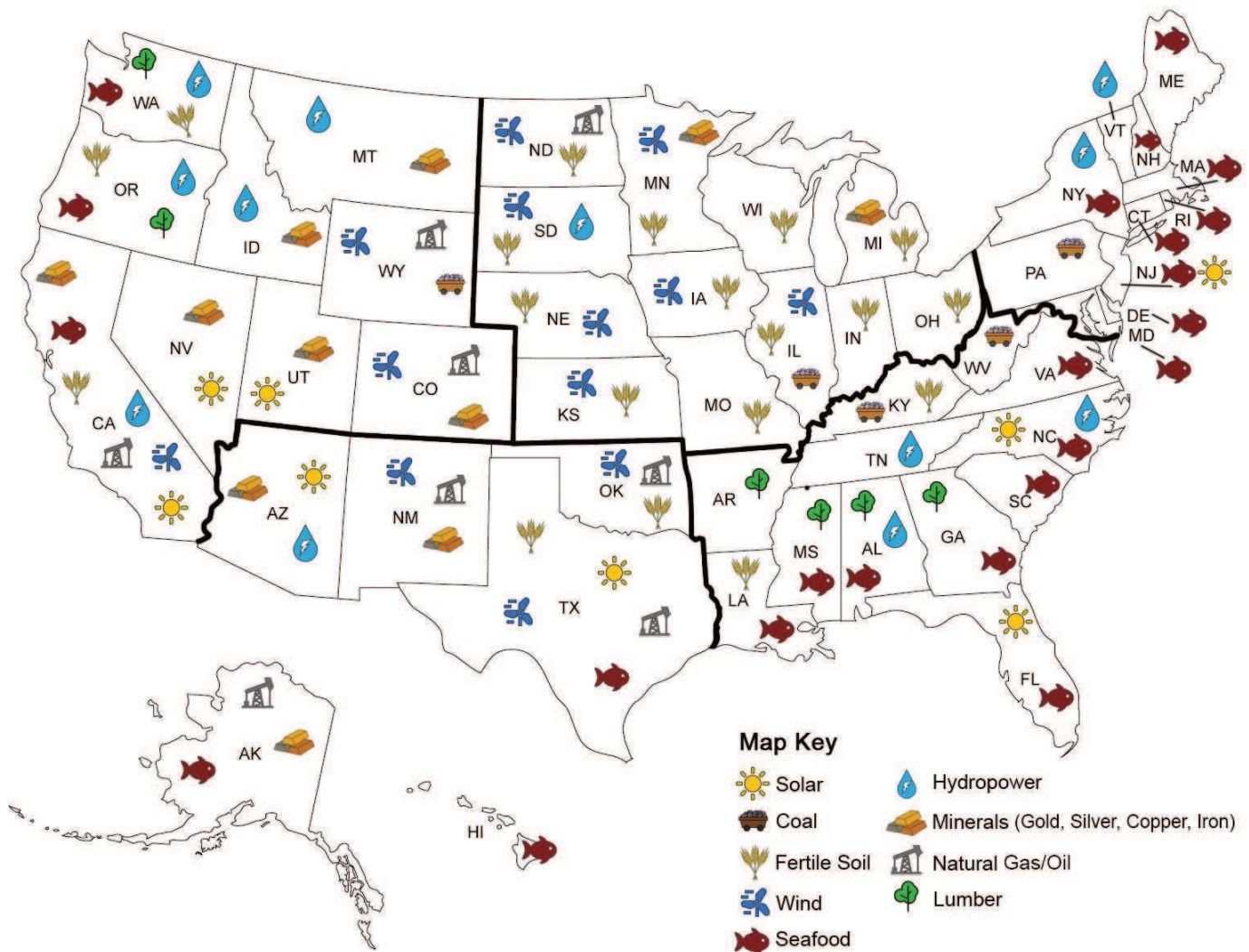
- Which region you chose
- How Indigenous peoples have shaped the culture of that region
- How at least one immigrant group has shaped the culture of that region
- At least one specific example of a cultural contribution (such as food, music, art, or traditions)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Extension: Regions of the United States Content Assessment (Sentence Frames)

Section 1: Geography

Directions: Below is a map of the United States showing natural resources found in the five United States regions you studied in this unit.



Map Identification

1. What natural resource appears in all states in the Midwest?

2. What natural resource appears in almost every state along the coast?

3. What natural resource does Massachusetts have?

Map Analysis

4. Choose one region. How have people there adapted to use a natural resource shown on the map?

The ___ region has ___. People there ___.

Section 2: Vocabulary

Directions: Draw a line between the vocabulary word and the matching definition.

Vocabulary Word	Connection	Definition
adapt		a geographic area with common features
sustainable		to change to fit the environment
culture		a way of using a resource while leaving enough for the future
region		a sudden event in nature that causes a lot of damage, such as a flood, storm, drought, or wildfire
natural disaster		the knowledge, beliefs, and way of life shared by a group of people

Section 3: Social Studies Past and Present

Directions: Read the quote below from a resident of Scituate, Massachusetts, and answer the questions that follow. Use the sentence frames to help you write your responses.

“People in Scituate are more open to the reality of climate change and how it's impacting our coasts with these storms. There was always a debate as to okay, how fast is the sea level rising, do we really need to take these drastic steps? But I think this last storm in March definitely demonstrated that yes, the sea level has certainly risen to a level that needs addressing sooner rather than later.”

—Resident of Scituate, Massachusetts

1. What regional challenge is this community facing? Use at least one detail from the quote in your answer.

The community in Scituate is facing ____ caused by _____. The speaker says _____.

2. What does the speaker think communities need to do in response to this challenge? Do you think this is the right response? Use evidence from the unit to support your answer.

The speaker thinks _____. Evidence from the unit shows that _____.

Section 4: Paragraph Response

Directions: Choose one region of the United States that you studied. Write a paragraph explaining how diverse peoples, including Indigenous nations and at least one other group, have shaped the culture of that region. In your paragraph, be sure to explain:

- Which region you chose
- How Indigenous peoples have shaped the culture of that region
- How at least one immigrant group has shaped the culture of that region
- At least one specific example of a cultural contribution (such as food, music, art, or traditions)

You can use these sentence frames to help you draft your paragraph response:

- *The ____ region has been shaped by ____.*
- *Indigenous nations like ____ shaped the region by ____.*
- *Later, ____ also contributed to the culture by ____.* One specific example is ____.

[illegible]

Flooding Strategy Cards

Image	Description
	Early Warning and Evacuation Systems When a storm is coming, town and city leaders can warn people early so they have time to move to safety before the flood arrives. Weather forecasts, emergency alerts on phones, and local announcements help spread the word. Whether flooding comes from the ocean or from overflowing rivers, having a warning system in place ahead of time helps communities stay safer. Towns can also plan safe routes and emergency shelters ahead of time, so that when a flood does happen, people know exactly what to do and where to go.



Infrastructure Upgrades

Many pipes and storm drains in Massachusetts are over 100 years old and were built for less rain than we get now. When too much rain falls too fast, overwhelmed drains cause streets and basements to flood. Town and city leaders can upgrade pipes and drains before the next big storm, helping rainwater move away faster. Building flood protection into roads and drainage systems now means communities can handle bigger storms in the future.



Seawalls

A seawall is a strong wall built along the shore to hold back ocean water during storms and high tides. Town and state leaders build seawalls from hard materials like concrete or steel to protect coastal homes and streets from waves and storm surge. The town of Scituate, Massachusetts, depends on seawalls to protect its neighborhoods from nor'easters. However, powerful storms and rising seas can damage seawalls or send waves over the top.



Levees

A levee is a long wall of packed earth built along a river or low-lying area to hold back floodwater before it reaches homes and streets. Town and state leaders build levees so that when rivers overflow from heavy rain, there is a barrier between the rising water and the community. When a flood is coming, communities can also build temporary levees out of sandbags, working together to stack them along the water. Like seawalls, permanent levees must be repaired by town leaders over time to keep working.



Marsh Mats

Some coastlines, like parts of Boston Harbor, no longer have the natural marshes that once protected them from ocean waves. A group of scientists and engineers called the Emerald Tutu is testing a new strategy in Boston Harbor: floating mats of marsh grass that soak up the energy of ocean waves before they reach the shore, similar to how a real marsh works. This strategy is especially useful in cities along the coast, where there is no room to restore a full wetland.



Oyster Reef Restoration

Oysters were once a plentiful natural resource along the Massachusetts coast. Huge reefs covered the shoreline. Over time, people took too many oysters, and much of that natural protection disappeared. Oyster reefs can act like a natural seawall. They break up the force of waves before the waves reach the shore. A concrete seawall needs to be rebuilt over time, but an oyster reef keeps growing upward as sea levels rise. Today, the Wampanoag Tribe is restoring oysters to the waters of Cape Cod with the help of government grants. They are using knowledge of the land and water passed down over thousands of years.



Managed Retreat

Rather than trying to hold back ocean water with walls, some coastal communities are choosing managed retreat. By acting before flooding gets worse, communities move buildings and people away from the shore and let the coast be natural again. Communities may create rules about where new buildings can be built, or buy homes from people in flood-prone areas. Managed retreat can be hard, but it works with nature rather than against it.



Community Emergency Preparedness Planning

Getting ready before a flood happens can save lives. Families can make emergency plans, gather supplies like water and food, and practice what to do if they need to leave quickly. Schools and hospitals can back up their power and water supplies, so they keep running during a flood. Communities can also prepare together: Neighbors can form groups ready to check on each other, share supplies, and help however is needed if a flood strikes. Whether flooding comes from the ocean or from heavy rain and overflowing rivers, communities that plan ahead are better prepared to respond.



Rain Gardens and Special Pavement

When rain falls on roofs, roads, and parking lots, it rushes off all at once and can flood streets and basements. Families can build small rain gardens in their yards to collect and soak up rainwater before it runs off. Town and city leaders can install rain gardens and special pavement across a whole community, letting water sink into the ground instead of rushing into drains. Installing these solutions before the next heavy storm helps reduce flooding in towns and cities where there is a lot of hard pavement.



Dam Removal

Massachusetts has about 3,000 dams, and most are no longer needed. Many were built more than a hundred years ago to power factories. Old dams can be dangerous. They can break or overflow, causing communities downstream to flood. Removing an old dam lets the river flow naturally and spread into the low land beside it, which can safely hold extra water. It also helps the natural ecosystem, including the fish who spawn (lay eggs) in the river. In Natick, town leaders voted to remove an old dam on the Charles River. Groups like the Charles River Watershed Association are working with towns across Massachusetts to remove more dams.

Text sources:

- Charles River Watershed Association. n.d. "[Dam Removal](#)."
- Emerald Tutu. n.d. "[About Us](#)."
- Goulston, Robert. 2026. "[Mass. Aims to Improve Stormwater Infrastructure After D+ Recovery](#)." NBC Boston.
- Indian Country Today. 2026. "[Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe Restores Water with Oysters](#)" [video].
- Lewis County Washington. n.d. "[Sandbags—Frequently Asked Questions](#)."
- Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency. n.d. "[Flood Safety Tips](#)."
- National Levee Database. n.d. "[What Is a Levee?](#)"
- National Marine Fisheries Service. 2023. "[Ipswich and Parker River Dam Removals in Massachusetts to Restore Fish and Protect Communities](#)." National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).
- Office of Habitat Conservation. 2026. "[Oyster Reef Habitat](#)." NOAA Fisheries.
- Scituate Seawalls. n.d. "[Save the Seawalls! Save Scituate!](#)"
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. n.d. "[Soak Up the Rain: Rain Gardens](#)."
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. n.d. "[Soak Up the Rain: Permeable Pavement](#)."
- Wasser, Miriam. 2021. "[Boston's Stormwater Problems Are Older Than the City Itself](#)." WBUR.
- Wolman, Jordan. 2026. "[Climate Reckoning: Mass. Communities Stare Down the Prospect—and Complications—of a Retreat from Rising Waters](#)." *CommonWealth Beacon*.

Image sources:

- "Hurricane Erin Scoots Out to Sea" by MODIS Land Rapid Response Team, NASA GSFC via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Storm Sewer Installation Ontario" by Imprezzivie1 via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Seawall and Steps, Sprey Point" by Derek Harper via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 2.0.
- "National Guard Soldiers Place Sandbags and Poly" by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Floating Wetland Prototype Designs" via Emerald Tutu, used with permission.
- "Billion Oyster Project" by Agata Poniatowski via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.
- "Scituate Storm Damage" by Eric Haynes for the Governor of Massachusetts via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Community Preparedness" by Iconathon via the Noun Project / Wikimedia Commons, CC0 1.0.
- "Rain Garden" by Alisha Goldstein, EPA, via Wikimedia Commons, public domain.
- "Wekepeke—During Removal (May 2014)" by Timpurinton via Wikimedia Commons, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Flooding Prevention and Preparedness Planning Guide

Part 1: Video Notes

Directions: Watch the video and use the space below to take notes.

What challenges do you see?	
What strategies do you notice?	
What questions do you have?	

Part 2: Choose Your Strategy

Directions: Use the Flooding Strategy Cards to choose one strategy for your community. Then answer the questions below. Use evidence from at least two sources to support your answers.

The problem: What kind of flooding is your community most likely to face? Why does flooding happen in this place? What problems could it cause?	
The solution: Which strategy do you recommend? Why is it important for responding to this flooding?	
Call to action: Who is your audience? What exactly do you want them to do?	

Name: _____

Date: _____

Flooding Prevention and Preparedness Planning Guide
(Sentence Frames)

Part 1: Video Notes

Directions: Watch the video and use the space below to take notes.

What challenges do you see?	
What strategies do you notice?	
What questions do you have?	

Part 2: Choose Your Strategy

Directions: Use the Flooding Strategy Cards to choose one strategy for your community. Then answer the questions below. Use evidence from at least two sources to support your answers. You can use the sentence frames to help you write your responses.

The problem: What kind of flooding is your community most likely to face? Why does flooding happen in this place? What problems could it cause?	<i>We are most likely to face [coastal / inland] flooding. This happens here because _____. It could cause _____.</i>
The solution: Which strategy do you recommend? Why is it important for responding to this flooding?	<i>We recommend _____ because _____.</i>
Call to action: Who is your audience? What exactly do you want them to do?	<i>Our audience is _____. We want them to _____.</i>

Name: _____ Date: _____

Regions of the United States Rubric

Standard	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching
Practice Standard 7 Describe a specific local, regional, and/or national issue and explain various strategies students and others could use in working alone and together to address it.	Students clearly describe the flooding issue facing their community (coastal, inland, or both) and who is most affected. Students recommend one strategy with a detailed explanation of how each helps prevent or protect from flooding. The call to action is realistic and actionable, names a specific audience, and clearly states what students want them to do.	Students describe the flooding issue and who is affected. Students recommend one strategy and explain how it helps. The call to action names what students think should happen but may be vague or unclear.	Students' description of the flooding issue is vague or incomplete. Students do not recommend a strategy relevant to their community OR do not explain how it helps OR the call to action is missing.
Practice Standards 3 & 6 In response to an inquiry question, integrate information from two sources on the same topic; identify evidence from a source in response to an inquiry question.	Students use accurate evidence from two or more sources, clearly connected to both the flooding problem and the recommended strategy.	Students use accurate evidence from two sources to support the problem and the strategy. Evidence is mostly accurate and connected to the flooding issue.	Students use little or no evidence, OR evidence is inaccurate or does not connect to the problems or strategy.

Standard	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching
Content Standard 4.T4b.3 Explain how natural disasters, such as hurricanes and floods, have affected the region, and how government and citizens have responded to catastrophic natural events.	Students accurately explain how flooding has affected their region, using specific details.	Students accurately explain how flooding has affected their region.	Students' explanation of how flooding affects the region is inaccurate or missing OR the strategy is not accurately connected to how government, communities, or Indigenous nations have responded.
Content Standard 4.T4a.4 Analyze how people have adapted to the environment of the Northeast.	Students accurately describe how the chosen strategy shows a way government, communities, or Indigenous nations have responded and adapted to flooding in the Northeast.	Students describe how the chosen strategy shows a way a government, communities, or Indigenous nations have responded to flooding, but the explanation may be vague.	

Overall Feedback:



QUESTION



We ask questions about what we see, think, and wonder.

	Less complex ⇨	More complex ⇨	Most complex ⇨
Who?	Who was ___?	Who made ___?	Who wrote ___?
What?	What was ___?	What did ___?	What would ___?
Where?	Where was ___?	Where did ___?	Where would ___?
When?	When was ___?	When did ___?	When would ___?
Why?	Why was ___?	Why did ___?	Why would ___?
How?	How was ___?	How did ___?	How would ___?



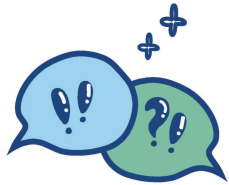
OBSERVE



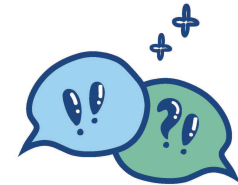
We observe a source by looking for details that help us understand it better.

Less complex ⇒	More complex ⇒	Most complex ⇒
In this source I see ____.	An important detail I see in this source is ____.	I notice ____. This is important because ____.
In this source I notice ____.	Something I notice and want to know more about is ____.	I see / <i>don't</i> see ____, which makes me wonder ____.

Things to look for	Source types and details	Examples
Details to look for: places, people, events, geography, patterns, words, numbers, colors, map keys Features of sources: title, author, headings, images, captions, charts, maps, vocabulary definitions	Source types: article, artifact, document, drawing, graphic, illustration, image, letter, map, newspaper, photograph, primary / secondary source, video, website Source details: author, audience, date, title, location, materials used in an artifact, size of an artifact	- In this source I see <u>a ruler by the coin that shows its size</u>. - I don't see <u>any people</u>, which makes me wonder <u>if the city was abandoned</u>.



CONNECT



We connect to our inquiry questions by thinking about what we learn from sources.

Less complex ⇒	More complex ⇒	Most complex ⇒
I think ____.	These two sources show ____.	The evidence in this source is important because ____.
One connection is ____.	This source shows ____, but the other source shows ____.	Based on evidence that shows ____, I think ____.
This source shows ____.	These sources help answer our question about ____ because ____.	The most useful sources for answering our question are ____ and ____ because ____.
This source answers our question because ____.	This information matters because ____.	We learned ____ from these sources. This is important because ____.

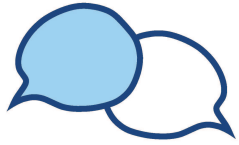


SUMMARIZE

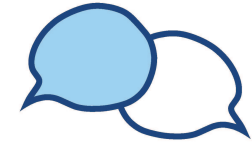


We summarize to understand and share the main idea and supporting details.

Less complex ⇒	More complex ⇒	Most complex ⇒
This is about ____.	The main idea of this source is ____.	<i>"Title"</i> by <i>Author</i> is about ____.
One detail is ____.	The first important detail is ____. A second key detail is ____.	In the <i>first / second</i> part, the main idea is ____. <i>An / Another</i> important detail is ____.
Another detail is ____.	One last important detail is ____.	The author concludes that ____.



TALK MOVES



We use talk moves to listen closely, share what we think, and build on the ideas of others.

Listening moves	Speaking moves
Clarify • Could you say that another way? • Can you explain what you mean by that? • I understand __, but I want to know __.	Add on • I'd like to add to what __ said. I think __. • I agree with you and __. • Another example is __.
Inquire • Can you tell us more about __? • What do you think about __? • What are some other perspectives?	Challenge ideas • I respectfully disagree because __. • Why do you think that? • What is your evidence for __?



CAUSE-EFFECT



Causes and effects help us understand events in history and explain why people, ideas, and places change over time.

Less complex ⇒	More complex ⇒	Most complex ⇒
___, so ___. (cause) → (effect)	Because (of) ___, ___. (cause) → (effect)	___ and ___ led to ___. (cause + cause) → (effect)
___ because ___. (effect) → (cause)	___ was caused by ___. (effect) → (cause)	___ and ___ because (of) ___. (effect + effect) → (cause)
<u>It was raining,</u> so <u>they wore boots.</u> <u>They wore boots</u> because <u>it was raining.</u>	<u>Because of the rain,</u> <u>there were big puddles.</u> <u>Big puddles</u> were caused by <u>the rain.</u>	<u>The rain and puddles</u> led to <u>wet kids.</u> <u>The kids got wet and cold</u> because of <u>the rain.</u>



CLAIM-EVIDENCE



We make claims to share what we think and explain how evidence supports our ideas.

Less complex ⇨	More complex ⇨	Most complex ⇨
I think (claim).	I think (claim) because ____.	I think (claim) because ____ and ____.
One reason is ____.	One piece of evidence is ____.	One fact that shows this is ____.
Another reason is ____.	A second piece of evidence is ____.	Another fact that shows this is ____.
This shows ____.	These examples show ____.	This evidence supports the claim because ____.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Grade 4 Word Map Example

Directions: Explore this word for your personal dictionary. Follow your teacher's instructions about what sections to complete and what tools to use.

geography
word

the study of places and the relationship between people and their environment
definition

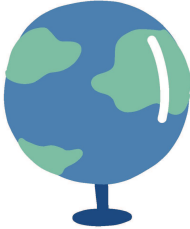
 Illustrate: Draw a picture or diagram to help you remember the meaning of the word. 	 Word Family: Write down different forms of the word. • geography (n) • geographic (adj) • geographically (adv) • geographer (n)
 Part of speech: Is this word a noun, a proper noun, a verb, an adjective, or an adverb? • noun	 Translanguage: Translate the word and write it here. • geografia

Image sources: "Sketch" by Adrien Coquet, "Puzzle pieces" by shashank singh, "Translate" by Uswa KDT, "Complement" by Brandon Shields, "Geography" by Mia Elysia, all via Noun Project, licensed under CC BY 3.0.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Word Map

Directions: Explore this word for your personal dictionary. Follow your teacher's instructions about what sections to complete and what tools to use.

word

definition

 Illustrate: Draw a picture or diagram to help you remember the meaning of the word.	 Word Family: Write down different forms of the word.
 Part of speech: Is this word a noun, a proper noun, a verb, an adjective, or an adverb?	 Translanguage: Translate the word and write it here

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