

Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Physical and Cultural Regions

Geographers seek to divide the earth into regions. A region is an area that has similar characteristics or shares unifying characteristics. These characteristics can be landforms, language, religion, economics, or political unions to name a few. In order to understand culture we must first examine the types of regions that can be found around the world.

Examples of Regions

Physical Regions

Landforms: Some examples of regions based on landforms and topography are the Great Plains in the United States, the Canadian Shield in Canada, or areas of the Andes Mountains in South America.

Vegetation: Some examples of regions based on vegetation are rainforests, savannas, and the Taiga.

Climate: An example of a region based on climate is the Sahara Desert.

Cultural Regions

Religion: Some examples of cultural regions based on religion are Latin America, which is unified by Catholicism and the Middle East and North Africa, which is unified by Islam.

Language: Some examples of cultural regions based on language are the Middle East and North Africa, which is unified by the Arabic language and the Francophone World. The Francophone World is unified by the French language.

Ethnicity: Some examples of cultural regions based on ethnicity are areas of China, where most people are ethnically Chinese, and the Kurds in the Middle East, who do not have a country of their own but live in several adjoining countries.

Economic or Political Regions

Some examples of economic or political regions are the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Directions: The best way to understand regions is to map them and visually examine the relationships between them. Follow the directions below using the blank map and a set of colored pencils. Don't color in a region using a solid color because a country may belong to several different regions at one time. Instead, use colored lines.