Unit 7: Regions of the United States

Content Area: **Social Studies**
Course(s): **Social Studies**
Time Period: **Week 30**
Length: **10 Weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

The United States, while standing together as one country, is composed of a landscape and people which are remarkably diverse and unique. The Northeast, composed of New England and Middle Atlantic states offers both large cities and rolling farmland. It is an area of rich history dating back to the Iroquois Indians and playing a prominent role in th American Revolution and Civil War. Its manufacturing history stands in sharp contrast with the agricultural background of the Southeast, supplying the country with valuable resources such as cotton, tobacco, and rice. The Southwest on the other hand is known for a vastly different landscape of canyons, deserts, and gushers of oil. Heavily influence by Spanish and Native American culture, this region continues to grow. The plains of the Middle West comprise a large part of the territory of the United States, providing rich soil and farming to feed a large percentage of the United States. Finally, the Mountain States of the North and Western United States offers a rugged terrain with a rich Native American heritage.

As students study the variance of the regions across the country, they will also seek out commonalities among the region to gain a bigger understanding of how a country made up of such diversity can come together as one United States.

Standards

SOC.6.1.4.B.1	Compare and contrast information that can be found on different types of maps and determine how the information may be useful.
SOC.6.1.4.B.2	Use physical and political maps to explain how the location and spatial relationship of places in New Jersey, the United States, and other areas, worldwide, have contributed to cultural diffusion and economic interdependence.
SOC.6.1.4.B.4	Describe how landforms, climate and weather, and availability of resources have impacted where and how people live and work in different regions of New Jersey and the United States.
SOC.6.1.4.B.6	Compare and contrast characteristics of regions in the United States based on culture, economics, and physical environment to understand the concept of regionalism.
SOC.6.1.4.B.8	Compare ways people choose to use and distribute natural resources.
SOC.6.1.4.B.CS4	Regions form and change as a result of unique physical/ecological conditions, economies, and cultures.
SOC.6.1.4.B.CS5	Patterns of settlement across Earth's surface differ markedly from region to region, place to place, and time to time.
SOC.6.1.4.C.2	Distinguish between needs and wants and explain how scarcity and choice influence decisions made by individuals, communities, and nations.
SOC.6.1.4.C.9	Compare and contrast how the availability of resources affects people across the world differently.

SOC.6.1.4.C.CS4	Availability of resources affects economic outcomes.
SOC.6.1.4.D.14	Trace how the American identity evolved over time.
SOC.6.1.4.D.15	Explain how various cultural groups have dealt with the conflict between maintaining traditional beliefs and practices and adopting new beliefs and practices.
SOC.6.1.4.D.19	Explain how experiences and events may be interpreted differently by people with different cultural or individual perspectives.

Essential Questions

- How do natural resources play a role in land cultivation?
- Why did people migrate to different regions of the United States?
- How does geography impact the economy, both locally and nationally?
- How did Native American culture impact the developing culture of each region?
- Why are rivers and sources of water essential to cities?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- Each region had a Native American tribe unique to its region, that impacted its food, history, and culture of the region.
- The Middle States's history was largely impacted by westward expansion, the gold rush, and women's equality movements.
- The Middle West includes the following unique landforms: the Great Plains.
- The Middle West is impacted greatly by weather, including frequent tornados and dust storms.
- The Middle West's history was largely impacted by westward expansion as well as the Industrial Revolution.
- The Mountain States include the following unique landforms: Rocky Mountains.
- The Southwest Region features a large influence from Spanish culture.
- The Southwest Region has oil as one of its primary natural resources, impacting its history, economy, and geography.
- The Southwest Region has to incorporate irrigation and ranching for successful farming.
- The Southwest Region includes the following unique landforms: the Grand Canyon, the lower Pacific coastline, and hot, humid, mountain ranges.
- The West has a unique population diversity depending on what area of the region you live in.
- The West include the following unique landforms: deserts, mountains, valleys, rainforests, and tundras.
- The West includes Alaska and Hawaii.

Application of Skills: Students will be able to...

- Analyze the cultural impact of indigenous cultures on the development of the area.
- Analyze the impact of physical features on the cultural development of a region.

- Compare and contrast cultural features of the people of varying regions, focusing on aspects such as economics, language, housing, and traditions.
- Compare and contrast the movement of various immigrant groups to different regions of the country.
- Compare and contrast the physical features of each region.
- Create a timeline of historically significant events in each region.
- Determine the impact of weather and climate on the economy of the region.
- Identify important monuments and historical landmarks in different regions.
- Identify key geographic locations in each region.
- Research and synthesize information.

Assessments

- Pre-assessment measuring students understand of regions of the country. Test students general knowledge of geographic awareness of the United States.
- Formative: Writing prompts to measure students understanding of the region and connection to their lives. For example: Write about your life living in the desert. Imagine you are an immigrant settling in the Southeast, explain how you acclimated to your new life.
- Formative: Foods across the country. In groups, create a restaurant reflective of your region. How would design the restuarant? What foods would you serve? What kind of uniforms would your staff wear?
- Formative: Timelines: Create a timeline of historically significant events in your region. (Extension - create a parallel timeline comparing events in different regions)
- Formative: Region presentations reflecting research on a given region.
- Summative: Compare and contrast life in the regions. This can be done via a project presentation format or traditional assessment.

Suggested Activities

- Geography Graphic Organizer: An organizer that allows students breakdown geographic terms and has them use supporting details to identify them.
- Desert Writing Prompt: Students write responses to the prompt: I would/would not like to live in a desert climate because...
- Native American Picture prompt: Students are given three different pictures. On the back of each picture, they will write a short story about what it means and how it relates to the Hopi. A think, pair, share is employed during this activity
- "Songs from the Loom" story: A Native America Navajo Indian story to which students will cartoon story board. They will create a six panel cartoon based on the story, emphasizing important vocabulary
- Spanish Letter Writing: Students will pretend they are settlers on a Spanish rancho; they will write letters back to Spain telling of their journey
- Cowboy Song Singing: A series of ranch hand songs sung to show significance and purpose of the songs. Song packet with lyrics are provided and students will perform these in class.
- Cowboy Tools and Technology: A reading and accompanying questions about the new technology used by cowboys and ranch hands during the 1800 and 1900's.
- Oregon Trail Game: A computer game about pioneers moving west and frontier land. Students will play the game in hopes to making it to their destination without suffering losses.

- Mass Production Assembly Line: In groups, students will role play how the assembly line works. Students will put together model cars, airplanes, and other products that were created in the Middle West.
- Great Lakes and Great Plains: Video that has students delve into how the Great Lakes and Plains were formed and their purpose
- Frontier Land!: A map handout of the expanding empire of the Frontier and why people decided to move there
- Weather Prompt: Students will be given a different weather scenario to which the will come up with an emergency plan of how to deal with it
- Crazy Horse's Vision: A novel about the Black Hills memorial. Narrative reading questions and expository essays are included with the novel
- Mount Rushmore Skit: Students will prepare a skit, in groups, about what the figures of Mount Rushmore might say if they came to life
- Lewis and Clark Journal: Students will write journal entries as they were a member of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. They will describe the important events they have seen.
- Women of the Mountain States Cards: Trading cards made by pairs of students that chronicle the importance of women in these states. They will create one card and "trade" to learn about the other women.
- Mountain State Word Association: A think, pair, share activity in which students look at pictures and write the first few words that come to mind. They will then share their words and come up with a word . web to share on a SMART board.
- National Park/Monument Brochure: A brochure created in Microsoft Publisher about the different national parks. Students will choose one and describe in detail using persuasive language the main features of the park
- Mining Mountains Poster: A visual poster that details the mining process and how metals are used in everyday life.
- Geographic Dioramas: Students will make shoebox dioramas about the Western states geography. Students will be assigned mountains, deserts, rain forests, forests, or valleys and will have to create a diorama depicting their geographic location, along with terms and vocabulary.
- Data-Graphic- Western Logging: A current news article and questions about logging in the West. Students will answer questions then take an attitude assessment about how they feel about the industry.
- Immigrant Chart: A hand-drawn chart about the accomplishments of the immigrants of the West and their contributions.
- The West Time Line: A student-made time line depicting the important events of the last one hundred years
- Atlantic Coast Projects: Students can choose to make a poster about the process of the glaciation, or illustrations of seafood caught off the coast, or they can write a short story about a hike alongside the Appalachian Mountains.
- City Living Venn Diagram: A chart comparing and contrasting living in different areas of the Northeast, including cities and rural areas
- Iroquois Long house Advertisement: A computer made home for sale advertisement about the advantages of living in a long house.
- Secret Soldier Novel: A reading about the Revolutionary War. Students will read the novel and write a book or create a glogster depicting the main points of the book based on narrative questions
- Industrial Revolution Poster: A poster that has students choose an important Industrial Revolution invention with facts and illustrations.
- Travel Charts: Students research and chart the main ways people travel to work in their areas. They will break down an area and compare and contrast it with the other areas.
- Trail of Tears Journal: A journal entry from the perspective of a Cherokee Indian child from the trail. Detailed map and pictures will also be included

- Sequoyah Alphabet: Using Sequoyah's alphabet, students will create their own message and have other students translate their sayings
- Underground Railroad Reading Assignment: Students will read If you Traveled on the Underground Railroad in class and write a short written report on the book. Students will detail import figures and why the railroad was so essential to helping free slaves.
- Past versus Present Civil Rights Fighters: Picture and statements of famous Civil Rights leaders. Students, in pairs, will match these individuals with what they did to help the Civil Rights Movement.
- Slavery Chart: A chart of student created reasons of why slavery should be abolished.

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

Differentiation for students with diverse needs (including special education, ELL, and gifted):

- **General modifications based on student motivation may include:**

  - Activity choice
  - Personally meaningful activities
  - Hands-on, multimodal activities
  - Involvement in goal setting and assessment activities
  - Response options

- **General modifications based on instructional presentation may include:**

  - Previewing information/materials
  - Questioning techniques
  - Brainstorming and webbing
  - Preteaching or reviewing strategies
  - Visual demonstrations, illustrations, or models

- **General modifications based on instructional monitoring may include:**

  - Timelines for assignments
  - Think-alouds, self-talk
  - Journal entries
  - rubrics and checklists
  - peer reviews and coaching

- **General modifications based on classroom organization may include:**

  - Cooperative learning groups
  - Buddy systems
  - Group roles (timekeeper, recorder, encourager, materials messenger, illustrator)
  - Prompt-cue
  - Gesture-signal
  - Variety of workspace arrangements
  - Organizational tools – labeled bins or cabinets for materials
  - Seating arrangements – minimize distractions, provide positive student models

- **General modifications based on student response may include:**

  - Extended time
  - Practice exercises
  - Use of preferred response mode

Content specific modifications for students with special needs may include:

- Modifications & accommodations as listed in the student's IEP
- When assigning regions to research, consider regions that students are familiar with or have a connection to.
- Provide graphic organizers or targetted questions to guide research.
- Provide leveled research materials.

Content specific modifications for ELL's may include:

- Tap the student's prior knowledge and experience, which may be different from other students in the class
- Collaboration with ELL Teacher
- Content specific vocabulary important for ELL students to understand include: Deserts, mountains, plains, natural resources, economy, irrigation, farming, ranching, Native American

Content specific modifications to extend learning for gifted students may include:

- Research extensions to the regions that are in tune with students interests or extend their understanding of concepts (for example economics).
- Allow for different ways of presenting information.

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

- **Reader's and Writer's workshop:** Students are honing their nonfiction reading and writing skills. Students are taught to look for text features, synthesize main idea and supporting details of a passage (boxes and bullets), and write about their reading. This unit will require students to do independent research, and carefully examine nonfiction texts in order to synthesize and present their information.
- **Science:** Through the Next Generation Science Standards, students are asked to think about engineering and design practices and analyze the purpose and thought behind why things are made. Students could apply these strategies when considering how people have adapted to their surroundings based on the geographic features, natural resources, and weather patterns of the region.
- **Math:** Students' understanding of economics will rely on their application of math concepts learned throughout their school years.

Resources

- Teacher created handouts, worksheets, and activities.
- If you Traveled on the Underground Railroad by Ellen Levine
- I was Dreaming to Come to America by Veronica Lawlor
- The Legend of Freedom Hill - by Linda Jacobs Altman
- Crazy Horse's Vision by Joseph Bruchac
- Leveled nonfiction texts to support the unit and research.
- Chromebooks
- Google Classroom

21st Century Skills

CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP5.1	Career-ready individuals understand the interrelated nature of their actions and regularly make decisions that positively impact and/or mitigate negative impact on other people, organization, and the environment. They are aware of and utilize new technologies, understandings, procedures, materials, and regulations affecting the nature of their work as it relates to the impact on the social condition, the environment and the profitability of the organization.
CRP.K-12.CRP6.1	Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems in new and different ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization. They can consider unconventional ideas and suggestions as solutions to issues, tasks or problems, and they discern which ideas and suggestions will add greatest value. They seek new methods, practices, and ideas from a variety of sources and seek to apply those ideas to their own workplace. They take action on their ideas and understand how to bring innovation to an organization.
CRP.K-12.CRP7.1	Career-ready individuals are discerning in accepting and using new information to make decisions, change practices or inform strategies. They use reliable research process to search for new information. They evaluate the validity of sources when considering the use and adoption of external information or practices in their workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP11.1	Career-ready individuals find and maximize the productive value of existing and new technology to accomplish workplace tasks and solve workplace problems. They are flexible and adaptive in acquiring new technology. They are proficient with ubiquitous technology applications. They understand the inherent risks-personal and organizational-of technology applications, and they take actions to prevent or mitigate these risks.
CRP.K-12.CRP12.1	Career-ready individuals positively contribute to every team, whether formal or informal. They apply an awareness of cultural difference to avoid barriers to productive and positive interaction. They find ways to increase the engagement and contribution of all team members. They plan and facilitate effective team meetings.