The climates and resources of Latin America have a great impact on the people who live there. Those countries with more resources tend to be wealthy, but many citizens never benefit from that wealth. At the same time, the use of resources has seriously affected the environment in certain areas. **What human activities benefit the environment, and what activities harm it?**
Section 1: Mexico

BIG IDEA Patterns of economic activities result in global interdependence. Many Mexicans now depend on factory jobs. Those who cannot find work at home migrate to the United States in search of work.

Section 2: Central America and the Caribbean

BIG IDEA The physical environment affects how people live. Many Caribbean islands have limited resources. Their warm climate and beautiful beaches, however, make tourism an important industry.

Section 3: South America

BIG IDEA People’s actions can change the physical environment. The Amazon basin holds the world’s largest rain forest. People are now using the rain forest’s resources to boost economic growth. Their actions greatly affect the Amazon basin’s fragile environment.

Organizing Information
Make this Foldable to help you organize information about the countries of Latin America today.

Reading and Writing
As you read the chapter, take notes about each Latin American country. Use your notes to write five quiz questions for each section of the chapter.

Social Studies ONLINE
To preview Chapter 9, go to glencoe.com.
Guide to Reading

BIG Idea

Patterns of economic activities result in global interdependence.

Content Vocabulary
- plaza (p. 233)
- vaquero (p. 234)
- maquiladora (p. 235)
- subsistence farm (p. 235)
- plantation (p. 235)
- migrant worker (p. 236)

Academic Vocabulary
- reveal (p. 234)
- assemble (p. 235)

Reading Strategy
Summarizing  Use a chart like the one below to organize key facts about Mexico’s economic regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Key Facts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Picture This  They may not look like soccer balls, but these piles of plastic panels will be stitched together by workers in San Miguelito, Mexico, to create thousands of balls for the popular sport. The soccer balls are then sold to large companies that export them. Read this section to learn about Mexico’s economy today and how it is connected to other regions of the world.

Soccer ball beginnings in San Miguelito, Mexico
Mexico's People, Government, and Culture

**Main Idea** Mexico’s culture reflects its Native American and Spanish past as well as modern influences.

**Geography and You** Do you like tacos or enchiladas? These are tasty Mexican dishes. Read to learn about Mexico’s people and culture.

Mexico is the United States’s nearest southern neighbor. It is the third-largest country in area in Latin America, after Brazil and Argentina. Mexico also ranks second in population.

**Mexico’s People**

Mexico’s people reflect the blending of Spanish and Native American populations over the centuries. About two-thirds of Mexicans are mestizos. A quarter of Mexico’s people are mostly or completely Native American.

In Mexico, rural traditions remain strong, but about 75 percent of Mexicans now live in cities. The largest city by far is Mexico City, the country’s capital. With nearly 22 million people, Mexico City is one of the world’s largest and most crowded urban areas.

Mexican cities show the influence of Spanish culture. Many of them are organized around large **plazas**, or public squares. City plazas serve as centers of public life. The main government buildings and the largest church are located alongside each city’s plaza. Newer sections of the cities have glass office buildings and modern houses. In poorer sections, homes are built of boards, sheet metal, or even cardboard.

**Mexico’s Government**

Mexico, like the United States, is a federal republic, where power is divided between national and state governments. A strong president leads the national government. He or she can serve only one six-year term but has more power than the legislative and judicial branches.

After a revolution in the early 1900s, one political party ruled Mexico for many decades. Then, in the 1990s, economic troubles and the people’s lack of political power led to calls for change. In 2000 Mexican voters elected a president from a different political party for the first time in more than 70 years. In the next presidential election six years later, the vote count was too close to call. An election court finally ruled Felipe Calderón president of Mexico, despite bitter protests from supporters of the opposing candidate.
**Mexican Culture**

Mexican culture reveals both European and Native American influences. Folk arts, such as wood carving, are deeply rooted in Native American traditions. Favorite sports, such as soccer, were brought from Europe. Carved and painted religious statues display the mixing of the two cultures.

Mexican artists and writers have created many national treasures. In the early 1900s, Diego Rivera and his wife, Frida Kahlo, became well-known for their paintings. Carlos Fuentes and Octavio Paz have written works about the values of Mexico’s people.

Mexicans enjoy celebrations called fiestas (fee-EHS-tuhs) that include parades, fireworks, music, and dancing. Food is an important part of Mexican fiestas. Tacos and enchiladas are now as popular in the United States as they are in Mexico.

**Identifying** What are the sources of Mexico’s culture?

---

**Mexico’s Economy and Society**

**Main Idea** While Mexico’s economy is improving, the country still faces significant challenges from poverty, overcrowded cities, and environmental issues.

**Geography and You** Have you seen the brown haze of smog? Read to find out how economic growth in Mexico City has contributed to the increase of smog there.

With many resources and workers, Mexico has a growing economy. Mexico has tried to use its resources to improve the lives of its people. Although these efforts have brought some gains for Mexicans, they have also created some challenges for the future.

**Economic Regions**

Mexico’s physical geography and climate together give the country three distinct economic regions. These regions are the North, Central Mexico, and the South.

Mexico’s North has large stretches of land that are too dry and rocky to farm without irrigation. So farmers have built canals to carry water to their fields. As a result, they are able to grow cotton, grains, fruits, and vegetables for export. Areas in the North have grasslands that support cattle ranches. Mexican cowhands called vaqueros (vah-KEHR-ohs) developed tools and methods for raising cattle during Spanish colonial times. Their skills were later passed on to American cowhands. Vaqueros still carry on this work today.

In addition to farming and ranching, the North profits from rich deposits of copper, zinc, iron, lead, and silver. Manufacturing is located in cities near
or along the Mexico–United States border. These cities include Monterrey, Tijuana (tee·HWAH-nah), and Ciudad Juárez (syoo·THAHTH HWAHR·ehs). In the North, many companies from the United States and elsewhere have built maquiladoras (muh·kee·luh·DOHR·uhs). These are factories in which workers assemble parts made in other countries. The finished products are then exported to the United States and other countries.

Central Mexico holds more than half of Mexico’s people. Although it is situated in the Tropics, this area has a high elevation that keeps it from being hot and humid. Temperatures are mild, and the climate is pleasant year-round. Fertile soil created by volcanic eruptions over the centuries allows for productive farming.

Large industrial cities, such as Mexico City and Guadalajara (gwah·thuh·lah·HAH-rah), prosper in central Mexico. Workers in these cities make cars, clothing, household items, and electronic goods. The coastal area along the Gulf of Mexico is a center of Mexico’s energy industry. This is because of the major oil and gas deposits that lie offshore.

Mexico’s South is the poorest economic region. The mountains towering in the center of this region have poor soil. Subsistence farms, or small plots where farmers grow only enough food to feed their families, are common here. In contrast, coastal lowlands have good soil and abundant rain. Wealthy farmers grow sugarcane or bananas on plantations, large farms that raise a single crop for sale. Both coasts in the South have beautiful beaches and a warm climate. Tourists from all over the world flock to resort cities, such as Acapulco on the Pacific coast and Cancun on the Caribbean coast’s Yucatán (yoo·kah·TAHN) Peninsula.

Economic and Social Changes

For years Mexico’s economy relied on agriculture. Today, Mexico still exports food products, but it relies less on farming and more on manufacturing. Much of the change has come about because of Mexico’s closer ties with its northern neighbors: the United States and Canada. As you recall, Mexico, the United States, and Canada entered into the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994. Under NAFTA, the three countries decided to end barriers to trade among themselves.

Mexico’s growing industries now provide a wide range of goods, such as steel, cars, and consumer goods. Many service industries, such as banking and tourism, also contribute to Mexico’s economy.
Economic advances have raised the standard of living, especially in the North. The speed of growth also has brought concerns about damage to the environment, as well as dangers to workers’ health and safety.

As Mexico’s economy has grown, pollution has increased. For example, the mountains that surround Mexico City trap car fumes and factory smoke. As a result, the city is often covered by unhealthy smog, a thick haze of fog and chemicals.

**Population and Ethnic Challenges**

Like the economy, Mexico’s population has grown rapidly in recent decades. Many people have moved to the cities to find jobs. Because many jobs pay low wages, people have had to live crowded together in slums, or poor sections of the cities.

Many Mexicans who cannot find work become **migrant workers**. These are people who travel to find work when extra help is needed to plant or harvest crops. They legally and sometimes illegally cross Mexico’s long border to work in the United States. Despite low pay, migrant workers can earn more in the United States than in Mexico. To reduce illegal immigration, the United States has tightened controls along the border. This has increased tensions with Mexico. Poorer Mexicans depend on money sent from relatives in the United States.

Many of Mexico’s Native Americans are poor and live in rural areas. In the 1990s, Native Americans in southern Mexico rose up against the Mexican government. They demanded changes that would improve their lives. By the early 2000s, the struggle between Native Americans and the government had not been resolved.

**Determining Cause and Effect**

Why have many Mexicans migrated to the United States?

---

**Vocabulary**

1. Explain the significance of:
   a. plaza  
   b. vaquero  
   c. maquiladora  
   d. subsistence farm  
   e. plantation  
   f. migrant worker

**Main Ideas**

2. **Describing** Describe Mexico’s form of government and recent events concerning the government.

3. **Identifying** Use a diagram like the one below to explain the challenges facing Mexico.

---

**Critical Thinking**

4. **Determining Cause and Effect** Why is irrigation needed to farm parts of the northern region?

5. **Challenge** What problems might people in northern Mexico face if maquiladoras are closed, even if they do not work in the maquiladoras?

6. **Challenge** What problems might people in northern Mexico face if maquiladoras are closed, even if they do not work in the maquiladoras?

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**Writing About Geography**

7. **Persuasive Writing** Choose one of the challenges facing Mexico. Write a newspaper editorial in which you suggest steps Mexico’s government could take to improve the situation.

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Section Review

Social Studies ONLINE Study Central™ To review this section, go to glencoe.com.
Central America and the Caribbean

What is it like to glide along a cable 230 feet (70 m) above a lagoon? Tourists can use this method to enjoy the spectacular views of Tiscapa Lagoon and the surrounding forest in Nicaragua. Opportunities like this show why ecotourism is fast replacing coffee, meat, and seafood as Nicaragua’s primary source of income. Read this section to learn more about Central America and the Caribbean today.

“Flying” over Tiscapa Lagoon in Nicaragua
Countries of Central America

Main Idea  Farming is the main way of life in Central America, where many people are poor.

Geography and You  Do you enjoy eating bananas at breakfast? They might have come from Central America. Read to find out about other ways in which Central Americans use their land and resources.

Central America is made up of seven countries: Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama. Most people in Central America depend on farming. For many decades, they have produced crops, such as bananas, sugarcane, and coffee, for export. In some Central American countries, conflict between ethnic or political groups has held back their economies.

Guatemala

Guatemala is a country of rugged mountains, thick forests, and blue lakes. About half of its people are descended from the ancient Maya. Many Guatemalans are also of mixed Maya and Spanish origin. Maya languages and Spanish are spoken.

Guatemala has fertile volcanic soil. Most of the land is owned by a small group of people who hold most of the wealth and power. During the late 1990s, rebel groups fought the government for control of the land.

GLOBAL CITIZENS

NAME: MARIE CLAIRE PAIZ  HOME COUNTRY: Guatemala

ACHIEVEMENT: Biologist Marie Claire Paiz directs a major preservation project for The Nature Conservancy in the Maya Forest, one of the world’s largest rain forests. Here, for more than 1,000 years, ancient Maya flourished on both sides of the Usumacinta River, which divides Guatemala and Mexico. Maya ruins and writings that date back to 2300 B.C. attract tourists and scientists. Today, however, the forest is being destroyed by farmers clearing the land. And the possible construction of a hydroelectric dam threatens to flood the area. Paiz works to educate Latin Americans about the importance of the site’s cultural heritage and what they can do to protect it.

QUOTE: “I hope that through conservation work, the wonders shared by Guatemala and Mexico can endure.”

CITIZENS IN ACTION

Paiz at work in Mexico’s Calakmul Biosphere Reserve near the border of Guatemala.
Countries of the Caribbean

Main Idea Although most Caribbean island countries are poor, several are turning to tourism to help their economies grow.

Geography and You Do many tourists visit the community where you live? Read to find out how several countries in the Caribbean are turning to tourism to boost their economies.

Many of the island countries of the Caribbean face political and economic challenges. For example, the people of Cuba and Haiti endure great poverty. Puerto Rico, which has connections to the United States, is more stable economically.

Costa Rica

Costa Rica has long stood out from its war-torn neighbors. A stable democracy is in place, and no wars have been fought within or outside the country since the 1800s. As a result, Costa Rica has no army—only a police force to keep law and order.

Costa Rica also has fewer poor people than other Central American countries. One reason is that Costa Rica has a higher literacy rate. Literacy rate is the percentage of people who can read and write. Workers with reading skills can be more productive and earn higher incomes.

Panama

Panama lies on the narrowest part of Central America. It is best known for the Panama Canal. The canal shortens distance and travel time between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. In 1999 the United States gave Panama control of the canal. Today, Panama profits from fees, or set charges, that ships pay to use the canal. Because of the commerce brought by the canal, Panama is an important banking center.

Determining Cause and Effect How does literacy rate affect income?
Cuba

Cuba lies about 90 miles (145 km) south of Florida. It has a command economy, in which the communist government decides how resources are used and what goods and services are produced. Many Cubans have not prospered under this system.

For years Cuba relied on selling its chief crop, sugar. To end that dependence, Cuba’s government is developing tourism and other industries. These efforts, however, have not yet succeeded. Meanwhile, Cuba’s longtime dictator, Fidel Castro, tightly controls society. People who criticize the government are often arrested and jailed. The United States condemns Cuba’s government for these actions. Because Fidel Castro is aging, Cuba’s future is uncertain.

Haiti

Located on the western half of the island of Hispaniola, Haiti has had a troubled history. Conflicts among political groups have made for an unstable government. In addition, most of Haiti’s people are poor. A major source of income is remittances, or money sent back home by Haitians who work in other countries.

Puerto Rico

Since 1952, Puerto Rico has been a commonwealth, or a self-governing territory, of the United States. Puerto Ricans are American citizens. They can come and go as they wish between Puerto Rico and the United States mainland.

Puerto Rico has a high standard of living compared to most other Caribbean islands. It has industries that produce medicines, machinery, and clothes. Farmers there grow sugarcane and coffee. Puerto Rico makes more money from tourism than any other Caribbean island.

Drawing Conclusions

Is Cuba’s command economy effective?
or decades many natural environments and wildlife species have been damaged by human activity. Farmers and loggers in Brazil and Ecuador have cut down or set fire to countless trees in order to acquire the land for farming and other economic activities. Miners in Bolivia have also cleared land in search of minerals. As a result, thousands of miles of forests have disappeared and wildlife populations have suffered.

Human activities have also hurt other environments. In Chile, fish farms that raise salmon in large tanks have harmed marine ecosystems.

In recent years, however, people have been working to protect but still profit from natural resources. Governments and citizens are working to limit the damage to forests and wildlife. Industries are developing alternative energy sources that are less harmful to natural environments. But is it too late?
South America has some of the world’s largest and most beautiful forests. From the Amazon rain forest to the woodlands of the Andes mountain ranges, the region’s green lush forests are home to many species of wildlife.

In recent decades, however, this fragile environment has changed. Since the 1960s, loggers, miners, and farmers have been clearing the trees from this region’s forests. Some people cut down trees to produce wood and paper. Others burn the trees to clear land for mining, farming, and industry. The process of clearing an area of forest is called deforestation.

Deforestation is a major challenge for South America and the world. Developing countries in this region need the land for industries that will help their economies grow. But deforestation destroys ecosystems and wildlife habitats. Deforestation also contributes to global warming. The burning of wooded areas sends large amounts of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and speeds up the rate of global warming.

There is much work to be done to protect these lush forests. After years of neglect, the region’s governments and citizens are beginning to realize how much is at stake. In recent years, people have been working to reverse decades of damage.

Amazon Alert!

The Amazon rain forest covers about 2.7 million square miles (7 million sq. km) of land in South America—mostly in Brazil. Parrots, jaguars, and piranhas are just some of the thousands of animals that make their home in the Amazon and the many rivers that run through it.

For decades, this tropical environment has been shrinking. In addition to farmers, cattle ranchers, and others clearing the land, the rain forest has also been cut down to make way for roads and highways that crisscross through the center of it. By 2004, nearly 204,000 square miles (528,358 sq. km) of the rain forest had been destroyed.
Stopping the Damage

Brazil’s government has been working to preserve the Amazon rain forest. In order to slow the rate of deforestation, Brazil is studying ways to make land that has been cleared more productive. If deforested land can grow more crops or feed more cattle, it will lessen the need for more deforestation.

Legal limits on the amount of land that can be cleared have also been created. However, these laws have not always been enforced. In recent years, though, Brazilian officials are doing a better job at imposing and enforcing laws that protect the Amazon rain forest. Now companies and individuals who ignore the limits are punished with large fines.

Saving Wildlife Populations

Citizens throughout South America are also taking action to protect wildlife. In Chile, fish are often raised on fish farms in giant tanks, called cages. Breeding fish in captivity raises production. Chile is one of the world’s biggest exporters of cage-bred salmon. In 2004 the country exported 782 million pounds of fish (355 million kg).

But success has created its share of problems. Fish raised in crowded cages pollute the ocean floor and are prone to illness. Critics of the farms say that the fish are given large amounts of antibiotics and other chemicals to keep them from getting sick. When people eat the fish, the drugs may be passed on to them, which can be unhealthy.

Juan Carlos Cárdenas is the director of Centro Ecóceanos, an organization that works to protect marine life. For years, the center has been working to improve the production methods of Chile’s fishing industry. The center teaches local fisheries how to catch more fish using traditional methods. It also conducts research and educates the public about how fish farms affect ecosystems.

Cárdenas says there is still much work to do. He is encouraged that consumers are learning about the health risks associated with eating cage-bred fish. Cárdenas hopes that if people buy fewer farmed fish, the lower sales will force the fish industry to make changes in how it operates.
Brazil’s “Flex car” has a sweet tooth. *Flex* is short for “flexible,” which describes the kinds of fuel the car uses. The Flex car looks and works like a regular vehicle, but it can run on gasoline or ethanol. Many Brazilians are filling up their gas tanks with ethanol—a fuel that is produced from sugarcane. The alternative fuel is pressed from sugarcane and then blended with gasoline. This “gasohol” mixture could eventually take the place of fossil fuels to keep cars running.

Ethanol-powered cars are not new in Brazil. The country developed them—and the fuel they operate on—in the 1980s, when the cost of buying oil from foreign nations began to soar. Over time, ethanol-powered cars zoomed onto the fast track. By 1988, more than 88 percent of cars sold each year in Brazil were running on a combination of ethanol and gasoline. Throughout Brazil there are now about 29,000 ethanol stations.

Today, Brazil is the world’s largest producer of ethanol, and Flex cars are seen everywhere. In 2006 sales of Flex vehicles were higher than sales of cars that ran only on gasoline. Flex car technology is also spreading to other Brazilian industries. Small planes, such as crop dusters, are using ethanol because it is more widely available than conventional aviation fuel.

**Added Mileage**

Flex cars are also good for the environment and the economy. The ethanol they run on is cleaner than gasoline, so Flex cars create less air pollution. And ethanol is less expensive. Its price is almost half that of gasoline.

As gasoline prices continue to skyrocket, the nations of the world are expected to follow Brazil’s example. In 2006 President George W. Bush called for the United States to develop more ethanol. “There is an enormous demand from abroad to know more,” said the president of Brazil’s carmakers’ association. “This is an opportunity for Brazil.” Perhaps it will be an opportunity for the rest of the world to have a sweet ride, too.

**Exploring the Issue**

1. **Explaining** Why did Brazil develop ethanol as an alternative fuel?

2. **Identifying Cause and Effect**
How might Brazil’s success with ethanol inspire other nations to develop and use alternative fuels?
Major Producers of Ethanol

Ethanol can be made from sugarcane and corn. As oil prices soar, the nations of the world are expected to produce more ethanol. Here is a look at major producers in 2006.

- **Brazil**: 38%
- **United States**: 24%
- **Europe**: 13%
- **India**: 10%
- **China**: 6%
- **Others**: 9%

**Source:** University of York Science and Education Group, United Kingdom.

**Building Graph Reading Skills**

1. **Analyzing Data** What percentage of the world’s ethanol is produced by the United States and the European Union?

2. **Identifying Cause and Effect** Brazil is the world’s largest producer of ethanol. As the world searches for less expensive energy sources, how might Brazil’s top ranking help its economy grow?

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**UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUE**

1. **Making Connections** How does deforestation affect wildlife?

2. **Writing to Inform** In a short article, explain some of the ways governments are working to preserve the natural environments in their countries.

3. **Writing to Persuade** In a letter to an editor of a newspaper, discuss your beliefs about driving vehicles that use alternative fuels.

**INTERNET RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**

4. Go to www.savethehighseas.org, the Web site of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition. Click the “About Us” link and scroll down to the “Coalition Steering Group Members.” Read about some of the organizations and how they work to protect marine ecosystems. Write a short essay describing one of these activities.

5. With your teacher’s help, do an online search on alternative fuel sources, such as ethanol or solar power. Read about how the nations of the world are developing these energy sources. Write a brief article that explains your findings.

**BEYOND THE CLASSROOM**

6. **Work in groups** to create and display an ecological mural on paper that illustrates how people can protect natural environments in your community.

7. **At your school or local library**, research what other countries are doing to decrease their dependency on foreign oil imports. Do you think their strategies will succeed? Why or why not?
People’s actions can change the physical environment.

Content Vocabulary
- selva (p. 247)
- favela (p. 247)
- gaucho (p. 249)
- national debt (p. 250)
- default (p. 250)
- sodium nitrate (p. 252)

Academic Vocabulary
- maintain (p. 248)
- issue (p. 248)

Reading Strategy
Identifying Central Issues Use a diagram like the one below to describe Brazil’s economy. Write the main idea on the line to the left and supporting details on the lines to the right. You can add as many additional lines as you have details.

Picture This This giant dish is like an “eye” studying the universe. The Swedish ESO (European Southern Observatory) Submillimeter Telescope, or SEST, is not like some telescopes that use light from stars or planets to “see” them. SEST is able to study distant objects by gathering radio waves that radiate from them. The telescope is located in the southern Atacama Desert in Chile, where the clear sky conditions are ideal for this type of research. To learn more about South America today, read Section 3.

Learning about the universe in Chile
Brazil

Main Idea  Brazil is a leading economic power, but concerns have grown about its use of the Amazon rain forest.

Geography and You  Did you know that some of the best farmland in the United States was once forestland? The forests were cleared by farmers. Read to find out how Brazil’s forests are being cut down for mining, logging, and farming.

Brazil is the fifth-largest country in the world and the largest in South America. The country is known for its Amazon rain forest, which Brazilians call the selva. This resource is threatened by Brazil’s economic growth.

Brazil’s People

With 187 million people, Brazil has the largest population of all Latin American countries. Brazil’s culture is largely Portuguese because they were the first and largest European group to settle Brazil. Today Brazilians are of European, African, Native American, Asian, or mixed ancestry. Almost all of them speak a Brazilian form of Portuguese, which includes many words from Native American and African languages.

Most of Brazil’s people live in cities along the Atlantic coast. São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro are among the largest cities in the world. In recent years, millions of Brazilians have moved from rural areas to coastal cities to find better jobs. Many of these migrants have settled in favelas. Favelas are overcrowded slum areas that surround many Brazilian cities. To reduce city crowding, the government now encourages people to move back to less-populated, inland areas. In 1960 Brazil moved its capital from Rio de Janeiro to the newly built city of Brasília 600 miles (966 km) inland.

Brazil’s Economy

Brazil is one of the world’s leading producers of food crops. It grows more coffee, oranges, and cassava than any other country. Brazil’s agricultural output has grown greatly in recent years. This is partly because Brazilian farmers have cleared more land in rain forest areas to grow crops. They also now use machinery to perform many tasks. Finally, farmers have planted crops that have been scientifically changed to produce more and to prevent disease.

In addition to productive farms, Brazil has valuable mineral resources, such as iron ore, bauxite, tin, manganese, gold, silver, and diamonds. Offshore deposits of oil, as well as hydroelectric power from rivers, supply the country with energy. Brazil also uses sugarcane to produce a substitute for gasoline.

With more than 2 million people, Brasilia is a modern and rapidly growing city.
Brazilians have successful industries. Most manufacturing takes place in São Paulo and other southeastern cities. Factory workers make heavy industrial goods, such as machinery, airplanes, and cars. They also make food products, medicines, paper, and clothing.

The Rain Forest

Brazil’s greatest natural resource is the Amazon rain forest. It is the world’s largest rain forest, yet it also has the highest rate of deforestation. Each year, the land deforested in the Amazon rain forest is equal in size to Ohio. Figure 1 shows how much of the rain forest has been lost.

Why is the rain forest shrinking? To increase jobs and make products for export, Brazil’s government has encouraged mining, logging, and farming in the rain forest. These activities lead to soil erosion and harm the rain forest’s ecosystem and biodiversity.

As deforestation takes place, roads are built, bringing companies, farmers, and change. Native Americans who live in the rain forest find it difficult to follow their traditional cultures as this occurs.

In addition, tropical forests give off huge amounts of oxygen and play a role in maintaining, or keeping up, the Earth’s climate patterns. They also provide shelter to many wildlife species that may not survive if deforestation continues. Thus, although the rain forest belongs to Brazil, the effects of deforestation are felt worldwide. Because deforestation is a global issue, or problem, other nations have convinced Brazil to protect at least part of the rain forest from economic development.
Brazil’s Government

Brazil declared independence from Portugal in 1822. During most of the 1800s, emperors ruled the country. Today Brazil is a democratic federal republic, in which people elect a president and other leaders. Brazil has many political parties, not just two main ones, as does the United States.

The national government of Brazil is much stronger than its 26 state governments. Like the United States, Brazil’s national government has three branches. The president heads the executive branch, which carries out the laws. The National Congress, which is similar to the U.S. Congress, makes the laws. A Supreme Federal Tribunal, or court, heads a judicial system that interprets the laws.

Analyzing Information  Why has Brazil’s agricultural output greatly increased?

Argentina

Main Idea  Argentina has experienced harsh military rule but now has a democratic government.

Geography and You  How would you feel if the government seized a member of your family and you never saw him or her again? Read to find out how Argentina went through a period of violent rule in recent decades.

Argentina is South America’s second-largest country after Brazil. It is about the size of the United States east of the Mississippi River. The Andes tower over western Argentina. South and east of the Andes lies a dry, windswept plateau called Patagonia. The center of Argentina has vast treeless plains known as the Pampas. More than two-thirds of Argentina’s people live in this central area.

Argentina’s People

About 85 percent of Argentina’s people are of European ancestry, especially Spanish and Italian. European cultural traditions are stronger in Argentina than in most other Latin American countries.

The majority of people in Argentina are city dwellers. In fact, more than one-third of the country’s population lives in the capital, Buenos Aires. This bustling city is a seat of government, a busy port, and a center of culture. Buenos Aires resembles a European city with its parks, beautiful buildings, wide streets, and cafés. It has been nicknamed “the Paris of the South.”

Argentina’s Economy

Argentina’s economy depends heavily on farming and ranching. Huge ranches cover the pampas. There, gauchos (GOW-chohs), or cowhands, raise livestock. Gauchos are Argentina’s national symbol.
They are admired for their independence and horse-riding skills. The livestock that the gauchos herd and tend are a vital part of the economy. Beef and beef products are Argentina’s chief exports.

Argentina is one of the most industrialized countries in South America. Most factories are in or near Buenos Aires. They produce food products, cars, chemicals, and textiles. Zinc, iron ore, and copper are mined in the Andes. Oil fields also lie in the Andes as well as in Patagonia.

Despite these resources, Argentina’s economy has struggled. To help its economy grow, Argentina borrowed money from foreign banks during the late 1900s. However, this led to a high national debt, or money owed by the government. A few years ago, Argentina had to default on its debts to the foreign banks. To default is to miss a debt payment to the company or person who lent the money. People in other countries stopped investing money in Argentina’s businesses. This caused a severe economic slowdown in Argentina. Recently the economy has recovered, and the government has paid off part of the debt.

**Argentina’s Government**

After independence in the early 1800s, Argentina was torn apart by civil war. By the mid-1850s, a strong national government had emerged, and Argentina prospered. During the early 1900s, though, the economy suffered, and the military took over. One of the military leaders, Juan Perón, became a dictator in the late 1940s. Perón tried to improve the economy and to help the workers. At the same time, he restricted freedom of speech and the press. These actions made people unhappy. In 1955 a revolt drove Perón from power and restored democracy.

Military officers again took control of Argentina in the 1970s. They ruled harshly and secretly seized and killed thousands of people they believed opposed their policies. The families of these people did not know what had happened to them. It was a time of fear.

In 1982 Argentina suffered defeat in a war with the United Kingdom over control of the Falkland Islands. The Falklands, known to Argentinians as the Malvinas, lie in the Atlantic Ocean. After this loss, military leaders gave up power, and elected leaders gained control of the government.

Today, Argentina is a democratic federal republic. It consists of a national government and 23 provincial, or state, governments. The nation is led by a powerful president who is elected every four years. A legislature with two houses makes the laws. A Supreme Court heads a system of judges.

**Beef Cattle in Argentina**

Beef plays an important role in Argentina’s foreign trade. Earnings from exports of animal products were about 1.9 billion dollars a year in the early 2000s. **Location** Where are most of Argentina’s livestock raised?

They are admired for their independence and horse-riding skills. The livestock that the gauchos herd and tend are a vital part of the economy. Beef and beef products are Argentina’s chief exports.

Explaining Why are food products among the leading manufactured items in Argentina?
Other Countries of South America

Main Idea  Economic growth for other countries of South America has been hindered by political and social troubles.

Geography and You  Can you recall hard times and good times in your life? Read on to learn which nations in South America are experiencing hard times and which are experiencing good times.

Many countries in South America face the same challenges as Brazil and Argentina. Some, such as Venezuela, Colombia, and Chile, have relatively strong economies. Others, however, face more difficult economic hardships.

Venezuela

Venezuela lies along the Caribbean Sea in northern South America. It is one of the world’s leading producers of oil and natural gas. Although it relies mainly on oil production, Venezuela also benefits from mining bauxite, gold, diamonds, and emeralds. The country’s factories make steel, chemicals, and food products. Farmers grow sugarcane and bananas or raise cattle. Most Venezuelans are poor, and some live in slums that sprawl over the hills around the capital, Caracas.

In 1998 Venezuelans elected a former military leader, Hugo Chávez, as president. Chávez promised to use oil money to better the lives of Venezuela’s poor. His strong rule, however, split the country into opposing groups. Chávez also tried to spread his influence overseas. He became friendly with Cuba’s leader, Fidel Castro, and frequently criticized the United States.

Colombia

Venezuela’s neighbor, Colombia, has coasts on both the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean. The Andes rise in the western part of Colombia. Nearly 80 percent of Colombia’s people live in the valleys and highland plateaus of the Andes. Bogotá (boh-goh-TAH), the capital and largest city, lies on one of these plateaus.

Colombia has many natural resources, such as coal, oil, and copper. It is the world’s leading supplier of emeralds. Colombian coffee, a major export, is famous for its rich flavor. Colombia also exports bananas, sugarcane, rice, and cotton.

Despite these economic strengths, Colombia has much political unrest. Wealth remains in the hands of a few, and many people are poor. Since the 1970s, rebel forces have fought the government and now control parts of the country.

Medical Technology

A six-year-old boy hears for the first time as a result of new medical equipment provided by Chile’s government. Regions  In addition to Chile, what other South American countries have relatively strong economies?
Drug dealers are a major problem in Colombia. The dealers pay farmers to grow coca leaves, which are used to make the illegal drug cocaine. Much of the cocaine is smuggled into the United States and Europe. Drug dealers have used their profits to build private armies. The United States has lent Colombia support in an effort to break the power of the drug dealers.

**Chile**

Chile lies along the southern Pacific coast of South America. It has an unusual ribbonlike shape that is 2,652 miles long (4,268 km) and an average of 110 miles (177 km) wide. Chile’s landscapes range from extremely dry desert in the north to ice formations in the south.

In recent years, Chile has had strong economic growth. Mining forms the backbone of Chile’s economy. Chile is a major world producer of copper. It also mines and exports gold, silver, iron ore, and sodium nitrate, a mineral used in fertilizer and explosives.

Agriculture is also a major economic activity. Farmers produce wheat, corn, beans, sugarcane, and potatoes. The grapes and apples you eat in winter may come from Chile’s summer harvest. Many people also raise cattle, sheep, and other livestock. Northern Chile’s fishing industry is the largest in South America.

Like Argentina, Chile has emerged from a long period of military rule. During that time, the government treated its opponents harshly. Today, Chile is a democracy. In 2006 Michelle Bachelet was elected the country’s first woman president.

**Vocabulary**

1. Explain the significance of:
   - a. selva
   - b. favela
   - c. gaucho
   - d. national debt
   - e. default
   - f. sodium nitrate

**Main Ideas**

2. Explaining In what ways has Brazil improved its economy?
3. Sequencing Use a diagram like the one below to show changes in Argentina’s government following independence.

   ![Diagram](image)

4. Describing Describe the problem of illegal drugs in Colombia.

**Critical Thinking**

5. **BIG IDEA** How are Brazilians changing the rain forest, and why does that matter to people in other areas of the world?
6. Challenge Do you think Venezuela is likely to suffer from focusing on one major product? Why or why not?

**Writing About Geography**

7. **Using Your** Use your Foldable to write a paragraph comparing the roles that two governments of South America play in economic affairs. Be sure to analyze how effective you think their governments are.
**Visual Summary**

**Mexico**
- Mexico City is one of the world’s largest cities.
- Mexico’s culture reflects both European and Native American influences.
- Industry and farming dominate Mexico’s North; agriculture leads in the South.
- Many Mexicans have migrated to cities and to the United States to find jobs.

**Central America and the Caribbean**
- Civil wars have held back economic growth in parts of Central America.
- Costa Rica’s citizens have a high literacy rate and enjoy a stable government.
- The Panama Canal enables ships to pass between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.
- Many Caribbean islands’ economies rely on tourism.

**Brazil**
- Brazil is the biggest and most populous country in South America.
- Brazil’s people, who speak Portuguese, are a mix of many different ethnic backgrounds.
- Brazil has many resources and a productive economy.
- Economic development threatens the Amazon rain forest.

**Argentina**
- A large grassland called the pampas covers much of Argentina.
- Argentina’s economy depends on farming and ranching.
- More than a third of Argentina’s people live in the capital, Buenos Aires.
- After years of military rule, Argentina is today a democracy.

**Other Countries of South America**
- Venezuela has relied on oil wealth to build a stronger economy.
- Colombia has been weakened by political unrest and illegal drug trade.
- Chile’s economy depends on the export of copper and agricultural products.
CHAPTER 9

STANDARDIZED TEST PRACTICE

TEST-TAKING TIP
Before answering essay questions, jot down a list of things you want to discuss.

Reviewing Vocabulary
Directions: Choose the word(s) that best completes the sentence.

1. Main government buildings in Mexican cities are located around central squares called ________.
   A. plazas
   B. murals
   C. selvas
   D. favelas

2. _______ are small plots where farmers grow only enough food for their families.
   A. Plantations
   B. Maquiladoras
   C. Commonwealths
   D. Subsistence farms

3. An important source of income in Haiti is ________.
   A. canal-use fees
   B. the literacy rate
   C. remittances
   D. the command economy

4. _______ take care of the livestock on ranches in Argentina.
   A. Gauchos
   B. Vaqueros
   C. Farmers
   D. Migrant workers

Reviewing Main Ideas
Directions: Choose the best answer for each question.

Section 1 (pp. 232–236)
5. Which expression of Mexican culture is rooted in Native American traditions?
   A. soccer
   B. bullfighting
   C. wood carving
   D. public squares

6. What helped change the Mexican economy in recent years?
   A. farmers’ small plots
   B. foreign-built factories
   C. large sugarcane farms
   D. resort cities along the coast

Section 2 (pp. 237–240)
7. What country makes more money in tourism than any other country in the Caribbean?
   A. Cuba
   B. Haiti
   C. Puerto Rico
   D. El Salvador

Section 3 (pp. 246–252)
8. Why is deforestation in Brazil felt worldwide?
   A. Farmers grow crops in the rain forest.
   B. Native Americans live in the rain forest.
   C. The rain forest has large deposits of oil.
   D. The rain forest helps maintain climate patterns.
Critical Thinking
Directions: Base your answers to questions 9 and 10 on the graph below and your knowledge of Chapter 9. Choose the best answer for each question.

9. Which of the following countries has the fewest doctors per thousand population?
   A Cuba
   B Chile
   C Uruguay
   D Costa Rica

10. Which of the following generalizations does the graph support?
    A Chile has more disease than the other countries.
    B Chile is healthier than the other countries.
    C Cuba has more doctors per 1,000 people than either the United States or Uruguay.
    D The United States has more doctors per 1,000 people than all Latin American countries.

Document-Based Questions
Directions: Analyze the following document and answer the short-answer questions that follow.

The following passage discusses a movement that has helped strengthen Argentina’s economy.

Since 1972 the Mil Hojas pasta factory [in Argentina] has churned out delicacies like ravioli and Italian desserts. But Mil Hojas’ fortunes—along with those of the national economy—began to decline with the late 1990s as deep recession set in.

The factory owners decided to abandon it amid a national epidemic of bankruptcies. Mil Hojas, like many other factories in Argentina, was to permanently close its doors.

That was when its workers decided to act. They took back, or “recovered” Mil Hojas, transforming it into what today is a thriving cooperative, as Argentina emerges from one of the worst economic crises in its history.

Today, thousands of workers are reactivating previously closed factories on their own terms and . . . breathing life into the national economy.


11. What happened to factories during economic hard times in Argentina?

12. Were the workers’ actions consistent with a command economy or with free enterprise? Explain.

Extended Response
13. Compare and contrast the political systems of Brazil and the United States.

STOP

Need Extra Help?
If you missed question... 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
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