



# Many Regions, Many Cultures

**TERMS & NAMES**  
culture region  
interdependence

## MAIN IDEA

The world can be divided into regions according to culture.

## WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Understanding other cultures can help you understand how people in other regions live and think.

## DATELINE

**TENOCHTILÁN, AZTEC CAPITAL, A.D. 1519**—Frightening news has arrived from the coast. Warriors from a land called “Spain” are marching toward the capital of our Aztec Empire. They are covered in metal armor and have thundering weapons. They have no respect for our gods, our temples, or our customs. Because we have never seen warriors like these, we do not know if they are men or gods. Nor do we know why are they coming toward our city. Some of our priests say these invaders have come to destroy our world.



**Culture** • The Aztecs had never seen horses and believed that Spanish soldiers rode giant deer. ▲

## Different Places, Different Cultures

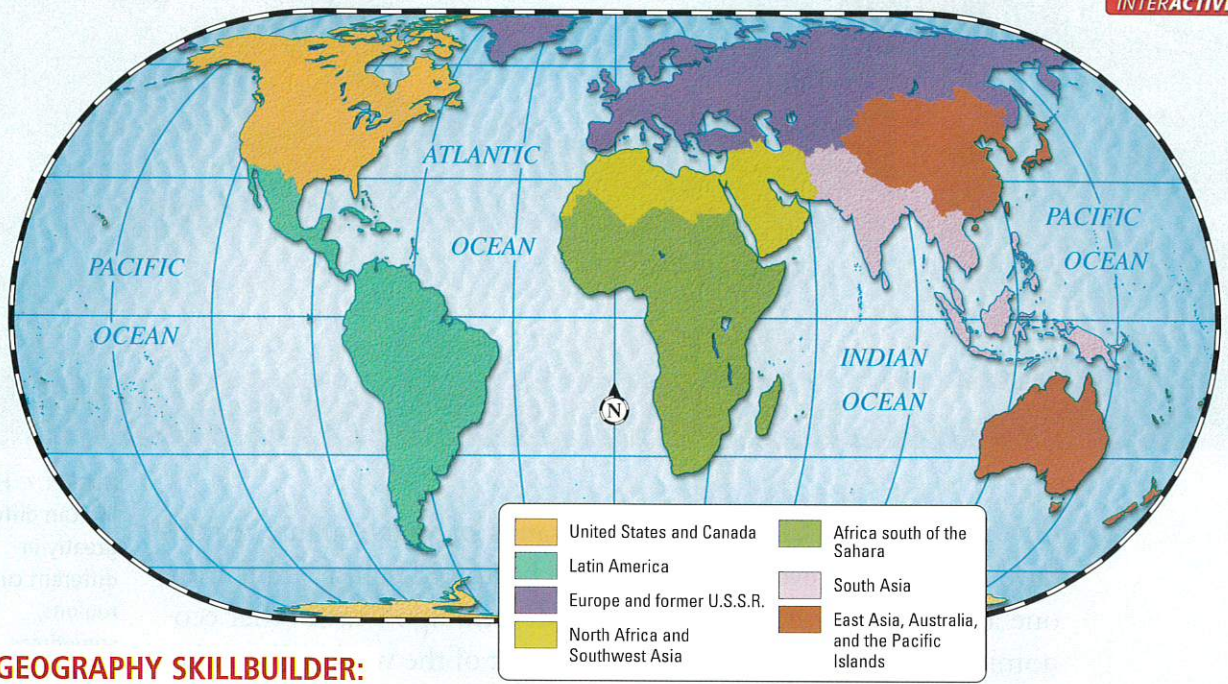
In 1519, one of the greatest culture clashes in history took place. That year, the Spanish invaded the powerful Aztec Empire, in what is now Mexico. The Spanish and the Aztecs were confused by each other’s customs because they came from different culture regions. A **culture region** is an area of the world in which many people share similar beliefs, history, and languages. The people in a culture region may have religion, technology, and ways of earning a living in common as well. They may grow and eat similar foods, wear similar kinds of clothes, and build houses in similar styles.

### TAKING NOTES

Use your chart to take notes about these terms.

Term	Definition
history	
geography	





**GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER:**  
Interpreting a Map

- 1. Region** • How many culture regions are shown on this map?
- 2. Location** • Name three culture regions in the Eastern Hemisphere.

**The World's Culture Regions**

The map above shows the major culture regions of the world. Latin America is one culture region. The Spanish and Portuguese languages help to tie its people together. So does its common history. Southwest Asia and North Africa is another culture region. Most countries in this region share a common desert climate and landscape. People have adapted to the desert in similar ways, thus creating a common culture. Islam, which is the major religion in this region, also helps shape a common culture.

Usually, not every person in a region belongs to the dominant, or mainstream, culture. Some regions are multicultural. For example, the United States and Canada contain other cultures besides the dominant one. Although most people in this region speak English, many people in eastern Canada speak French. Many people in the United States speak Spanish, especially in the Southwest. In both countries, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists, and members of other religions are free to worship.

**reading**  
**Social Studies**

**A. Recognizing Important Details**

Name two characteristics that make the United States multicultural.

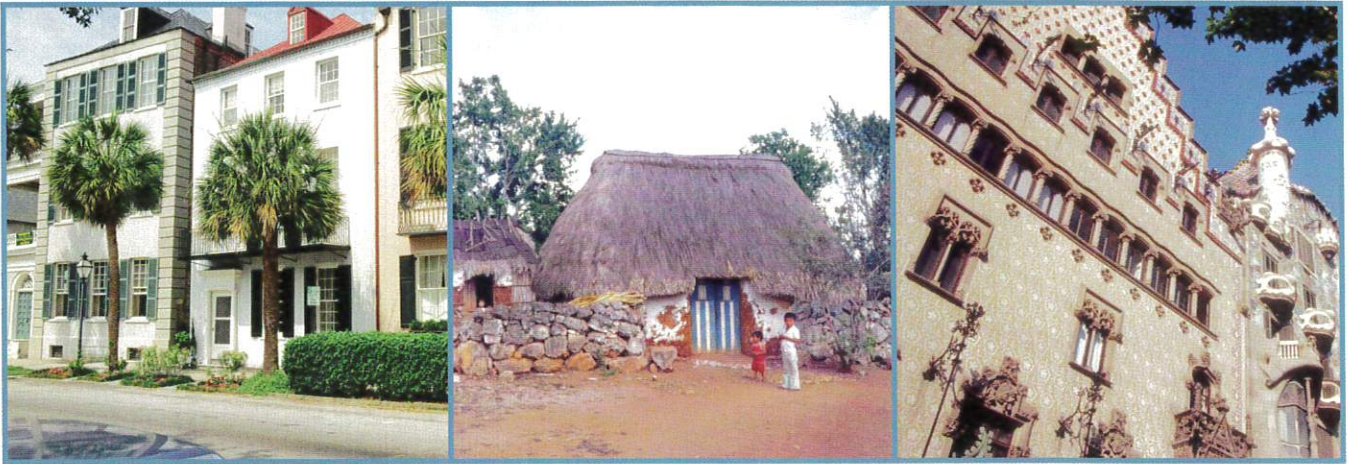
**Strange but TRUE**

**Children Invent Language** In the late 1700s, most people in Hawaii spoke English or native Hawaiian. As people began immigrating to Hawaii to work on the sugar cane plantations, they brought their native languages with them: Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Spanish, and Portuguese.

At school, the children of these immigrants began speaking a form of English that was a blend of native Hawaiian, Pidgin English, Pidgin Hawaiian, and their native languages, especially Portuguese. Eventually, children began to learn this form of English as their native language. This was the beginning of Hawaii Creole English, and it soon became the language of the majority of Hawaiians.







**Culture Regions Change** For thousands of years, culture regions have changed and evolved as they have borrowed culture traits from one another. They have also come to depend upon each other economically. Decisions and events in one part of the world affect other parts. Advances in transportation and communication have increased this **interdependence**. When oil-producing nations in the Middle East raise the price of oil, for example, the price of gasoline at the neighborhood gas station is likely to rise. If there is an especially abundant banana crop in parts of Latin America, the price of bananas may drop at the local grocery store. More and more, people of different countries are becoming part of one world.

**Region** • Home life can differ greatly in different culture regions, sometimes depending on a region's climate or natural resources. ▲

## SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

### Terms & Names

1. Explain the significance of: (a) culture region (b) interdependence

### Using Graphics

2. Use a chart to list the major culture regions of the world.

Major Culture Regions of the World	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

### Main Ideas

3. (a) List at least three things people in a culture region may have in common.  
 (b) Which continents have more than one culture region?  
 (c) What is one cause of cultural change?

### Critical Thinking

#### 4. Clarifying

Why might Brazilian coffee at your local supermarket suddenly cost more?

#### Think About

- ◆ price setting
- ◆ coffee supplies

### ACTIVITY -OPTION-

Write a **dialogue** between you and a visitor from another country in which you explain what makes the culture in your region different from others.