

What Type of Region is it?

Ch. 1: Thinking Geographically
Essential Skill Activity #2

Skill: Be able to define regions, and evaluate the regionalization process.

Directions:

- 1) Identify and mark the region on the map.
- 2) Indicate type of region it is (see Key Issue #2).
- 3) Describe how the characteristics that define this region would change over time, and as a result would change the nature of the region.

Region 1: The Middle East

The Middle East is a region that spans southwestern Asia, southeastern Europe, and northeastern Africa. It has no clear boundaries, often used as a synonym to Near East, in opposition to Far East. The history of the Middle East dates back to ancient times, and throughout its history the Middle East has been a major centre of world affairs. The Middle East is also the historical origin of three of the world's major religions - Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The Middle East generally has an arid and hot climate, with several major rivers providing for irrigation to support agriculture in limited areas. Many countries located around the Persian Gulf have large quantities of crude oil. In modern times the Middle East remains a strategically, economically, politically, culturally and religiously sensitive region.

Region 2: The Bible Belt

The Bible Belt is an informal term for an area of the United States in which socially conservative evangelical Protestantism is a dominant part of the culture and Christian church attendance across the denominations is extremely high.

Much of the Bible Belt consists of the Southern United States. During the colonial period (1607–1776), the South was a stronghold of the Anglican church. Its transition into a stronghold of non-Anglican Protestantism occurred gradually over the next century, as a series of religious revival movements, many associated with the Baptist denomination, gained great popularity in the region.

The region is usually contrasted with mainstream Protestants and Catholics of the northeast, the religiously diverse Midwest and Great Lakes, the Mormon Corridor in Utah and southern Idaho, and the relatively secular western United States.

Region 3: The Hanford Area, Washington

The Hanford Site is a decommissioned nuclear production complex on the Columbia River in the U.S. state of Washington, operated by the United States federal government. Established in 1943 as part of the Manhattan Project in the town of Hanford in south-central Washington, the site was home to the B Reactor, the first full-scale plutonium production reactor in the world. The site is bordered on the southeast by the Tri-Cities, a metropolitan area composed of Richland, Kennewick, Pasco, and smaller communities, and home to over 230,000 residents. Hanford is the primary economic base for these cities.

Throughout its history, and continuing to today, there has been release of radioactive materials into the air, water, and ground on the Hanford site. This has resulted in a high level of cancer cases in and around Hanford, lessening with increased distance from the site. Many nearby residents have what is known as the “Hanford necklace”, a scar across their necks which indicate surgery for thyroid cancer. Nonetheless, nearby residents maintain a sense of pride in Hanford’s history, believing that they were part of helping to win World War II through their efforts to make atom bombs.

Region 4: The Caribbean

The Caribbean is a region consisting of the Caribbean Sea, its islands (most of which enclose the sea), and the surrounding coasts. The region is located southeast of the Gulf of Mexico and Northern America, east of Central America, and to the north of South America. The majority of the Caribbean has populations of mainly Africans in the French Caribbean, Anglophone Caribbean and Dutch Caribbean. The Spanish-speaking Caribbean has primarily Mulatto, African, or European majorities.

The climate of the region is tropical but rainfall varies with elevation, size and water currents. Warm, moist tradewinds blow consistently from the east creating rainforest/semidesert divisions on mountainous islands. Occasional northwesterlies affect the northern islands in the winter. Winters are warm, but drier.