Chapter 7

Central America and the Caribbean Islands

The World and Its People NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

To learn more about the people and places of Central America and the Caribbean, view ***The World and Its People*** **Chapter 7** video.

Social Studies online

Chapter Overview Visit ***The World and Its People*** Web site at twip.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 7—Chapter Overviews** to preview information about Central America and the Caribbean islands.

▼ Guadeloupe, an island in the Lesser Antilles

Why It Matters

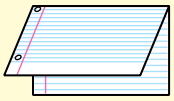
Building Trust

In 1823 the Monroe Doctrine warned European nations against interfering with the affairs of countries in the Americas. Ever since, U.S. presidents have worked to develop a special relationship with our near neighbors.

FOLDABLES™ Study Organizer

Compare-Contrast Make this foldable to help you determine how Central America and the Caribbean islands are similar and different.

Step 1 Fold one sheet of paper in half from top to bottom.



Step 2 Fold it in half again, from side to side.

Step 3 Unfold the paper once. Sketch an outline of Central America and the Caribbean islands across both tabs and label them as shown.

Step 4 Cut along the fold of the top flap only.

Reading and Writing As you read the chapter, write facts under the appropriate tabs of your foldable. Use what you write to compare and contrast the people and places of Central America and the Caribbean islands.

Section 1

Central America

Guide to Reading

Main Idea

Central America is made up of seven nations that are home to a variety of peoples, exotic animals, and diverse landforms.

Terms to Know

- isthmus
- canopy
- ecotourist
- literacy rate
- republic
- parliamentary democracy

Reading Strategy

Create a chart like this one. List several countries in Central America, and write two key facts about each country.

Country	Key Facts

Interactive Graphic Organizer

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Exploring Our World

Unusual animals found nowhere else on the earth roam the floor and canopy of Central America's rain forests. The small frog here seems as if it would be a snack for other, larger animals. Do not be fooled by the enlargement of the photo, however. Many frogs like this one hold a deadly poison in their skin, which would quickly kill anything that tried to eat them.

Central America is an **isthmus,** or a narrow piece of land that links two larger areas of land—North America and South America. Most of the countries on the isthmus have two coastlines—one on the Pacific Ocean and one on the Caribbean Sea. This narrow region is actually part of North America. Seven countries make up Central America: **Belize, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica,** and **Panama.**

A Rugged Land

Like Mexico, Central America sits where plates in the earth's crust meet. The collision of these plates produces volcanoes and earthquakes in the region. The Central Highlands, which curve like a backbone through inland Central America, are actually a chain of volcanic mountains. Because of their ruggedness, the Central Highlands are difficult to cross. This causes serious problems for transportation and communication and has also kept many of the region's people isolated from one another. The volcanoes of the Central Highlands do bring some benefits to farmers, though. Volcanic material has made the soil very fertile.

Central America is mostly tropical, although the mountains remain cool. Lowlands along the Caribbean side receive about 100 inches (254 cm) of rain year-round. Lowlands along the Pacific, however, are drier from December through April. Cooling breezes from the Caribbean Sea can become deadly hurricanes during the summer and fall. Remember that hurricanes are fierce storms with heavy rains and high winds of more than 74 miles (119 km) per hour.

Reading Check **How have the volcanoes in Central America been helpful?**

Central American Economies

The economies of the Central American countries depend on farming and harvesting wood from their rain forests. Central America has two kinds of farms. Wealthy people and companies own plantations, which, as you learned in Chapter 6, are commercial farms that grow crops for sale. Major crops include coffee, bananas, cotton, and sugarcane. Plantations export their harvest to the United States and other parts of the world. Farmers in Guatemala and Costa Rica also grow flowers and ornamental plants for export.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Central America and the Caribbean Islands: Political

Applying Map Skills

1. Which countries in Central America border only one body of water?
2. What two countries occupy the island of Hispaniola?

Find NGS online map resources @ www.nationalgeographic.com/maps

Many farms in Central America are not plantations but subsistence farms. These are small plots of land where poor farmers grow only enough food to feed their families. Subsistence farmers typically raise livestock and grow corn, beans, and rice.

Rain Forests Beneath Central America's green **canopy,** or topmost layer of the rain forest that shades the forest floor, lie many treasures. Ancient ruins of past empires can be found as well as valuable resources. The dense forests offer expensive woods—mahogany and rosewood, for example. Unusual animal and plant species also thrive here. Scientists research the plants to develop new medicines.

Both local and foreign-owned companies have set up large-scale operations in the rain forests. Lumber companies cut down and export the valuable trees. Other companies and local farmers also cut or burn the trees to clear land for farming. Without trees to hold the soil in place, rains wash the soil and its nutrients away. As a result, the land soon becomes poor. The businesses and farmers then move on, clearing trees from another piece of land.

Many Central Americans worry about the rapid destruction of the rain forests. Some countries are responding to this crisis by helping workers replant cleared areas. Costa Rica has set aside one-fourth of its

In Motion

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Central America and the Caribbean Islands: Economic Activity

CONTENTS

forests as national parks. It uses the rain forests to attract **ecotourists,** or people who travel to other countries to enjoy natural wonders.

Industry Missing from the skylines of most major Central American cities are the smokestacks of industry. The few industries that exist generally focus on food processing. In Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, some factories produce clothing for export.

Guatemala, which has some oil reserves, exports crude oil. Costa Rica produces computer chips, other electronic goods, and medicines. With its varied economy, Costa Rica enjoys one of the highest standards of living in Latin America. It also has one of the highest **literacy rates,** or percentage of people who can read and write.

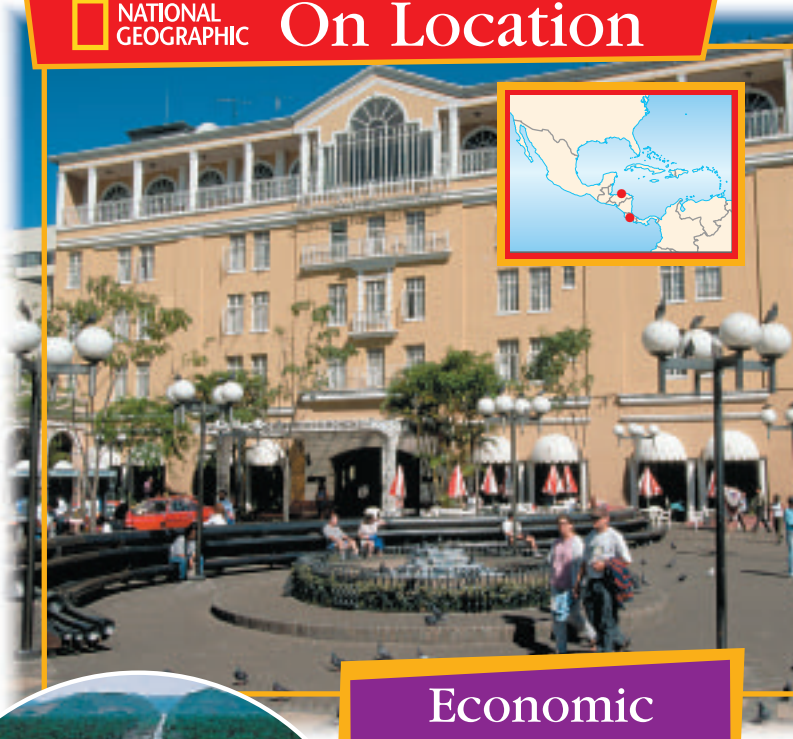
Tourism is of growing importance in Central America. If you like bird-watching, Costa Rica is the place to visit. The country has about 850 different kinds of birds. Guatemala and Honduras also draw many tourists to the magnificent ruins of their ancient Mayan culture.

The Panama Canal The economy in Panama—just like the other countries of Central America—is based on farming. Panama also earns money from its canal, however. The Panama Canal stretches across the narrow Isthmus of Panama. Ships pay a fee to use the canal to shorten travel time between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Turn to page 218 to see how the canal works.

The United States built the canal and owned it for more than 80 years. Panama was given final control of the canal on December 31, 1999. Panama hopes to use this waterway to build its economy. Nearly half of Panama's 3 million people live and work in the canal area.

Reading Check **What are the major crops grown on Central America's plantations?**

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC On Location



Economic Highs and Lows

San José, Costa Rica's capital (above), has shopping malls and fast-food chains like many North American cities. In 1998 Hurricane Mitch caused massive mudslides that buried whole villages and destroyed crops in Honduras (left).

Issues **During what seasons do hurricanes strike Central America?**

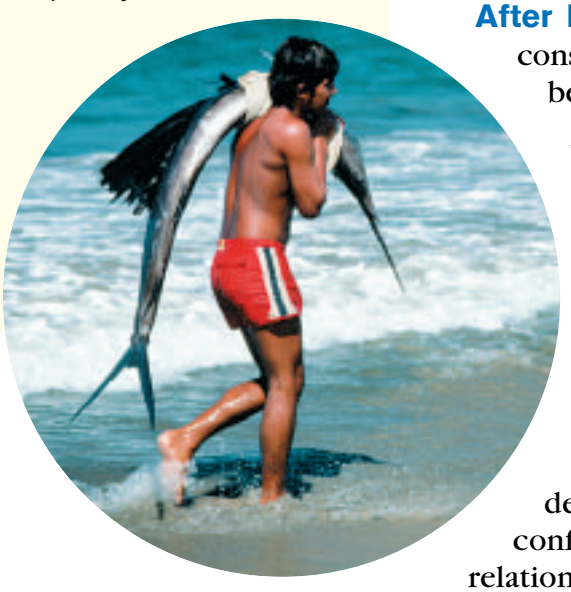
Central Americans—Then and Now

Native Americans settled Central America thousands of years ago. The Olmecs were the first civilization in the area, from about 1200 B.C. to 400 B.C. The Maya flourished in the rain forests of the north from about A.D. 250 to 900. Look at the Native American civilizations map on

Teen Scene

What a Catch!

The deep, blue waters of Lake Nicaragua are home to the world's only freshwater sharks and swordfish. Now the lake holds one less swordfish. Amadeo Robelo, who lives in Granada, Nicaragua, just spent three hours battling the powerful fish. Amadeo enjoys fishing with his father on weekends. His father wants Amadeo to become part of Nicaragua's middle class—something new in a region where you are either one of the few with wealth or one of the many who live in poverty.



page 198. In **Tikal** (tee•KAHL), Guatemala, and **Copán** (koh•PAHN), Honduras, the Maya created impressive temples and sculptures. Before Columbus arrived, Tikal was the site of the highest structure in the Americas, a 212-foot (64.6-m) temple rising from the floor of the rain forest. The Maya were a highly developed civilization. Their religion focused on the careful study of time and the stars, astronomy, and mathematics. The Maya developed a calendar and kept records on stone slabs. Then the Maya mysteriously left their cities. Many of their descendants still live in the area today.

In the 1500s, Spaniards established settlements in Central America. For the next 300 years, Spanish landowners forced Native Americans to work on plantations. The two cultures gradually blended. Native Americans started to speak the Spanish language and follow the Roman Catholic faith. Native Americans taught the Spanish about local plants for medicines and how to trap animals for food and hides.

Most Central American countries gained independence from Spain by 1821. The two exceptions are Panama and Belize. Panama was part of the South American country of Colombia for decades. In 1903 the United States helped Panama win its independence in exchange for the right to build the Panama Canal. Belize, a British colony until 1981, was the last Central American country to gain independence.

After Independence Most Central American countries faced constant conflict after they became independent. A small number of people in each country held most of the wealth and power. Rebel movements arose as poor farmers fought for changes that would give them land and better lives. Civil wars raged in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala as recently as the 1980s and 1990s.

In Guatemala from 1960 to 1996, government military forces fought rebel groups living in the highlands. About 150,000 people died, and the civil war severely weakened Guatemala's economy. Tens of thousands of Guatemalans left the country to look for work in the United States.

In contrast, Costa Ricans have enjoyed peace. A stable democratic government rules, and the country has avoided conflict for most of its history. As a result of these peaceful relations, the country has no army—only a police force to maintain law and order.

Today each country in Central America has a democratic government, with voters choosing government officials. Six countries are also **republics,** with elected presidents as head of the government. Belize is a British-style **parliamentary democracy,** in which an elected legislature chooses a prime minister to head the government.

Daily Life Nearly 40 million people live in Central America. About one-third of this number live in Guatemala, the most heavily populated country in the region. In contrast, only about 300,000 people live in Belize, the region's least populous country. Spanish is the official language

throughout the region, except for English-speaking Belize. Many Central Americans also speak Native American languages, such as Mayan. Guatemala's population, for instance, is largely Native American and has more than 20 different Native American languages. Most Central Americans follow the Roman Catholic religion.

About 50 percent of all Central Americans live on farms or in small villages. At least one major city, usually the capital, is densely populated in each country. Guatemala's capital, **Guatemala City,** ranks with **San José,** Costa Rica, as one of the most populous cities in Central America. People living in urban areas hold manufacturing or service industry jobs, or they work on farms outside the cities. Those living in coastal areas may harvest shrimp, lobster, and other seafood to sell in city markets or for export.

Whether rural or urban, most people enjoy a major celebration called Carnival. This festival comes before Lent, a solemn period of prayer and soul-searching before the Christian celebration of Easter. During Carnival—and at other times—bands play salsa, a mixture of Latin American popular music, jazz, and rock. Do you like baseball? It is a national sport in Nicaragua and is very popular in Panama too. Most people throughout the region also enjoy *fútbol,* or soccer.

Reading Check **Why is the government of Belize different from that of other countries in Central America?**

Section 1 Assessment

Defining Terms

1. **Define** isthmus, canopy, ecotourist, literacy rate, republic, parliamentary democracy.

Recalling Facts

2. **Economics** What is the difference between plantation and subsistence farming?
3. **Culture** What are the major religion and language of Central America?
4. **Place** Which country in Central America is the most heavily populated? The most sparsely populated?

Critical Thinking

5. **Making Comparisons** How have the differences in government stability affected the citizens of Guatemala and Costa Rica in the past and today?
6. **Analyzing Cause and Effect** Explain why rain forest soil does not keep its nutrients long after trees are cut down.

Graphic Organizer

7. **Organizing Information** Create a diagram like this one. On the lines, list the major products and industries of Central America.

Interactive Graphic Organizer

Applying Social Studies Skills

8. **Analyzing Maps** Refer to the political map on page 213. Which countries of Central America border Mexico? Which border the Pacific Ocean?

The Panama Canal Locks

Before the Panama Canal was built, ships had to sail around the southern tip of South America to go from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean and vice versa. The canal provides a shortcut that reduces that trip by about 7,000 miles (11,270 km).

Digging the Canal

The first attempts to build a canal across Panama were begun in 1881 by a private French company. Huge expenses, poor planning, and the effects of diseases such as malaria and yellow fever stopped construction. In 1904 the United States government took over. Doctors had recently learned that bites from infected mosquitoes caused malaria and yellow fever. Workers drained swamps and cleared brush to remove the mosquitoes' breeding grounds. Then the digging began. The canal's course ran through hills of soft volcanic soil. Massive landslides regularly occurred before the 50-mile (80-km) canal was completed in 1914.

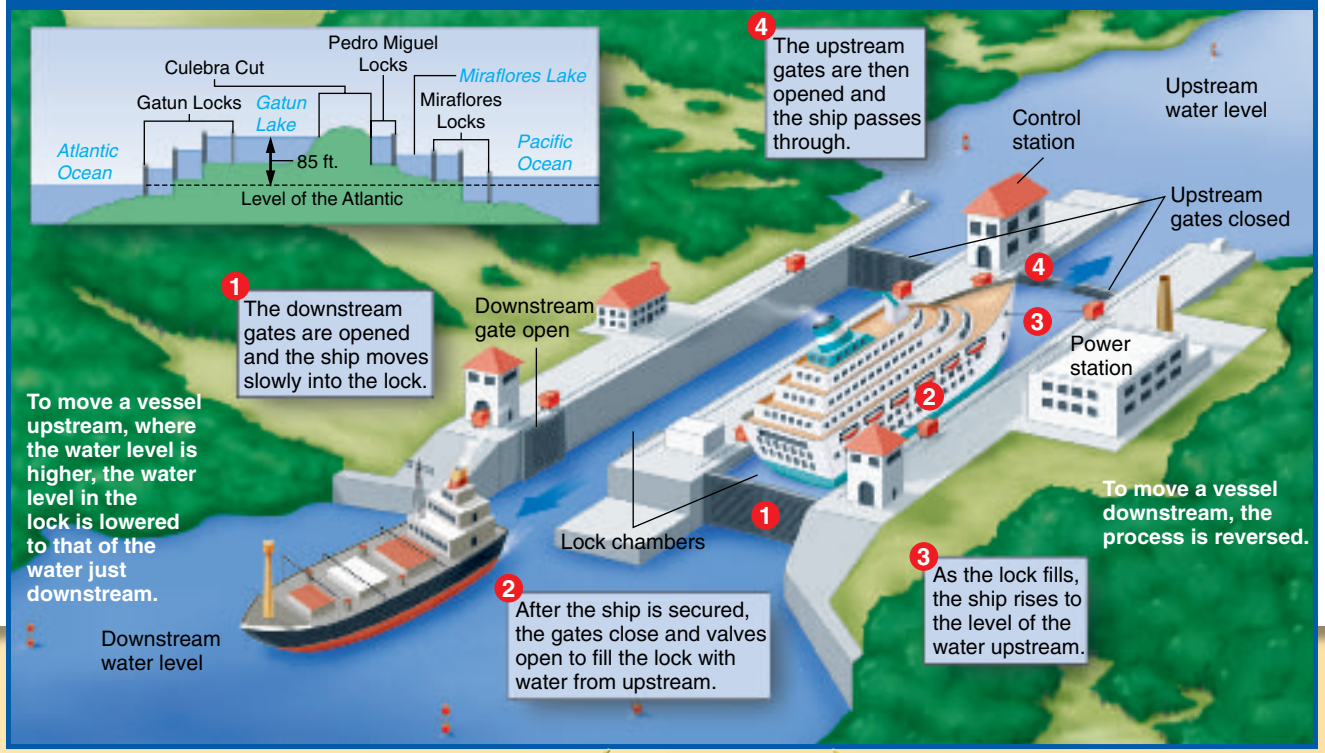
An Engineering Masterpiece

To move ships through the canal, engineers designed three sets of locks—the largest concrete structures on the earth. They allow ships to move from one water level to another by changing the amount of water in the locks. Together, the locks can raise or lower ships about 85 feet (26 m)—the height of a seven-story building. The diagram below shows you how these locks work.

Making the Connection

1. Why was a canal through Panama desirable?
2. What function do locks perform?
3. **Understanding Cause and Effect** How did medical advances affect the building of the Panama Canal?

The Panama Canal Locks



Section 2

Cultures of the Caribbean

Guide to Reading

Main Idea

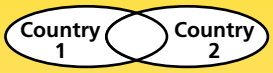
The Caribbean islands rely on tourism to support their economies.

Terms to Know

- archipelago
- bauxite
- communist state
- cooperative
- embargo
- free trade zone
- commonwealth

Reading Strategy

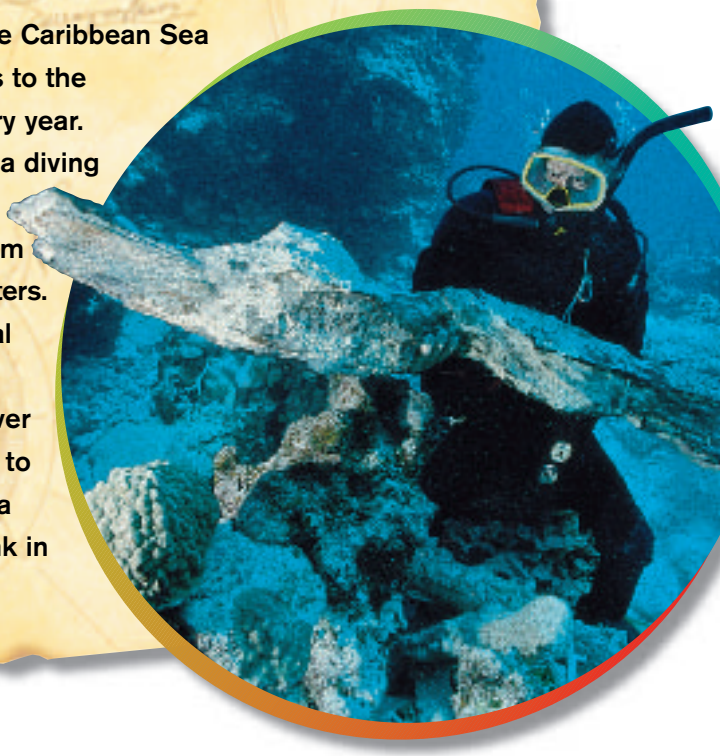
Create a diagram like this one. In the outer part of each oval, list a country in the Caribbean and features that are specific to it. Where the ovals overlap, list features that are true of both countries.



Interactive Graphic Organizer

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC Exploring Our World

The warm waters of the Caribbean Sea lure millions of tourists to the Caribbean islands every year. Some tourists go scuba diving so they can see the colorful fish, which swim in the islands' clear waters. Others shop at the local stores, buying hand-crafted goods. This diver uses a metal detector to look for objects from a Spanish ship that sank in the 1600s.



Several **archipelagos** (AHR•kuh•PEH•luh•GOHS), or groups of islands, dot the **Caribbean Sea.** East of Florida are the **Bahamas,** an archipelago of nearly 700 islands. South of Florida you find the **Greater Antilles.** This group includes the large islands of **Cuba, Jamaica, Hispaniola,** and **Puerto Rico.** To the southeast are smaller islands called the **Lesser Antilles.**

Mountaintop Islands

Many of the Caribbean islands (also known as the **West Indies**) are the tops of an underwater chain of mountains formed by volcanoes. A typical volcanic island has central highlands ringed by coastal plains. The volcanic soil in the highlands is rich. Other islands are limestone mountains that have been pushed up from the ocean floor by pressures under the earth's crust. Limestone islands are generally flatter than volcanic islands and have sandy soil that is not good for farming.

Climate Most of the Caribbean islands have a fairly constant tropical savanna climate. Sea and wind, more than elevation, affect the climate here. Northeast breezes sweep across the Caribbean Sea and become the temperature of the cooler water beneath them. When the winds blow onshore, they keep temperatures pleasant. For half the year, however, hurricanes threaten the islands.

Reading Check **What formed the Caribbean islands?**

The Caribbean Economy

Tourism and farming are the most important economic activities in the Caribbean. The sunny climate and beautiful beaches attract millions of tourists each year. Tourism is the region's major industry. Airlines and cruise ships make regular stops at different islands.

Wealthy landowners grow sugarcane, bananas, coffee, and tobacco for export. Many laborers work on the plantations that grow these commercial crops. Some areas are used for subsistence farming. People may own or rent small plots of land. They grow rice and beans, which are basic parts of the diet in this region. They also grow fruits and vegetables.

Some countries in the Caribbean islands face an economic danger by depending on one commercial crop. If the crop fails, no income is earned. If too much of the crop is produced worldwide, overall prices fall and the economy is in serious trouble.

Look at the map on page 214. You can see that most of the islands do not have large amounts of minerals. Jamaica, however, mines **bauxite,** a mineral used to make aluminum. The country of Trinidad and Tobago exports oil products. In Puerto Rico, companies make chemicals and machinery. Haiti and the Dominican Republic have textile factories where workers make cloth. Several islands have banking and financial industries.

Reading Check **What is the major industry in the Caribbean?**

Caribbean History and Culture

When Christopher Columbus reached the island of San Salvador—now part of the Bahamas—in 1492, who met him? It was a Native American group—the Taíno. The Taíno and other Native Americans lived on the islands long before the coming of Europeans.

The Spaniards established the first permanent European settlement in the Western Hemisphere in 1496. That settlement is now the city of **Santo Domingo,** capital of the Dominican Republic. During the next 200 years, the Spaniards, the English, the French, and the Dutch also founded colonies, or overseas settlements, on many of the islands. They found the soil and climate perfect for growing sugarcane. During this time, new plants, animals, and other products were traded between the Americas and other parts of the world. Turn to page 228 to learn more about this so-called Columbian Exchange.

By the mid-1600s, most Native Americans had died from European diseases and harsh treatment. The Europeans then brought enslaved Africans to work on sugar plantations. When the slave trade ended in

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

On Location

Economic Activities

Schoolgirls on Barbados walk past vast sugar plantations that European countries started in the colonial period (above left). A steel-drum band entertains tourists in Trinidad (above).

Region **What attracts so many tourists to the Caribbean islands?**

the early 1800s, plantation owners still in need of workers brought them from Asia, particularly India. Asians agreed to work a set number of years in return for free travel to the Caribbean and low wages.

Independence During the 1800s and 1900s, many Caribbean islands won their freedom from European rule. The first to become independent were the larger island countries, such as Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba. Later, smaller islands such as Barbados and Grenada became independent. Many countries—like Haiti and the Dominican Republic—are republics. Others—like Jamaica and the Bahamas—are British-style parliamentary democracies.

Cuba is the only country in the Western Hemisphere with a government based on communism. In a **communist state,** government leaders have strong control of the economy and society as a whole.

Some Caribbean islands are still not independent. Two large islands—Martinique and Guadeloupe—have ties to France. Puerto Rico and some of the Virgin Islands are linked to the United States. Other small islands are owned by the British or the Dutch.

Daily Life Many people in Central America have Native American ancestors. The peoples of the Caribbean, however, have African or mixed African and European ancestry. Large Asian populations live in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago as well.

More than 38 million people live in the Caribbean islands. Cuba, with about 11.3 million people, has the largest population in the region. Saint Kitts and Nevis has only about 50,000 people. Most people speak a European language and follow the Roman Catholic or Protestant religion.

Believe It or Not!

Bee Hummingbird

How small is this bird? The bee hummingbird of Cuba measures only 2 inches (5.1 cm) from head to tail. That is small enough to make it the tiniest bird in the world. The bird's wings move so fast—80 beats per second—that the human eye cannot see them. At two grams, the bee hummingbird weighs less than a penny.

About 60 percent of the people live in cities and villages. The other 40 percent live and work in the countryside. Many islanders have jobs in the hotels or restaurants that serve the tourist industry. If you visit the Caribbean, you are likely to hear lively music. The bell-like tones of the steel drum, developed in Trinidad and Tobago, are part of the rich musical heritage of the region. Jamaica's reggae music combines African rhythms and American popular music. Cuban salsa blends African rhythms, Spanish styles, and jazz.

On several islands, you will hear a different sound—the crack of a baseball bat. People in Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Cuba have a passion for baseball. Soccer is another popular sport.

Reading Check **Where was the first permanent European settlement in the Caribbean islands?**

Island Profiles

The Caribbean islands have many similarities, but they also have differences. Some of these differences can be seen in Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico.

Cuba One of the world's top sugar producers, Cuba lies about 90 miles (145 km) south of Florida. Most farmers work on **cooperatives,** or farms owned and operated by the government. In addition to growing sugarcane, they grow coffee, tobacco, rice, and fruits. In **Havana,** Cuba's capital and the largest city in the region, workers make food products, cigars, and household goods.

Cuba won its independence from Spain in 1898. The country had a democratic government, but in 1959 Fidel Castro led a revolution that took control of the government. Almost immediately, he set up a communist state and turned to the Soviet Union for support. When Castro seized property belonging to American companies, the United States government responded. It put in place an **embargo,** or a ban on trade, against Cuba.

Cuba relied on aid from the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Union broke apart in 1989, it stopped giving economic support to the island. The Cuban economy is struggling, and many Cubans live in poverty.

Haiti On the western half of the island of Hispaniola, you will find the country of **Haiti.** Led by a formerly enslaved man, Francois-Dominique Toussaint-Louverture, Haiti fought for and won its independence from France in 1804. It was the second independent republic in the Western Hemisphere (after the United States). It became the first nation in the history of the world to be founded by formerly enslaved persons. About 95 percent of Haiti's 7.5 million people are of African ancestry. Civil war has left Haiti's economy in ruins, and most Haitians are poor. Coffee and sugar, the main export crops, are shipped through **Port-au-Prince,** the country's capital.

Dominican Republic The **Dominican Republic** shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. The two countries have different histories and little contact, however. Haiti was a French colony. The Dominican

Republic was settled by Spaniards, who brought enslaved Africans to work on sugar plantations. Sugar is still an important crop. Tourism is growing too, and many Dominicans sell goods in the country's free trade zone. **Free trade zones** are areas where people can buy goods from other countries without paying taxes.

The government of the Dominican Republic hopes to build up the country's electrical power so the economy can grow more quickly. Poverty remains a problem. As a result, many Dominicans have left the country looking for work.

Puerto Rico To be or not to be a state in the United States? This is the question that Puerto Ricans ask themselves every few years. The last time they voted, they said no. How did Puerto Rico become part of the United States? The island was a Spanish colony from 1508 to 1898. After the Spanish-American War in 1898, the United States won control of Puerto Rico. Since 1952 the island has been a **commonwealth,** or a partly self-governing territory, under U.S. protection. By law, Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens. They can come and go as they wish from the island to the United States.

Puerto Rico has a high standard of living compared to most other Caribbean islands. It boasts more industry, with factories producing chemicals, machinery, clothing, and more. **San Juan** is the capital and largest city. In rural areas, farmers grow sugarcane and coffee. Puerto Rico makes more money from tourism than any country in the region.

Reading Check **What is a commonwealth?**

Social Studies online

Web Activity Visit ***The World and Its People*** Web site at twip.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 7—Student Web Activities** to learn more about Puerto Rico.

Section 2 Assessment

Defining Terms

1. **Define** archipelago, bauxite, communist state, cooperative, embargo, free trade zone, commonwealth.

Recalling Facts

2. **Region** What three archipelagos make up the Caribbean islands?
3. **History** Name four groups who have influenced the culture of the Caribbean region.
4. **Government** How is Cuba different from every other country in the Western Hemisphere?

Critical Thinking

5. **Drawing Conclusions** Explain why you think Puerto Ricans might be satisfied remaining a commonwealth.
6. **Making Predictions** What is the danger of a country's dependence on only one crop?

Graphic Organizer

7. **Organizing Information** Complete a chart like the one below with facts about Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Interactive Graphic Organizer

Facts	Haiti	Dominican Republic
Colonized by		
Economy		

Applying Social Studies Skills

8. **Analyzing Maps** Refer to the economic activity map on page 214. What resources are found in Cuba?

Social Studies Skill

Interpreting an Elevation Profile

You have learned that differences in land elevation are often shown on physical or relief maps. Another way to show elevation is on **elevation profiles.** When you view a person's profile, you see a side view. An elevation profile is a diagram that shows a side view of the landforms in an area.

Learning the Skill

Suppose you could slice right through a country from top to bottom and could look at the inside, or *cross section.* The cross section, or elevation profile, below pictures the island of Jamaica. It shows how far Jamaica's landforms extend above or below sea level.

Follow these steps to understand an elevation profile:

- Read the title of the profile to find out what country you are viewing.
- Look at the line of latitude written along the bottom of the profile. On a separate map, find the country and where this line of latitude runs through it.
- Look at the measurements along the sides of the profile. Note where sea level is located and the height in feet or meters.
- Now read the labels on the profile to identify the heights of the different landforms shown.
- Compare the highest and lowest points.

Practicing the Skill

Use the elevation profile below to answer the following questions.

1. At what elevation is Kingston?
2. What are the highest mountains, and where are they located?
3. Where are the lowest regions?
4. Along what line of latitude was this cross section taken?

Applying the Skill

Look at the elevation profile on page 118. What are the highest mountains? Where is the lowest point?

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Jamaica: Elevation Profile

Chapter 7

Reading Review

Section 1 Central America

Terms to Know

isthmus
canopy
ecotourist
literacy rate
republic
parliamentary democracy

Main Idea

Central America is made up of seven nations that are home to a variety of peoples, exotic animals, and diverse landforms.

✓ **Region** Central America includes seven countries: Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama.

✓ **Region** Volcanic mountains run down the center of Central America with coastal lowlands on either side.

✓ **Economics** Most people in the region farm—either on plantations or on subsistence farms.

✓ **Culture** Most countries in Central America have a blend of Native American and Spanish cultures.

The Panama Canal ▶

Section 2 Cultures of the Caribbean

Terms to Know

archipelago
bauxite
communist state
cooperative
embargo
free trade zone
commonwealth

Main Idea

The Caribbean islands rely on tourism to support their economies.

✓ **History** Christopher Columbus landed in this region in 1492.

✓ **History** Most of the islands were at one time colonies of European countries.

✓ **Economics** Farming and tourism are the major economic activities in the Caribbean region.

✓ **Culture** The cultures of the Caribbean islands mix Native American, European, African, and Asian influences.

✓ **Government** Most governments in the Caribbean islands are democratic, but a dictator rules Communist Cuba.

Chapter 7 Assessment and Activities

Using Key Terms

Match the terms in Part A with their definitions in Part B.

A.

1. isthmus
2. literacy rate
3. cooperative
4. ecotourist
5. archipelago
6. bauxite
7. commonwealth
8. embargo
9. free trade zone
10. republic

B.

a. farm owned and operated by the government
b. mineral ore from which aluminum is made
c. ban on trade
d. narrow piece of land connecting two larger pieces of land
e. area where people can buy goods from other countries without paying taxes
f. person who travels to another country to enjoy its natural wonders
g. country with an elected president
h. percentage of adults who can read and write
i. partly self-governing territory
j. a group of islands

Reviewing the Main Ideas

Section 1 Central America

11. **Region** What seven countries make up Central America?
12. **Economics** Why are the Central American rain forests being destroyed?
13. **History** In what Central American countries did the Maya live?
14. **Culture** What percentage of Central Americans live on farms or in small villages?

Section 2 Cultures of the Caribbean

15. **Economics** What two activities form the basis of the Caribbean economies?
16. **Region** Which country has the largest population in the Caribbean?
17. **Culture** What types of music can you find in the Caribbean islands?
18. **History** What was the first nation in the world to be founded by formerly enslaved people?
19. **Economics** Why are commercial crops sometimes a risky business?

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Central America and the Caribbean Islands

Place Location Activity

On a separate sheet of paper, match the letters on the map with the numbered places listed below.

1. Guatemala
2. Caribbean Sea
3. Cuba
4. Puerto Rico
5. Costa Rica
6. Panama
7. Bahamas
8. Haiti
9. Jamaica
10. Honduras

CONTENTS

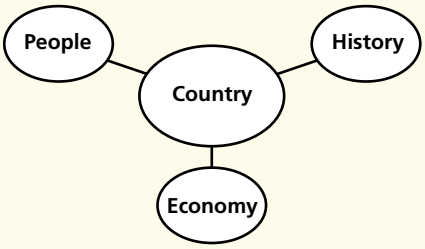
Social Studies ONline

Self-Check Quiz Visit ***The World and Its People*** Web site at twip.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 7—Self-Check Quizzes** to prepare for the Chapter Test.

Critical Thinking

20. **Analyzing Information** Explain why Cuba's location is an important factor in the United States's relationship with that nation.

21. **Categorizing Information** Create a diagram like this with details about the people, history, and economy of a country in this chapter.



Comparing Regions Activity

22. **History** Compare the early Spanish settlements in Central America to the early British settlements in New Zealand. Use these examples to write a paragraph about what can happen when one country colonizes another.

Mental Mapping Activity

23. **Focusing on the Region** Create an outline map of Central America and the Caribbean islands, and then label the following:

- Pacific Ocean
- Cuba
- Caribbean Sea
- Puerto Rico
- Guatemala
- Dominican Republic
- Panama
- Bahamas

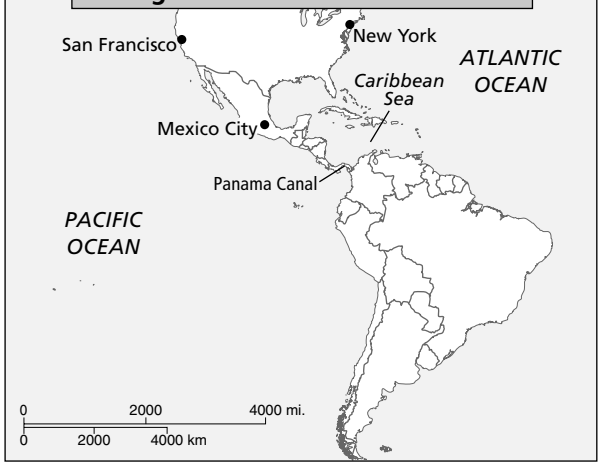
Technology Skills Activity

24. **Building a Database** Create a database about Central America, using the **Country Profiles** in the Unit 3 **Regional Atlas** as your information source. Make a record for each country. Each record should have a field for the following: population, landmass, and capital city. Sort the records from largest to smallest for population. What generalizations can you make based on these data?

Standardized Test Practice

Directions: Study the map below, and then answer the question that follows.

Contiguous U.S. and Latin America



1. Which of the following was true before the Panama Canal was completed?

A A ship sailing from New York to San Francisco had to travel nearly 12,000 additional miles.

B A ship sailing from New York to San Francisco had to travel nearly 5,000 additional kilometers.

C The completion of the canal increased trade between Mexico City and San Francisco.

D Mexico City was extremely far away from New York City.

Test-Taking Tip: The scale shows you the actual distance between places on a map. Use your finger or a piece of paper to mark off the distance of the scale. Then use your finger or piece of paper to gauge the distance between two places on the map.

Columbus with King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain

The Columbian Exchange

The next time you eat a french fry, think about the long history of the lowly potato. The story begins high in the Andes mountain ranges of Bolivia and Peru (facing page), where thousands of years ago potatoes grew wild.

By the 1400s, the Inca, an early people who ruled a vast empire in western South America, had developed thousands of varieties of potatoes. The story of how potatoes came from such a faraway time and place is one that began even before the Inca. Now, potatoes are part of our everyday diet.

Two Separate Worlds

Before the 1400s, people living in the world's Eastern Hemisphere were unknown to those living in the Western Hemisphere. This changed on October 12, 1492, when explorer Christopher Columbus, who had sailed from Spain, landed in the Bahamas in the Americas. Believing he had reached the Indies of Asia, Columbus named the people on the islands "Indians" and claimed the land for Spain. Columbus returned to the Americas the following year, bringing more than a thousand men in 17 ships. With his second trip, Columbus began what became known as "the Columbian Exchange"—an exchange of people, animals, plants, and even diseases between the two hemispheres.

For Better and for Worse

The Europeans brought many new things to the Americas. Columbus brought horses, which helped the Native Americans with labor, hunting, and transportation. European farm animals such as sheep, pigs, and cattle created new sources of income. Explorers brought crops—oats, wheat, rye, and barley—that eventually covered North America's Great Plains. The sugarcane brought by Europeans flourished on plantations in Central and South America.

Some parts of the exchange were disastrous, however. Europeans brought diseases that killed millions of Native Americans. Plantation owners put enslaved Africans to work in their fields.

From the Americas, explorers returned home with a wide variety of plants. Spanish sailors carried potatoes to Europe. Nutritious and easy to grow, the potato became one of Europe's most important foods. (European immigrants then brought the potato to North America.) Corn from the Americas fed European cattle and pigs. Tobacco grown there became as valuable as gold. Peanuts, tomatoes, hot peppers, and cacao seeds (from which chocolate is made) changed the landscapes, eating habits, and cooking styles in Europe, Asia, and Africa.

QUESTIONS

1. What is "the Columbian Exchange"?
2. Exchanges continue today. What are some present-day exchanges among the world's hemispheres?

Women in Peru tend a potato field. ▶

The Spread of Plants and Animals

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