Chapter 2 Regions and Tourism

"Understanding the nature of regions requires a flexible approach to the world. The criteria used to define and delimit regions can be as spatially precise as coastlines and political boundaries, or as spatially amorphous as suggesting the general location of people with allegiances to a particular professional athletic team or identifying a market area for distributing the recordings of a specific genre of music. Regions can be as small as a neighbourhood or as vast as a territorial expanse covering thousands of square miles [sic] in which the inhabitants speak the same language. They can be areas joining people in common cause or they can become areas for conflict, both internal and external."

Geography For Life, National Geography Standards, 1994

Chapter Overview

This chapter reviews the region as a significant geographic concept, first learned in the grade 7 Ontario curriculum. People interact with the places that shape their identity and lives. Because the places and the interactions are very complex, regions are used as a tool - a kind of framework - to identify and organize these places. While there are many different types of regions, each one is unique with distinct characteristics. The more we understand about a region, the better our chances of understanding the complex interactions among human and natural systems that exist in the world. Regions help us make sense of landscapes and of how people use the resources they provide. Studying regions provides knowledge and understanding that can be used to analyse problems and issues and find solutions.

This chapter uses visible characteristics of an Indian neighbourhood in a large city such as Toronto, to help students understand the research and analytical skills required when defining a region and solving problems within it.

Since we tend to see tourist destinations in terms of regions, such as the Caribbean, or Mediterranean Europe, they are useful when analyzing tourism patterns and issues. Tourists use regions to help them identify and understand destinations, to learn more about the culture and heritage, conflicts, hazards and issues in a place and to plan suitable equipment, clothing and behaviours for travel.

Issues can arise as a result of changes to or within a region or conflicts about how a region and the resources within it should be used. Planning for solutions involves compromise among different stakeholders and decision-making about how space and resources are to be used.

The issues case study centers on how different levels of government, including the international UNESCO, can manage and protect the unique region of the Niagara escarpment. Land-use policies, World Biosphere Reserve designation and other aspects of planning and decision-making need to take many different viewpoints into account, on how the land in the region should be used. In the Geotech Activity students create a map of popular tourist regions with hot links to the regions.

Key Understandings

- Regions are places on the earth's surface, big or small, with unique characteristics
- Regions have boundaries to delimit their extent
- Regions are a tool to help us better understand our complex world and solve problems and issues
- Geographers analyze data to determine regions and their boundaries
- People use regions to organize large amounts of complex information for investigating issues
- Tourists use regions and their characteristics when planning and making travel decisions
- The Niagara escarpment is a region with distinct natural and human characteristics
- Tourism development on the Niagara escarpment attracts many visitors each year
- There are many different viewpoints about how the Niagara escarpment should be managed and protected

Key Terms

- **Boundaries**: edges of a region, may be clearly defined or amorphous
- **Functional Region**: an area defined by its ongoing activities or functions
- **Homogeneous**: the presence of same factors within a geographic region
- **Multifactor Region**: an area identified using many overlapping characteristics
- **Region**: an area of the Earth's surface that has characteristics that make it unique or different from other places
- **Single factor Region**: an area identified using only one characteristic
- **Transition Zone**: an area with fewer visible characteristics of the region
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**SUGGESTED APPROACHES**

1. **Pick the Regions**
   In addition to the chart above, here are some ideas for classroom activities:
   To review the concept of region and introduce students to how regions can be useful in solving problems and issues, provide them with a copy of the photograph of Vancouver (BLM 5) (see possible answer key (BLM 7)) and accompanying activity sheet “Pick the Regions” (BLM 6). Students will outline the boundaries of regions they see on the photograph, identify the type of region, natural and/or human criteria used for each region, how tourists might use the region, and give each a name. They will list ways that using the regions might help when investigating and solving issues. This activity could be used as a diagnostic or for formative assessment.

   **Expectations demonstrated:**
   - Demonstrate an understanding of how a variety of factors are used to define regions
   - Explain how natural and human criteria are used to establish regional boundaries
   - Demonstrate an understanding of different types of regions
   - Identify the natural resources on which tourism is based
   - Explain how geographers use the concept of regions in investigating and solving problems and issues
   - Use geographic terms correctly in written and oral communication

2. **Facts About Regions**
   Use the chapter including photographs and their captions to create a list of 10 “Facts About Regions”

3. **Ontario Travel Regions**
   As a research activity, provide students with the map of Ontario Travel Regions (BLM 8). This can be used as the basis of an internet research assignment. There are 12 regions. With students working in pairs on a different region, have them conduct research to find the natural and human features that would appeal to tourists, develop a trip route and itinerary for a 10-day trip within their region after identifying a particular season and type of tourism being featured, and/or a set of travel tips and quiz for rest of the class on the natural and human features of each region.
   Another option is for students to use an Ontario road map and create a road rally highlighting features within their chosen region.

   **Expectations demonstrated:**
   - Explain how natural and human criteria are used to establish regional boundaries
   - Analyse the major characteristics of a selected tourist region in terms of natural, cultural, economic and political criteria

4. **Image of Your Home Place**
   What is the ‘image’ that students hold of their local region? Why is it unique? What are its characteristics? Its boundaries? What aspects of it would appeal to tourists? Students who are interested in photography may wish to create a photo essay to illustrate its attractive natural and human features and facilities. Another option would be to write a letter to municipal council outlining changes that could be made to attract more tourists, tourism-related industry, and ‘boost’ the economy.

   **Expectations demonstrated:**
   - Collect data through field observation and apply these data to a study dealing with an aspect of tourism in their local region
   - Explain how natural and human criteria are used to establish regional boundaries
   - Analyse the major characteristics of a selected tourist region in terms of natural, cultural, economic and political criteria
   - Research and report on the potential of natural and human factors to attract tourists to their local region
Create Your Own Regions

Students will select 2 or 3 criteria for a particular kind of multifactor region. See answer key for question 10 below for some sample region ideas. These could be any topic or might be something related to travel and tourism. Students will create their own examples of regions, but possible ideas include: "Regions of Fun in the Sun", with criteria such as countries with tropical climates AND noted beach areas AND famous golf courses or "Regions of Extreme Adventure" with criteria such as location within a country, state or province of white-water rivers AND location of caves/caverns AND areas of cliffs and thermal uplift (check a hang-gliding web site for information) Students will need an outline map of the world (BLM Map 1) or a sketch map of the country, province etc. on which to outline the location of the 2 or 3 criteria in different colours. Where the criteria overlap, students will outline their 'regions' in another colour. A legend on their map will identify criteria, and final boundaries of the regions. The number of regions will vary.

Expectations demonstrated:
- Use information from a variety of primary and secondary sources when conducting geographic inquiries
- Evaluate the quality and validity of information found in various sources
- Produce and interpret different types of maps
- Demonstrate an understanding of how a variety of factors are used to define regions
- Explain how natural and human criteria are used to establish regional boundaries
- Demonstrate an understanding of different types of regions

Field Study

For schools within reasonable driving distance of some part of the Niagara escarpment, this is a good field study location. Look for tourism opportunities and other land uses that conflict with protection of the unique natural resources. Visit Niagara escarpment planning offices in the Niagara region, or visit/speak with various stakeholders in the study area. (e.g. gravel pit operation, farmer, vineyard, parks planner etc.) Take a short hike on the Bruce Trail. Be sure to follow the policy and procedures of your school and board.

Possible Student Answers

Check In - Page 36

1. In what ways does the Little India example use similarities and differences in analyzing places?
   Regions are defined by their similarities or common properties. These characteristics set the region apart from the places that have different characteristics. In this example, those parts of the study area where there were any three of the four variables that overlapped were included in the region because this where the strongest Indian influence exists. Those parts that had fewer than three variables were excluded because they were different and the Indian influence was not visibly as strong.

2. Brainstorm two other characteristics that might be used to identify a cultural neighbourhood. Suggest a way to collect data about each.
   Some other variables that could be used to identify a cultural neighbourhood might be the presence of eating establishments such as cafes or coffee shops, places of worship, cultural community centers, clothing worn, culturally specific homes for the aged, and so on.
Check In - Page 41

1. a) Explain how natural and human characteristics are used to establish regions.
   Regions are defined by the presence or absence of particular characteristics determined by the purpose of the study. Regions may then be defined using only one characteristic such as the presence or absence of mountains or people who speak German. Or they could be defined by a number of characteristics as in ecozones that are defined by both natural and human characteristics.

   b) Give two examples of regions defined by natural characteristics alone, two defined only by human characteristics and two defined by both natural and human characteristics.
   Natural - landform regions, nesting ground for certain species, brook trout streams, maple forest, snow capped mountains
   Human - census tracts, ethnic neighbourhoods, telephone exchanges, transit routes, school districts or boards, trading blocs such as NAFTA members
   Natural and human - National Parks, agricultural regions (Cotton belt), countries, cities.

2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of defining a region using multiple factors?
   Advantages: regions can suggest interrelationships among variables, regions are more sophisticated in their definition, regions can be more clearly defined, a greater variety of problems may be addressed, regions can be understood or recognized better
   Disadvantages: more data must be accessed, the outer edge becomes more indistinct, requires subjective setting of standards for inclusion in the region such as three out of four variables.

3. a) What is the smallest region that you could define? For what purpose might you identify such a small region?
   Small regions tend to be homogeneous such as a streetscape, park or small island that needs to be identified so as to be studied or planned for specific uses or reasons.

   b) What is the largest region that you know about? For what purpose might you use such a region?
   Theoretically, the whole planet could be defined as a region, but this would not be of much help in understanding spatial arrangements and patterns that result from human activity. The largest practical size would be groups of countries, such as the Middle East or members of NAFTA. The whole planet defined as the biosphere could however be used to analyse the global impact of planet-wide issues such as climate change or ozone layer depletion.
Check In - Page 51

1. a) In what ways can the Niagara Escarpment be considered a region?
   The Niagara Escarpment is a region because it can be clearly identified on the surface of the earth by its main distinctive characteristic - a steep cliff formed by the erosion of weaker layers of material under a more resistant dolomite layer.

   b) Explain how the commission responsible for implementing the Niagara Escarpment Plan uses the concept of a region to investigate and solve problems and issues related to development of the area. The Niagara Escarpment Plan makes the escarpment the core or central part of the region. Those areas that are affected by the escarpment, or will affect it, are also included in the "region". In this way, a region, with distinctive characteristics is defined and used to make decisions about how the land within the region will be managed. Because of this plan, the distinctive ecological qualities of the escarpment have a better chance of being protected.

2. Sketch a poster to promote the tourist potential of the Niagara Escarpment. Explain in a paragraph why you chose the symbols or images you used in your poster.
   Have students list the natural and human characteristics (land uses) found in this chapter and then try to create a visual to incorporate as many of these as possible. Tourism posters around the classroom might help generate some idea of what is possible with enough information about the region.

3. The Niagara Escarpment Plan has been criticized because it controls the ways that people who live near the escarpment can use their land.
   a) Summarize arguments that these critics might make to the provincial government if they were trying to get the plan changed.

   Critics of the Plan might argue:
   • The plan limits the rights of landowners to use their land as they wish
   • Government bureaucracies don’t know the local situation
   • The plan discourages the benefits of ‘market forces’
   • Development is slower and more costly as more approvals are necessary

   b) Summarize arguments that a supporter of the plan might make to keep the plan intact.

   Supporters of the plan might argue:
   • The plan provides a comprehensive approach to development that maximizes positive conditions
   • The plan gives better protection to the environment
   • Developers cannot impose their schemes on an unwilling public
   • This is the best way to manage a sensitive ecological area

   c) Which side of the issue do you support? Give reasons for your opinion.
   Students must give evidence to support their choice.
Revisit the Chapter : Looking Back

Understanding the Concepts

1. Offer one example (other than those used in this chapter) to show that regions may be defined using a variety of factors.
   Regions are defined using variables that have spatial components such as political units (Ontario), urban regions (Greater Toronto Area) or natural areas (the Prairies, the Sahara desert).

2. What are three important characteristics for the concept of a region?
   Patterns: the arrangement of shapes, lines or items that can be identified on the earth’s surface both natural (mountain ranges) and human (road patterns, network of cities).
   Movements: changes in locations that occur in a place such as movement of tourists to a region or the migration of animals from one region to another
   Interactions: connections between human and natural systems such as agriculture or transportation systems or between people in different regions.

3. Describe the skills required to identify regions, such as Little India.
   Skills such as those of data collection (questionnaires, surveys, observations, research) , data organization (using computer mapping skills), interpretation and analysis, (making sense of the data, drawing conclusions) synthesis (compiling appropriate data from different sources, bringing ideas together) and evaluation (identifying bias, drawing conclusions) are some of the skills required.

4. Using ideas from the little India example, explain how geographers use the concept of regions to investigate and solve problems and issues.
   Since the characteristics of the region known as Little India are unique and unlike those of other parts of the city, urban problems and issues there can be resolved specifically to that neighbourhood. What works in one part of the city may not work in another as the neighbourhoods (regions) have inherently different characteristics such as cultural or socio-economic tendencies.

5. Write a letter to a friend explaining how the concept of a region has been used to improve the tourism potential of the Niagara Escarpment by protecting its natural systems.
   The letter should point out that the concept of a region has provided a basis for the Niagara Escarpment Plan that shapes development along this physical feature. In protecting the environment and its natural systems, the tourist potential of the escarpment is enhanced.
Practicing Your Skills

6. What factors will affect the characteristics of regions?
   Some of these factors are:
   • Political boundaries because policies and procedures can produce spatial patterns such as a town's willingness to allow subdivision development on farmlands or wetlands
   • Natural features such as rivers or mountains act as barriers to movement or funnels at bridges or mountain passes that encourage development around them
   • Communication methods such as newspapers or local radio and television link those who live within the catchment areas of these media, influencing travel patterns such as those to shop, entertainment or work.

7. Use the issues approach described in chapter one (pages 15-21) to analyze the issue of development of the Niagara Escarpment. Answer these questions:
   a) What is the issue?
   b) Who are the stakeholders when it comes to development of the Niagara Escarpment?
   c) What are the viewpoints of the stakeholders?
   d) Write a one-page summary of your position on the issue.

Students should respond using some of these ideas:
   • The issue might be stated as: Should governments take away the rights of landowners to ensure protection of a unique environment? Or should citizens of a province support government initiatives to protect special places?
   • Lists of stakeholders will include: landowners, residents in the vicinity of the escarpment, local governments, natural resource industries such as the aggregate industry, provincial governments, tourists, environmentalists.
   • Viewpoints are: governments, some landowners, tourists and environmentalists would generally be in favour of development controls. Developers, aggregate industry and some landowners would feel that the controls limit their access to or use of resources.
   • The strength of stakeholder positions is an opinion. Students should give evidence to support their views.
   • Again, students must clearly offer evidence to justify their viewpoint.

Students could use a graphic organizer like the following to answer parts a), b), and c)
Should protection of the Niagara Escarpment's unique natural features be a top priority?

- 7 million people and growing live close by
- intense pressure to develop the region for different land uses – housing, recreation, gravel pits, roads, farms, etc.

**Tourist Industry**
- attracted by natural features
- want access to hiking trails, parks
- enjoys private access to many natural features
- some allow hiking on property
- some resent government control on how land is used
- enjoy private access to many natural features
- maintain trail for hikes
- provide maps, resources
- build estate homes at top of cliffs and elsewhere
- apply for amendments to plan to build resorts, subdivisions, etc.

**Tourists**
- International UNESCO
- Provincial
- Local towns:
- wineries:
- local farms:
- some allow hiking on property
- some resent government control on how land is used
- enjoy private access to many natural features

**Industry**
- governments
- NGOs
- environmentalists
- farmers
- developers
- landowners

**Eg.**
- Bruce Trail Association
- maintains trail for hikers
- provides maps, resources
- monitors government and how it follows plan
- attracts people to protect lands and public access
- want to protect lands and public access
- different land uses – housing, recreation, gravel pits, roads, farms, etc.
**Applying Your Skills**

8. Does your community have a tourist region? To answer this question, brainstorm a list of the sites in and around your community that people would likely describe as tourist destinations. Locate these places on a map of your community. Is there a pattern to the locations? What does this pattern indicate about a tourist region?

Local topographic, municipal, land use and street and highway maps can be used to do this activity. A field study to find and locate sites on the map is a good possibility within a smaller region. GIS applications are possible if a local database is available. Many municipal planning departments have one.

9. Research a region in your local area, such as a land use region or a distinctive neighbourhood. Try to answer these questions about the region:
   a) What characteristics or criteria were used to define the region?
   b) What is the function or purpose of this region?

This activity is much dependent on the conditions in your local area. Review with students the situation of Little India posed at the beginning of the chapter to develop the notion of a systematic definition of a geographic regional entity. Emphasize the need for a purpose or function in defining regions.

10. Think of a purpose for using regions, such as what makes a tourist region in the world. Once you have a purpose, determine which characteristics or criteria would help you to define the regions. Conduct research to find information about the topic, then divide the world into regions on an outline map.

Student answers should include different purposes than those used in this chapter and may, with their examples, look or be presented like this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem or Topic</th>
<th>Characteristics or Criteria</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global hunger</td>
<td>• nutrition levels</td>
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<td>• infant mortality</td>
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<td>• GNP per capita</td>
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<td>• foreign aid levels</td>
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<td>Natural Disasters</td>
<td>• locations of natural disaster types</td>
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<td>• relief spending information</td>
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<td>• number of relief workers</td>
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<td>World Troublespots</td>
<td>• military spending</td>
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<td>• size of armed forces</td>
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<td>• UN sanctions</td>
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<td>• land mines</td>
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There are some GIS opportunities researching and identifying regions to complete this question.
**Thinking Like a Tourist**

11. **Identify one way that people might use the concept of a region to plan tourist activities.**
   Share your ideas with others and list the ‘best’ way from everyone’s ideas.
   Tourists tend to think in general terms when thinking of where to go on a holiday then move to the specific destination such as:
   - Hot and sunny = the Caribbean
   - Historic culture = Europe
   - Alpine skiing = Western Canada
   Tourists then use the regions to fine tune their destinations such as selecting French colonial history in the Caribbean or mountainous parts of Europe or skiing the interior such as Banff as opposed to a coastal resort such as Whistler.

12. **Suppose you are a world traveller and have numerous videotapes about places you have visited.**
    You need to categorize these videos. Brainstorm three ways that you might use the concept of regions to organize your collection.
    Some ways that students might suggest using regions to organize the videotapes are: using geographic descriptions (Middle East, South Asia, etc.), using cultural characteristics (Hindu, Moslem, etc.), using economic conditions (least developed, developing, etc.), using climatic descriptions (tropical, temperate, etc.).

**Job Skills**

Problem-solving skills are important to employers. The ability to identify the root cause of a problem is one skill.

**Suppose you are being interviewed for a position in the travel and tourism industry.** During the interview, you are asked to explain how concepts and ideas you learned in school will make you a better problem solver. Write a paragraph on how understanding the concept of regions makes you a more useful employee.

Using regions can help make a person a better problem solver because they involve skills such as:
   - Identifying the problem
   - Identifying relevant characteristics of the problem for study
   - Choosing criteria for decision making
   - Collecting data
   - Identifying patterns and trends
   - Making decisions based on evidence
   - Communicating the results of your regional study
This activity provides an opportunity for you to:

- Understand how a variety of factors are used to define regions
- Explain how natural and human criteria are used to establish regional boundaries
- Identify the natural resources on which tourism is based
- Explain how geographers use the concept of regions in investigating and solving problems and issues
- Use geographic terms correctly
- Interpret different types of maps and diagrams

Using the photocopy of the Vancouver photograph, decide on as many different regions in the Vancouver area as you can identify (although there are more, 5 or 6 would be enough!). Then use the chart below to complete your regional analysis.

1. Outline the general boundaries for each region in different markers or coloured pencils.
2. Identify each region you have outlined by creating an appropriate name for it.
3. Describe the natural and human features that are characteristic of each region.
4. Identify the tourist activities that would most suit each region.
5. Write a paragraph explaining how regions might be used to investigate and solve issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Name it</th>
<th>Characteristics (natural/human)</th>
<th>Tourist activities</th>
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<tr>
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VANCOUVER – PICK THE REGIONS

POSSIBLE REGIONS (students answers will vary considerably)

1. Mountains
2. Suburban shore
3. Park (Stanley Park)
4. Central Business District (downtown core)
5. Manufacturing/industrial
6. High density residential
7. Harbour Region
8. The whole region – Greater Vancouver area

6. The whole region – Greater Vancouver area
7. Harbour Region
6. High density residential
Ontario Travel Regions

South Central Ontario
Region 1: Southwestern Ontario
Region 2: Festival Country
Region 3: Lakelands
Region 4: Metropolitan Toronto

Eastern Ontario
Region 5: Getaway Country
Region 6: Ontario East

Northeastern Ontario
Region 7: Near North
Region 8: Rainbow Country
Region 9: Algoma Country
Region 10: James Bay Frontier

Northwestern Ontario
Region 11: North of Superior
Region 12: Sunset Country