

Chapter 1: The Geography of Canada





Regional Geography

- There are six major physical regions in Canada
- Each has its own unique climate and vegetation
- As a result, different regions are better suited for certain economic activities than others
 - Ex. Fishing, farming, mining, logging, etc.



Appalachian Region

- A mountainous region on the east coast of North America
- Topography (shape of the land)
 - Low mountain ranges, rolling hills, river valleys
- Origins
 - Older mountain range worn down by glaciers and erosion
 - Layers of sedimentary rock helped create coal
 - Volcanic activity formed metallic minerals



Appalachian Region

- Vegetation
 - Heavily forested with mixed coniferous and deciduous trees
- Economic Activity
 - Mining
 - Logging
 - Fishing
 - Trade (sea ports)





Canadian Shield

- A very rocky region that stretches from the Arctic to Eastern Canada
- Topography
 - Flat, bare rock (oldest in North America)
 - Some lakes and wetlands
- Origins
 - Volcanic mountain range worn down by glaciers
 - Heat and pressure created many mineral deposits



Canadian Shield

- Vegetation
 - Mostly boreal forests
 - Thin soil makes it unsuitable for agriculture
- Economic Activity
 - Pulp and paper industry
 - Mining
 - copper, gold, lead, diamonds, nickel, platinum, etc.







Arctic

- The plains, lowlands, and mountains in northern Canada
- Topography
 - Very flat near the ocean, with some mountains
- Origins
 - Pressure from the Canadian Shield formed fold mountains
 - Climate change has led to less sea ice, more open water



Arctic

- Vegetation
 - Sparse vegetation
 - Small shrubs, mosses, lichens
 - Trees cannot grow on the tundra
- Economic Activity
 - Mining
 - Oil and natural gas drilling
 - Fishing





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St. Lawrence Lowlands

- Small region along St. Lawrence River and Great Lakes
- Topography
 - Flat plains, rolling hills, deep river valleys
 - Several escarpments (steep cliffs)
- Origins
 - Formed by receding ice sheets after Ice Age
 - Ice sheets pushed soil off Canadian Shield into Lowlands, then melted into lakes



St. Lawrence Lowlands

- Vegetation
 - Fertile soils
 - Mixed deciduous and coniferous forests
- Economic Activity
 - Farming
 - Logging
 - Manufacturing
 - Urban economic activity





Interior Plains

- Vast plains running up the centre of Canada and the United States
- Topography
 - Flat or gently rolling plains at various elevations
- Origins
 - Formed by soils deposited at edges of numerous rivers, turned into horizontal layers of sedimentary rock, helped create fossil fuels



Interior Plains

- Vegetation
 - Mostly prairie grasses
 - Used to have more forests
- Economic Activity
 - Farming (mostly wheat and grains)
 - Mining
 - Oil and natural gas drilling





Western Cordillera

- The parallel ranges of mountains and valleys that run along Western N. America
- Topography
 - Tall, rough mountain ranges divided by valleys
- Origins
 - Plate collision pushed up mountains, pushed down valleys (prone to earthquakes)
 - Glacier erosion left mountains “rocky”



Western Cordillera

- Vegetation
 - Very old and immense evergreens
 - Rain forest
 - Less vegetation higher up in the mountains
- Economic Activity
 - Logging
 - Fishing
 - Mining
 - Farming







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