

## Chapter 3: Settlement Patterns & Ways of Life in Canada



### 1. Introduction

James is a sixth grade student in Pond Inlet, a town in Nunavut. Located in the far northern part of Canada, Nunavut is the homeland for the Inuit people. When James goes to school in January, the sun never comes up. Looking out of his classroom window in the dark winter months, all he sees are streetlights and the lights of cars. Some of his classes at school are taught in English while others are in Inuktitut, the language of the Inuit. The majority of sixth graders, including James, also speak Inuktitut at home. In fact, in their language, the town's name is Mittimatalik.

Compare James with Marie, a sixth grader in Quebec City, which is in eastern Canada. Marie is French Canadian, and all of her classes are taught in French. Because of Quebec City's location, it is always light outside when Marie is in school—she can watch many people passing by on the streets outdoors. James and Marie live in the same country, but their experiences are very different.

Canada is such a large, diverse country that it is often called a **plural society**. This term reflects the fact that the Canadian people have come from many countries and cultures. While most people share a Canadian identity, many also keep the traditions of their parents and grandparents.

Canadians often divide their country into five **regions**. In this chapter, you will explore these regions and determine how differently people live in each one. You will also discover how location influences people's lives.

#### Essential Question

**How does where you live influence how you live?**

This illustration shows the five regions of Canada. Each region has a different climate. Each region's history and economy are different too. These differences affect how people live in Canada. Keep this illustration in mind as you try to answer the Essential Question.

#### Graphic Organizer



### 2. The Geographic Setting

In area, Canada is the world's second largest country, covering most of the northern part of the North American continent. The United States is Canada's neighbor to the south, and the two countries share a border that is about 5,000 miles long. This is the longest unguarded border in the world.

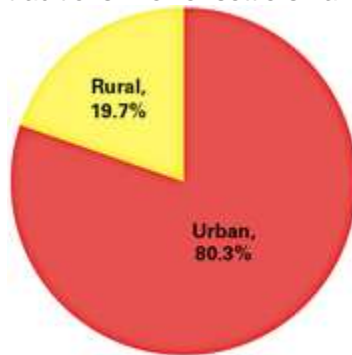
## Canada's Three "Founding Peoples"

The first people to settle in Canada probably came from Asia thousands of years ago. Pursuing mammoth, huge bison, and other game, the people crossed over a broad land bridge linking the continents of Asia and North America. In time, their descendants became the Inuit and other Native American groups. Groups moved southward, gradually spreading throughout the Americas. But the native peoples who still live in Canada are known as Canada's first "founding peoples."

Canada's second and third founding peoples came from Europe. In the early 1600s, the French established a settlement, calling the place by its Native American name, Quebec. Meanwhile, English colonists had settled on the Atlantic coast in what is now the state of Virginia. France and Great Britain struggled for power worldwide and in the mid-1700s fought a war for control of North America. When the war ended in 1763, Great Britain was victorious. As a result, France gave up Canada to Great Britain.

In the 1800s, large numbers of English settlers came to Canada, but the French Canadians held on to their language and way of life. Meanwhile, Canada attracted settlers from Ireland, Scotland, Sweden, Norway, and Germany. By the early 1900s, Italians, Ukrainians, and Jews were arriving from southern and eastern Europe. Some settled in the big eastern cities while others began farms on the flat land in central Canada. Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino people came from Asia as well, and many settled along Canada's Pacific coast.

All of these groups have helped to shape Canada's plural society. Its founding peoples have kept their languages and traditions. Newer settlers have also held on to traditional ways. Yet all are Canadians.



**A Thinly Settled Country** Canada is large in area but small in population. In 2008, more than 33 million people lived there. That is fewer people than lived in the state of California.

Approximately 8 out of every 10 Canadians live in an **urban** area. These are areas in or around cities. The rest of the population make their homes in **rural** areas. These are parts of the country that are not near cities.

Most of Canada's people live within 100 miles of the United States. This strip of land lies within Canada's **ecumene**. An ecumene is a region that is well suited for people to live permanently.

Many Americans think that Canadians' lives are just like theirs. This is not the case. It is true that many Canadians live close to the United States. It is also true that Canada and the United States are each other's most important trading partner. And it is true that they are good allies. But there are many political, economic, and cultural differences between the two countries.

## 3. Canada's Five Regions

Canada is divided into provinces and territories. There are 10 provinces, each with its own government—much like states in the United States. A territory is an area that cannot become a province until its population is larger.

Geographers often divide Canada into five large regions, which are outlined in black on the map shown here. As you will see, each region has its own geography, history, and way of life.

**Atlantic Region** This region lines the Atlantic coast of Canada. The island of Newfoundland with Labrador on the mainland form one province. The peninsula of Nova Scotia with an island to the northeast form another. Two other provinces are Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick on the mainland.

**Core Region** This region in eastern Canada stretches north of the Great Lakes. It includes the two large provinces of Ontario and Quebec. It was in Quebec that the French, Canada's second founding people, made their first permanent settlement.

**Prairie Region** This region covers Canada's central plains—from grasslands to wooded country to plateaus. The region includes the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

### ▶ Geoterms

**ecumene** a geographic region that is well suited for permanent settlement by people. Areas not included in the ecumene are generally too dry, too cold, or too rugged for permanent human settlement.

**plural society** a society in which different cultural groups keep their own identity, beliefs, and traditions

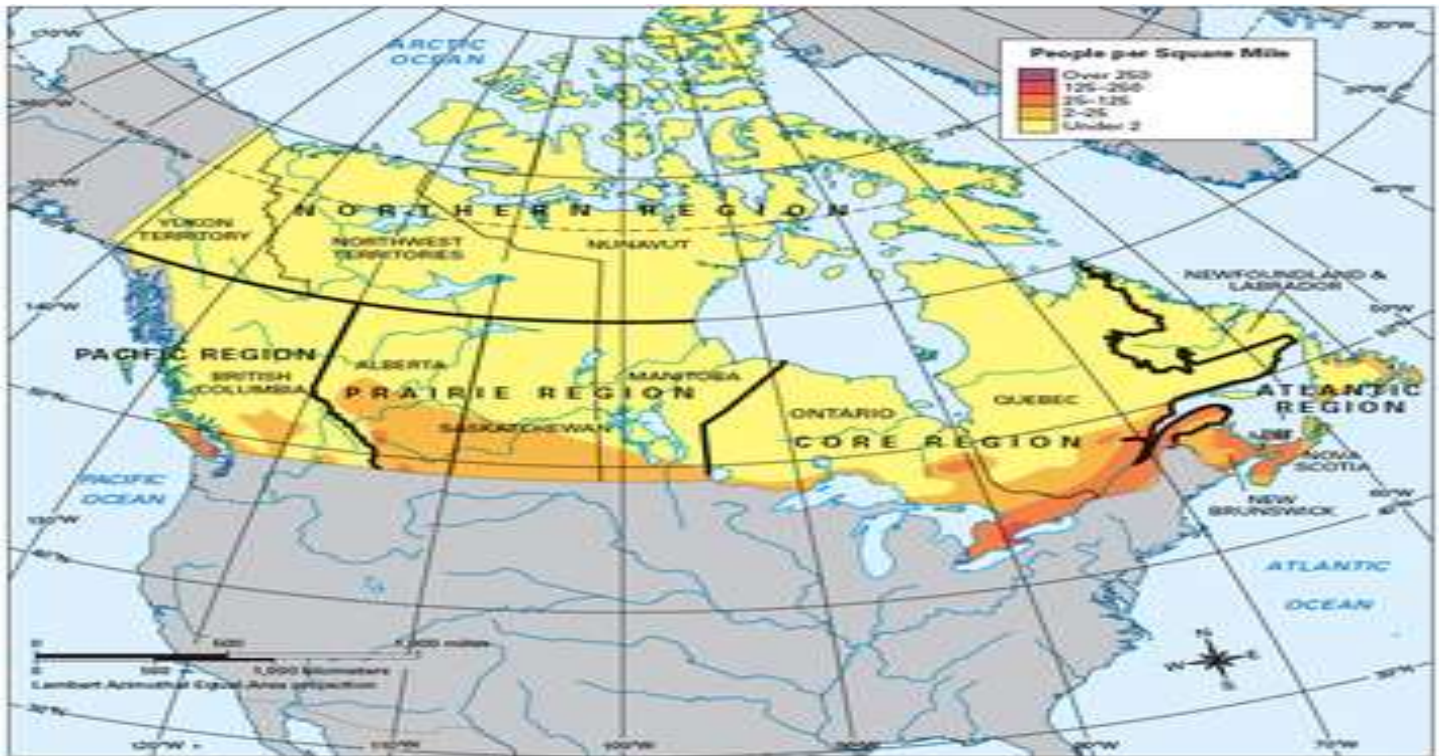
**rural** found in or living in areas that are not close to cities

**urban** found in or living in a city

**Pacific Region** This region on Canada's Pacific coast is made up of the province of British Columbia. It has many islands and good harbors for ocean trade. It is also the most mountainous province.

**Northern Region** This region lies to the north of the provinces and reaches far into the Arctic Ocean. It includes Canada's three territories: the Yukon Territory, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. Nunavut, which means "our land," was carved from the Northwest Territories as a homeland for the Inuit people.

**Population Density of Canada**



**4. Settlement Patterns: Who Lives Where?**

Imagine that you could spread Canada's people out evenly. About eight people would live in every square mile of land. But Canada's people do not live like this. Outside of the large cities, an average of only two people live in every square mile.



**The Atlantic Region** This was the first area where Europeans settled in Canada. They came because fishing was so good in the North Atlantic. Until recent years, most people here made a living by fishing, but the ocean has been overfished. The government now limits fishing to make sure there will be fish in the future. As a result, many people have moved away.

**The Core Region** Most Canadians live in Canada's core region. This region has three of Canada's largest cities: Toronto, Montreal, and the [capital city](#) of Ottawa. In the past, people came to Ontario to work in its many factories. More recently they have come for jobs in banks, computer companies, and other businesses.

**The Prairie Region** More than 5 million people live in the three prairie provinces. Farming was once the main activity here, but today the oil and gas business is booming in Alberta. As a result, Alberta is the fastest-growing province in Canada. Its largest cities, Edmonton and Calgary, are popular urban areas.

**The Pacific Region** British Columbia is home to more than 4 million people. Most live around the cities of Vancouver and Victoria. People also live on the western slopes of the Rocky Mountains. Many people from Asia have moved to this region because of its location on the Pacific Ocean.

**The Northern Region** This is the largest region in land area, but it has the smallest number of people. Only about 100,000 people live in all three territories. Living in the region is costly because it is so far from other places. In addition, there are so few roads that goods often have to be flown in by plane.

## 5. A Plural Society: Who Speaks What?

If you walked around Toronto, Ontario, you would hear people speaking a variety of languages. Of course, you would hear English and French, but many other cultural groups live there as well. Toronto has one of the most multicultural school districts in the world. More than half of the students in the city speak a language other than English at home.

**The Atlantic Region** Most people in this region speak English as their first language because their families came from Great Britain to farm or fish many years ago. Some French speakers settled here as well, and French remains their first language.

**The Core Region** In Ontario most people speak English; in Quebec most people speak French. Other languages spoken in this region include Chinese, Italian, and Portuguese. For many years, Canadians argued about which language their government should use. The government finally ended the argument by making both French and English the country's official languages.

Some people in Quebec think their province should be a separate country. In 1995, the people of Quebec voted whether to make the province its own state, independent of Canada. In a very close vote, the measure was rejected by just 1 percent. However, enthusiasm for independence has steadily dwindled in recent years, with support dropping well below 40 percent in public opinion polls.

**The Prairie Region** European settlers first came to this region to farm. Now oil in Alberta attracts newcomers. English is the first language for more than four out of five people who live in this region. But people who speak French, German, and Ukrainian have moved here too, seeking work and homes.

**The Pacific Region** Here English is the first language, but many people from Asia also live in this region. Chinese is the second most common language. In addition, people from India speak Punjabi, and people from the Philippines speak Tagalog.

**The Northern Region** Almost two thirds of the people in the north speak English as their first language. Many are English-speaking Canadians who moved here to work for the government. Most of the founding peoples, such as the Inuit, have retained their cultures. The Inuit, for instance, continue to speak Inuktitut.

## 6. Having Fun in the Cold





Winters are long and summers are short in this northern country, so Canadians have adjusted by finding ways to have fun in all seasons. In summer, for example, people use the Rideau Canal in Ottawa for boating. But in the winter the canal freezes, and for a few months it becomes the longest skating rink in the world.

**The Atlantic Region** This area has a **humid continental** climate, which is fairly mild. Winters can be very wet, though. Halifax, the capital of Nova Scotia, for instance, gets around five inches of **precipitation** in January alone.

Nova Scotia is said to be the birthplace of ice hockey. The story goes that Canadians were unhappy spending the long winter months indoors. They knew of a game that is like field hockey. Then someone thought to put on skates, and ice hockey was born. Today ice hockey is popular in the United States too.

**The Core Region** The southern part of this area also has a humid continental climate. The average temperature of Toronto, Ontario, in July is a pleasant 63°F.



Every February, Canadians celebrate Winterlude in Ottawa, in southeast Ontario. People ice skate and ride in horse-drawn sleighs along the Rideau Canal. There are ice-skating races and figure-skating contests. You can learn how to make ice carvings—or eat at a cafe carved from ice!

**The Prairie Region** The southern part of this region has a **semiarid** to humid continental climate. The northern part has a **subarctic** climate. In Churchill, located on Hudson Bay in northeast Manitoba, the average January temperature is a frosty  $-16^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

Churchill is called the “Polar Bear Capital of the World.” In the fall, more than a thousand polar bears pass through the town to gather at Hudson Bay. There they wait for the bay to freeze so they can hunt for food. And every fall, people travel to Churchill to see this event.

**The Pacific Region** The coast of British Columbia has a **marine west coast** climate. In Vancouver, January temperatures average 37°F. This is much warmer than most parts of Canada.

Winter surfing is a popular sport off the Pacific coast, where large waves from winter storms challenge surfers. Farther inland lie the Coast Mountains and, even farther, the Rocky Mountains. The Rockies' highest peak in Canada is Mt. Robson, which soars 12,972 feet in British Columbia. The high altitudes here definitely mean long, cold winters, and you will find some of Canada's best ski resorts in this region.

**The Northern Region** Much of this area is treeless **tundra**. The most northern part has very few plants. The southern part has a subarctic climate. The temperature in the town of Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, in July averages 57°F. The all-terrain vehicle has replaced the traditional dog sled in the north. People still love to compete in dog sled races, though. A long-distance race in winter, over mountains, frozen rivers, and other rough terrain, can cover 1,000 miles and take up to two weeks.



## 7. Different Traditions and Needs: What's Built Where?

Let's say you are visiting the Museum of Civilization, a short trip from Ottawa. You see houses of Canada's native peoples. Later you look at a lumber camp and then walk past an oil derrick and a fishing village. You soon see how people's needs and traditions, as well as their locations, have led them to build different kinds of structures.

**The Atlantic Region** Lighthouses dot the coast in this region because of the importance of fishing. Lighthouses help sailors determine their position on the ocean. They also guide ships, letting them know that land is near or warning them about dangerous rocks. Canada still has several hundred lighthouses in operation. The powerful light at the top of each lighthouse continues to flash. But there are new tools as well—radar beams, radio links, cellular phones, and even, perhaps, a helicopter and helipad atop a lighthouse.



**The Core Region** Many buildings here combine French and British influences. The Parliament Buildings in Ottawa were built in the Gothic revival style of architecture, which French and British settlers brought from western Europe. These large stone buildings have tall, pointed windows, pointed arches, and carved ornaments. Another example of the Gothic revival style is the Château Frontenac, a famous hotel in Quebec City.



**The Prairie Region** Farms cover the southern part of this region, with the typical farm sitting on hundreds of acres of land. Beside the barn is a silo, a tall, round structure used for storing grain. Farmers in this rural region usually grow spring wheat. This crop is planted in spring and harvested in late summer and grows well in climates with harsh winters. Farmers here also grow barley, another grain crop, and usually raise livestock as well.



**The Pacific Region** British influence is strong here. In the mid-1800s, Victoria—named for ruling Queen Victoria—became the first city in British Columbia and eventually its capital. Located off the mainland, on Vancouver Island, Victoria is known as the most British of Canadian cities. Some buildings there look almost like castles.

**The Northern Region** This region has long, cold winters. In the past, some Inuit made winter igloos from snow blocks. The word *igloo* translates to

“house.” Igloos can also be made of other materials, such as sod, stone, or wood. Today, most Inuit have houses made from kits. Such a house is put together from sections made in factories. Inuit live in widely scattered villages along the Arctic Ocean or Hudson Bay.

## 8. How People Make a Living

Canada is rich in [natural resources](#). Fish, furs, and lumber were early exports. Today oil and minerals are important as well. Even so, most Canadians today work in service industries—industries that produce a service for people rather than goods. Examples include restaurants, dry cleaners, and banks.

**The Atlantic Region** In the 1800s, this region had a strong economy. Good fishing in the Atlantic Ocean made it easy to make a living. In recent years, however, overfishing has led to limits on fishing. Many cod-fishing grounds, for instance, were closed by the government in the 1990s. That, in turn, has put many people out of work.

Farming is also important, but poor soil limits farming to small, scattered patches of good land. **Forestry**, in contrast, is a growing industry. Forestry companies are producing lumber as well as pulp for paper.



**The Core Region** Most of Canada's factories are located here. This region is also a strong farming center—more than a third of Canada's farm products are grown here. Recently, the region has become a large producer of **hydroelectric power**, which is electricity generated from flowing rivers. Some power plants are located on rivers in northern Quebec while others are situated near Niagara Falls or along the St. Lawrence River.

**The Prairie Region** This region produces half of the country's farm products. Its southern plains are good for raising grains, such as wheat and barley, as well as livestock. Mining is also important—more than half of Canada's minerals are mined here. They include coal, nickel, copper, zinc, and uranium.

Much oil is trapped in the oil sands of northern Alberta. In fact, this area is thought to contain more oil than the entire Middle East. It is expensive to separate oil from sand, but demand for oil is high and Alberta's oil business is booming. The same is true in Edmonton, where major oil reserves were discovered nearby. Now it is one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada.

**The Pacific Region** Forestry and fishing are important in British Columbia, but now newer industries have passed these by. Both metals and coal are mined in this region. The shipping industry is growing as well. Shippers on the coast carry Canadian products to all parts of the world. In addition, many rivers have been dammed to produce hydroelectric power. Much of the electricity generated in British Columbia is sold to the United States.

**The Northern Region** Some native peoples still follow the nomadic, or wandering, life of herders and hunters, but most are settled in small villages. Because there is little business in most villages, jobs are few. Canadians from the south sometimes travel here to work for short periods, finding jobs with the government, churches, or mining companies. Many people in the territories believe that there are undiscovered precious minerals still to be found here.



## Summary - Beginning to Think Globally

In this chapter, you learned about settlement patterns and ways of life in Canada. You read about the various groups that make up Canada's plural society. You also learned about urban and rural areas in Canada.

For the most part, people have settled in Canada's ecumene. But not all Canadians live in the ecumene. Some people live in the subarctic region of Canada, and a few even make their homes in the far northern tundra climate zone.

This variety in settlement patterns is found in many places around the world. Consider Australia, for example. Many aborigines, the native people of Australia, choose to live in remote **deserts**, where they are able to retain their traditional way of life. But they face other problems there, such as lack of work and the challenge of keeping their culture alive. Think about these relationships between location and ways of life as you explore settlement patterns around the world in the next section.



## Global Connections

This map shows where people live around the world. The areas in purple represent the most densely populated regions—these are population hot spots in the global ecumene. The gray areas represent very thinly populated regions, which lie outside the global ecumene. Notice that different parts of the ecumene have different population densities. Why do you think this might be so?

**What climate zones are likely to be found in the global ecumene?** The climates found in the ecumene are neither too hot nor too cold for people to live comfortably. Areas outside of the ecumene, however, often have extreme temperatures. Few crops, for instance, can be grown in such climate regions. That helps explain why the regions are not part of the ecumene.

**Which physical features are likely to lie outside the global ecumene?** Some of Earth's physical features are not well suited for human settlement. Relatively few people live in major deserts because these areas are too dry to support life. Most mountainous regions are thinly settled because they are too rugged for most people. Many large swamps—wet, spongy lands that are submerged in water much of the time—also lie outside the ecumene.

**What might life be like for people who live outside the ecumene?** Most of the world's people live within the global ecumene, but some people live in less populated areas. They survive by finding ways to stay warm, keep cool, find water, or keep dry—even in the harshest conditions. In later chapters, you will look at different ways people adapt to living in extreme environments outside the ecumene.