Regional Landscapes of the United States and Canada
Canada’s National Core
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Regional Landscape Studies
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<<<For each region:
1. Know its physical geography.
2. Identify its unique characteristics.
3. Be able to explain the human imprint.
4. Discuss its sequence occupancy and economic development.

Canada’s National Core
When you think about this region, what images come into your mind?
- Toronto/Montreal
- French influence
- Great Lakes
- Thousand Islands
- Snow and cold
- Niagara Falls
- St. Lawrence River
- Canadian Parliament
- Hockey/winter sports

OVERVIEW
- Historically a contested region with a cultural divide (British/French; British/American).
- Distinctive sub-regional landscapes and toponymy.
- Canada’s chief urban-industrial area.
  (Conflict between the agric and urban land uses)
- A highly productive, diverse agricultural area.
- Transportation corridor: the St. Lawrence Seaway allows ocean-going vessels access to the interior of North America.

National Core
Term used in political geography to refer to:
1) the original area from which a country subsequently grew and developed; and/or
2) a region containing a country's greatest development, wealth, and densest populations; and/or
3) the part of a country where people have the clearest sense of national identity.

All three apply to Canada’s Core Region.
(Does the U.S. have a core area?)
Summers are long, hot and humid.
Winters extremely cold and snowy.
Spring/autumn unsettled.

Moderate climate, long growing season and good soils allowed an agricultural base to develop.

In the Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Lowland physiographic region.
Canadian Shield near surface.
Area was glaciated; has glacial lake sediments.

Physical Environment

Population of the Core
Called Canada’s “Main Street” because historically it contained over half of Canada’s people.

Settlement in the Core
This area was settled early in the colonial period. “Lower” and “Upper” designations refer to the area in relation to the river basin. French came from the east. (Cartier 1535; Champlain 1603; first settlement 1608). English came from the south. (Late 1700s: first after French & Indian War and again after the American Revolution). English encouraged settlement to counter the existing French influence. (English Protestants vs. French Catholics).

Canadian Toponymy
“Canada” comes from a Wendat (Huron-Iroquoian) word kanata, meaning “village.”
In 1535 native people used kanata to direct the French explorer Jacques Cartier to a village near the site of present-day Quebec City. Kanata became Canada, and got applied to the entire region, and later to the entire country.

“Quebec” comes from an Algonquin kébec, meaning “where the river narrows.”

Source: [link](http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/earth-sciences/geography-boundary/geographical-name/geoname-origins/5875)

Ottawa
Canada’s capital and 4th largest city
Site selected in 1857
- Only town of size on the border between Lower Canada (east) and Upper Canada (west), now Quebec and Ontario.
- A geographical compromise between English and French speaking areas
- Relatively immune to possible American attack (a lesson from the War of 1812)

National Core Cultural Boundary
National Atlas: P33 War of 1812 battle site.
French-speaking Canadians have resisted assimilation from the time of the English take-over: first the Acadian peasants, then the wealthy landlords.

French Language as a Mother Tongue

- All Canadians - 21%
  - Quebec – 81%
  - New Brunswick – 33%
  - Ontario – 6%
  - Nova Scotia – 4%

Quebec Sovereignty Movement

A political action aimed at the secession of Quebec and the creation of a new French-speaking country.

If successful, the action would partition Canada:
- Quebec (the new nation),
- Atlantic Provinces (which would be isolated from the rest of Canada),
- Western Canada (ONT to BC/YT).

Defeated twice. Rural areas tended to favor secession. Urban areas (esp. Montreal) opposed it.

Quebec City

- The French cultural capital of Canada.
- Acropolis site commanding the location where the Gulf of St. Lawrence meets the much narrower river.
- A choke point to control river travel.

Quebec City with La Citadelle

- This was the site of the battle for Quebec during the French and Indian War (1759).
- La Citadelle overlooks the St. Lawrence River and controls river traffic that has to slow down to make the curve.

French Long-lots

- Officially known as the Seigneurial System. A land division involving long narrow lots brought to America by the French.
- This system guaranteed access to property.
- No property owner could be isolated or dependent on his neighbor.

Seigneurial System

- Large land grants (seigneuries) were awarded by the King of France to entrepreneurs (seigneurs), who sub-granted parcels (rotoures) to peasant farmers (habitants).
- Each rotoure was 150-200 yards wide and arranged perpendicular to the St. Lawrence River and extended about a mile inland.
- After river frontage was occupied, roads were extended inland to create a new rank (rang) of rotoures.
- This was repeated inland as needed.

- Remember Acadian colony? No long-lot pattern there. Because the area was not inviting and no Seigneurs claimed the land.
MONTREAL

- Located at head of navigation (rapids) of the St. Lawrence R.
- Strategically located at the junction of a T-shaped low-land area where the St. Lawrence River Valley meets the Lake Champlain Lowland.
- Land routes radiate from the site.

Montreal

Canada’s most important eastern port city. The world’s 2nd largest French-speaking city.

St. Lawrence Seaway

System of locks, canals and deepened channels that permit ocean-going ships to travel 2,340 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to Duluth, MN on Lake Superior.

Thousand Islands Region

Extends from Cornwall, Ont. and Massena, NY to Kingston, Ont. and Cape Vincent, NY in the St. Lawrence River.

Consists of about 2,000 rocky outcrops that geologically link the Canadian Shield to the Adirondack Mts. (An impediment to the St. Lawrence Seaway construction.)

To be classified an island, there must be a tree or bush on it. Otherwise, it is a shoal. There 1,564 islands.

Thousand Islands St Lawrence River

It traverses the Canadian Core from Montreal to Lake Erie (5 locks) and the Welland Canal (8 locks) gets it over the Niagara Escarpment.

Thousand Islands section of the St Lawrence Seaway

It traverses the Canadian Core from Montreal to Lake Erie (5 locks) and the Welland Canal (8 locks) gets it over the Niagara Escarpment.
**Toronto**
- Canada’s largest city and 5th largest in N. Amer.
- Has a better hinterland than Montreal.
- Has excellent links to the US Midwest.
- Originally noted for its small harbor and portage from Lake Ontario to Georgian Bay.

- About 25% of all Canadians live in the Toronto metro area.
- It is a world financial center as well as a diversified manufacturing city.

**Niagara Escarpment**
- Extends from Rochester, NY through southern Ontario and into Michigan and Wisconsin. It is responsible for many waterfalls, the most famous of which is **Niagara Falls**.

- Located in the center of the “Golden Horseshoe” which extends from Toronto to the Niagara River.
- A sandbar provides it with a natural harbor.
- It is a center for heavy industry, producing c.60% of Canada’s steel.

**Niagara Falls**
(a beautiful impediment to shipping)

- Horseshoe Falls
- Canadian side of Niagara Falls

**Hamilton**
- Called the “City of Waterfalls.” It has more than 100 waterfalls within its boundaries created by streams passing over the Niagara Escarpment.
The Niagara River flows from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. It flows over the Niagara Escarpment to reach Lake Ontario. It has created a 7 mile long gorge as the falling water eroded weak layers of rock. It will take 75,000 yrs for the falls to reach Lake Erie.

Lake Erie is 22 miles upstream of the Falls. Moved 7 miles in 12,000 yrs from escarpment. 9 miles from escarpment. 16 miles from the Falls. Canada (Ontario). United States (New York).

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Welland Canal

Linking Lake Ontario with Lake Erie, it was built to counter the US construction of the Erie Canal.\checkmark\text{Allows ships to avoid Niagara Falls using 8 locks to raise and lower them over the Escarpment.} \checkmark It has been enlarged a number of times.

Agriculture in the National Core

- Good soils; flat land
- Relatively mild climate
- Relatively long growing season
- Proximity to large cities and many people.
- Educated, fully mechanized farmers.

Ontario Peninsula Agriculture

- Good soils; flat land
- Relatively mild climate
- Relatively long growing season
- Proximity to large cities and many people.
- Educated, fully mechanized farmers.

Windsor

- Canada’s southernmost city at west end of the Core.
- Located on the Detroit River.
- Strategic site in colonial times.
- Shows evidence of French influence.
- Now a major border crossing and a short-cut between Detroit and Buffalo.
- Focus of Canada’s automotive, food processing and wine making industries.

Next

AMERICA’S HEARTLAND