The Cultural Geography of Australia, Oceania, and Antarctica
Chapter Objectives

- Describe population patterns in Australia, Oceania, and Antarctica and how they have changed.
- Discuss the forms of government that have developed in the region.
Population Patterns

Section 1
Objectives

- Identify the peoples who settled Australia and Oceania.
- Discuss how the region’s geography affects population density, distribution, and growth.
- Explain what factors account for settlement in urban and rural areas.
Terms to Know

- Strine
- Pidgin English
A Geographic View

Rock formations near Lake Argyle, Australia
Paupa New Guinea shares the island of New Guinea with the Indonesian province of Papua. Paupa New Guinea is home to about 5 million people, living in an area a little larger than California (which is home to over 32 million people). The capital city, Port Moresby, has about 174,000 people.
Human Characteristics

- **Aborigines and Maori**
  - Australia’s indigenous people are called Aborigines (from the Latin for “from the beginning”).
  - The first Aborigines, who probably came from Southeast Asia, arrived on the continent between 40,000 and 60,000 years ago.
  - They lived as nomadic hunters and gatherers. Today Aborigines make up about 2 percent of Australia’s population.
  - New Zealand’s indigenous people are called the Maori.
  - They came from Polynesia and were hunters and farmers.
  - They still embrace many of their ancestral traditions.
  - Many of them intermarried with European settlers, so most of today’s Maori have some European ancestry.
Human Characteristics

- **Pacific Islanders**
  - The first people in Oceania probably came from Asia more than 30,000 years ago.
  - Oceania is home to many different people speaking hundreds of languages.
  - Melanesia includes the countries of Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and the Solomon Islands.
  - Micronesia includes Kiribati, Nauru, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the United States territories of Guam and the Marianas.
  - Polynesia includes Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and a group of islands, including Tahiti, called French Polynesia. French Polynesia is under French rule.
Human Characteristics

- **Europeans** Europeans first sailed to the South Pacific region during the 1500s.
- They established trading settlements and eventually colonized the area.
- Most of the population of Australia and New Zealand is of European, mainly British descent.
- Some of Oceania’s population is also of European descent.
Human Characteristics

- **Asians** Chinese traders and South Asian workers settled parts of Oceania in the 1800s.
- Japan ruled some of the area from the early 1900s to 1945.
- Australia and New Zealand once blocked non-European immigration, but this policy changed during the 1970s.
- Many Asians have migrated to Australia and New Zealand in search of work.
Languages

- Before modern technological advances, geographic barriers separated South Pacific people, and many different languages developed.
- The people of Oceania speak a total of 1,200 languages.
- European languages were brought by colonization.
- French is widely spoken on islands under French control.
- English is the chief language of Australia and New Zealand, although Australian English features special local idioms and words.
- **Pidgin English** is a blend of English and an indigenous language.
Where People Live

- The region of Australia, Oceania, and Antarctica is home to only 0.5 percent of the world’s population because much of the land is uninhabitable.

- **Population Distribution**
  - The region is unevenly populated because of variations in physical features and climates.
  - Australia has almost 98 percent of the habitable land in the region and about two-thirds of the people.
  - Most people in Australia and New Zealand live along the coast.
Where People Live

[Image of two children and a map of Australia]
Where People Live

- Population Distribution (cont.)
  - Oceania’s population is unevenly distributed among island countries, but most people live in coastal areas.
  - Antarctica is a part-time home to between 1,000 and 10,000 researchers and scientists, depending on the season.
  - The climate is too cold to support permanent human habitation.
Where People Live

- **Population Density**
  - Australia’s population density is highest in the coastal urban areas.
  - The harsh interior of the continent is sparsely populated.
  - Oceania’s relatively young population increases by about 2.3 percent each year.
  - Some of its islands are densely populated; others have only a few people per square mile.
Where People Live

- **Urbanization**
  - Few people live in the desert interior.
  - New Zealand’s large cities include Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch, all port cities.
  - Urban areas throughout the region draw migrants from within their country and from other countries.
  - Seventy percent of Oceania’s people live in urban areas.
Where People Live

- **Immigration**
  - Australia’s industries offer jobs to immigrants from many regions, including Latin America, South Africa, Asia, and Oceania.
  - About 26 percent of Australia’s population is foreign-born.
  - Diversity enriches the cultures of the region and also creates conflicts over immigration, health benefits, employment, and the effects of colonial rule.
History and Government

Section 2
Objectives

- Discuss the lifestyles of the region’s indigenous people before colonization.
- Summarize how colonial rule affected social, economic, and political structures.
- Examine how today’s governments reflect the region’s history.
Terms to Know

- clan
- boomerang
- trust territory
- dominion
A Geographic View

Samoan diver in Pacific waters
Geographic Literacy

- The Maori of New Zealand have made great strides in recovering from their defeat by the British colonizers in the 1800s. From the 1890s to today, the Maori have increased their numbers from 40,000 to 500,000. Also, the Maori now have significant political influence, and several of them sit in New Zealand’s parliament.
Indigenous People

- **Early Migrations** Various people from Asia settled the South Pacific region over 40,000 years ago.
- Some may have crossed land bridges that are now submerged; others probably sailed in canoes and rafts.
Indigenous People

- **Indigenous Lifestyles**
  - The early Aborigines followed a nomadic way of life in the hot, dry interior of Australia.
  - They created routes that made trade and social exchanges possible among various clans.
  - Nomads carried only the most essential tools and possessions with them.
  - In Oceania, people settled in kinship groups on island coasts.
  - They built canoes that allowed them to travel and to trade with other islands.
  - Between the A.D. 900s and 1300s, the Maori left Polynesia and settled New Zealand.
  - They established villages, hunted, fished, and farmed the land.
European Colonization

- British sailor James Cook was the most famous European explorer of the region. Between 1768 and 1779, Cook claimed eastern Australia for Britain, visited Oceania, circled Antarctica, and made accurate maps of the area.

- **European Settlement**
  - Britain used Australia as a penal colony—it shipped prisoners to Botany Bay (now Sydney) beginning in 1788.
  - By the early 1850s, the British were settling the coasts as farmers.
  - Wool became a major export product. A gold rush in the early 1850s tripled Australia’s population.
  - Oceania was ideal for large commercial plantations that produced sugarcane, pineapples, and other tropical products.
European Colonization

- **Indigenous Peoples**
  - British immigrants forced Aborigines off their ancestral lands and denied them basic rights.
  - European diseases and weapons greatly reduced the indigenous population.
  - In the mid-1800s, the British began forcing Aborigines onto reserves.
  - The Maori of New Zealand gradually lost most of their land to the British.
  - An 1840 treaty guaranteed the Maori full rights, but disagreements over the treaty led to armed Maori resistance that was eventually defeated.
  - In the islands of Oceania, Europeans weakened the indigenous cultures by bringing in workers from other countries.
  - Europeans also sought to replace traditional ways of life with European beliefs and practices.
Struggle for Power

- Britain, France, Spain, the United States, and Germany spent the late 1800s and early 1900s struggling for control of various Pacific islands.
- After World War I, Japan took over most of the German-controlled islands.
- During World War II, the South Pacific region saw many battles between Japan and the United States, including those of Guadalcanal and Iwo Jima.
- After the war, Japan turned control of all its territories in the region over to the United States as UN trust territories.
- Most of these islands are now independent countries.
Independent Governments – Australia and New Zealand

- In 1901, British colonies in Australia united to form the Commonwealth of Australia, a self-governing country within the British Empire.

- New Zealand achieved the same status in 1907.

- After World War II, Australia and New Zealand looked more and more to the United States for trade and military protection.

- The Aborigines and Maori began regaining some of their rights, and immigrants made populations more and more diverse.
Independent Governments – South Pacific Islands

- The islands of Oceania began moving toward independence in the 1960s.
- Samoa was the first to gain its freedom in 1962.
- Today the islands represent a variety of governments, from republics to constitutional monarchies.
Independent Governments – South Pacific Islands
In the early 1900s, Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen and British explorer Robert Scott engaged in a dramatic race to be the first to reach the South Pole.

Amundsen won the race on December 14, 1911.

Scott’s team arrived later, but, unfortunately, all members of the Scott expedition died on the return trip.

Much of Antarctica remained unexplored until modern technology made travel easier and safer.

In 1959, twelve countries signed the Antarctic Treaty, in which they agreed to preserve the continent as a scientific research site.

The treaty was amended in 1991 to prohibit mining and to protect the environment.
Independent Governments - Antarctica
Objectives

- Discuss the role that religion plays in the region’s cultures
- Describe how the people of Australia and Oceania expressed their heritages through the arts
- Analyze how everyday life in the region reflects cultural diversity
Terms to Know

- Subsistence farming
- *Fale*
A Geographic View

A girl visits Sydney, Australia
Geographic Literacy

- From 1938 to 1968, Australia held supremacy in the world of men’s professional tennis. The Australian team appeared in the Davis Cup competition every year between 1939 and 1968. Australians have won the Davis Cup finals four times.
A Blend of Cultures

- **Religion** Indigenous religions in the South Pacific region focus on the relationship between human beings and nature.
- Followers of these religions believe that all natural things have spirits and are interrelated.
- Christianity, brought by Europeans, is the most widely practiced faith in the region today.
A Blend of Cultures

• The Arts
  • South Pacific people traditionally used art, dance, music, and storytelling to pass on knowledge from one generation to the next.
  • Once inspired by European themes and styles, artists of European descent are now inspired by the South Pacific environment.
  • In recent decades, the South Pacific region has produced many outstanding artists, writers, musicians, and movie stars, including operatic soprano Kiri Te Kanawa, writer Thomas Keneally (Schindler’s List), and actors Mel Gibson, Nicole Kidman, and Russell Crowe.
A Blend of Cultures
Everyday Life

- **Traditional and Modern Lifestyles**
  - Many Pacific islanders work at subsistence farming.
  - Others are employed in government offices, the tourist trade, or service industries.
  - Kinship ties are the basis of traditional life throughout the region.
  - A typical traditional dwelling might have a thatched roof and palm-leaf blinds that can be lowered over open walls for privacy.
  - Because of roads and modern communications technology, many Australians and New Zealanders have a modern, fast-paced, urban lifestyle.
Everyday Life

• **Education and Health Care**
  • Literacy rates are high in Australia and New Zealand, where free education is compulsory to age 15.
  • Both countries provide quality medical care.
  • People who live in remote areas can take advantage of Australia’s Flying Doctor Service and its mobile clinics.
  • Pacific islanders often live in isolated areas, where fresh food, electricity, schools, and hospitals are limited.
  • As a result, they often lack an adequate standard of living.
Everyday Life

- **Sports and Leisure**
  - People in the South Pacific region enjoy a variety of traditional and European sports and leisure activities.
  - Temperate or warm climates encourage people to enjoy many outdoor activities.
Everyday Life
Section 1 - Summary

- Many different people settled in the South Pacific, resulting in diverse cultures and lifestyles.
- The population of the South Pacific is unevenly distributed because both the physical geography and the climate differ dramatically from place to place and because many areas cannot support life.
- Migration between and within South Pacific countries has influenced population patterns and caused a blending of cultures.
Section 2 – Summary

- Many of the area’s earliest inhabitants came from Southeast Asia and survived by hunting, gathering, and, in some cases, farming.

- European countries were attracted to the area by its raw materials, rich fishing areas, and fertile coastal land.

- During the late 1800s and early 1900s, European countries, Japan, and the United States sought possessions in the region.

- Australia, New Zealand, and a number of Pacific islands are independent; a few island groups are still under foreign rule.
Section 3 – Summary

- The culture of the South Pacific is a mixture of Western and indigenous lifestyles.
- Some people in the area still live in traditional villages; others live in modern urban areas.
- Modern technology helps provide services to people in some remote areas.