

The South

A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

BEFORE YOU READ

Reach Into Your Background

Think about a time in your life when you experienced a big change. Perhaps you moved to

another community or started at a new school. How did you adapt to the change? Did you find yourself thinking and behaving in new ways?

Questions to Explore

1. How are the South's land and water important to its economy?
2. How has the growth of industry changed the South?

Key Terms
petrochemical
industrialization
Sun Belt

Key Places
Atlanta
Washington, D.C.



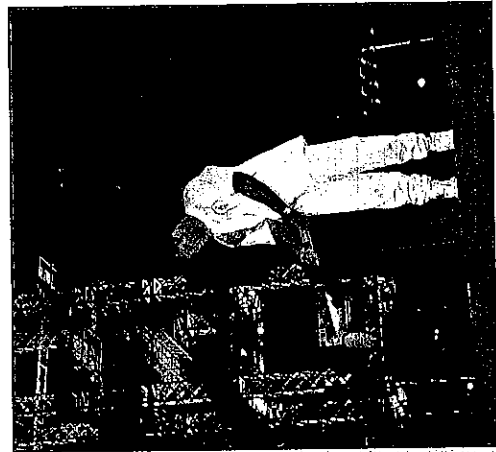
From July 19 to August 4, 1996, the city of Atlanta, Georgia, was the center of the world. More than two million people from 172 countries visited the city during that time. They came to see a very special event. It was the 1996 Summer Olympic Games.

The people who watched the 1996 Olympics saw more than great athletes. They also saw a world-class city. Atlanta today is a center of trade, transportation, and communication. Atlanta is also in one of the fastest-growing regions of the United States: the South. With strong urban areas like Atlanta, plus rich agriculture, the South is helping to lead the United States into the future.

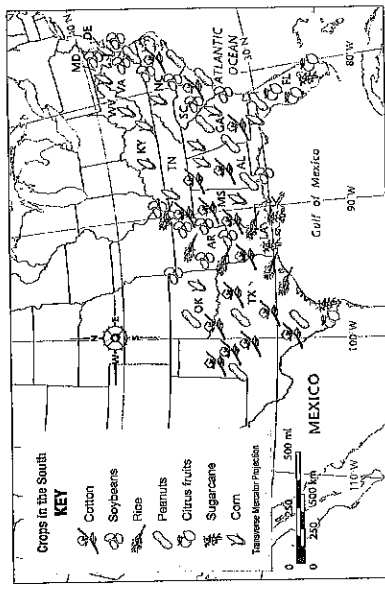
The Varied Land of the South

People in the South today can make a living in many different ways. The South's geography makes many of these jobs possible. The South is warmer than regions of the United States that are farther north. Most parts of the region also receive plenty of rain. The wide coastal plains along the Atlantic

▼ Famous boxer Muhammad Ali lights the Olympic torch at the 1996 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia.



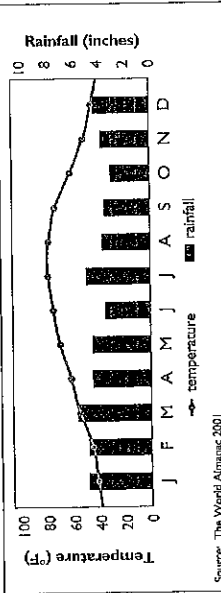
The South: Land Use and Climate



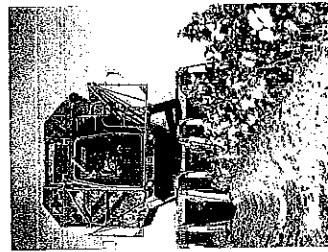
Crop	Growing season
Corn	60–330 days
Cotton	135–180 days
Peanuts	120–140 days
Soybeans	100–150 days
Sugarcane	about 240 days

Source: Encyclopædia Britannica; MSN Encarta Encyclopedia

Atlanta, Georgia: Climate Graph



Geography The map and charts above present information about climate and land use in the South. **Map and Chart Study** (a) What crops are grown in Texas? (b) In what month is the average temperature highest in Atlanta? (c) Why are the crops listed in the growing season chart well-suited to be grown in the South?



Cotton harvesting in the South



Take It to the NET Data Update For the most recent data on the South, visit www.phschool.com.

Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico have rich soil. Together, these features make much of the South a great place for growing crops. Some places in the region are also good for raising animals. People in the South can take advantage of many different natural resources.

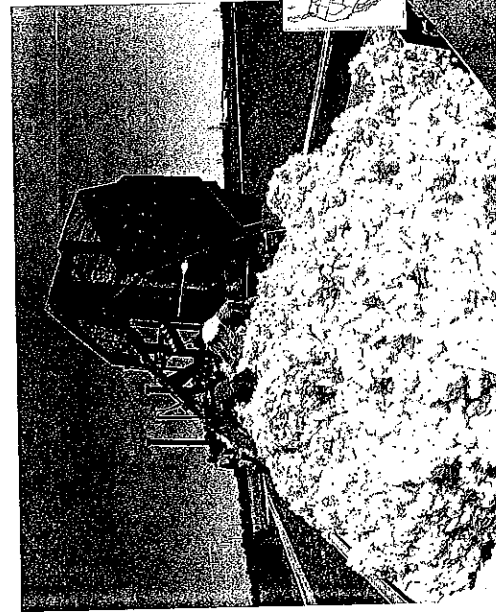
Farming in the South Farming has always been one of the most important parts of the South's economy. For years, the South's most important crop was cotton. Southern farmers once depended on cotton as their only source of income. Today, cotton still brings a lot of money to the South, especially to Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas. But

"King Cotton" no longer rules this region. In the 1890s, the boll weevil (howl wee vnh)—a kind of beetle—began to attack cotton plants in the South. Over the next 30 years, it destroyed fields across the area. Without money from cotton, many farmers went bankrupt. Most southern farmers now try to raise more than one crop. Together they produce a wide variety of crops and farm animals.

Some of these crops need very special growing conditions. Citrus fruits require year-round warmth and sunshine. Florida has plenty of both. More oranges, tangerines, grapefruits, and limes are grown here than in any other state. Rice needs warm, moist growing conditions. Farmers in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi can supply this. They grow rice along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico and in the Mississippi River valley.

Some areas of the South have become famous for their agricultural products. Georgia has taken one of its products as its nickname. It is the Peach State. Georgia is also known for its peanuts and pecans. Texas raises more cattle than any other state. Arkansas raises the most chickens and turkeys. All of these items are just a sample of what southern agriculture produces. You can read about more of the South's farm products in the Regional Profile.

Drilling and Mining in the South In some parts of the South, what is under the soil is as important as what grows in it. In Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas, companies drill for oil and natural gas. These can be used as fuel. They are also made into petrochemicals. These are substances, like plastics, paint, and asphalt, that come from petroleum. In Alabama, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Tennessee, miners dig for coal. Southern states are also leading producers of salt, sulfur, lead, zinc, and bauxite—a mineral used to make aluminum.



◀ Cotton is no longer the South's major crop, but it still plays an important part in the region's economy.

READ ACTIVELY

Visualize Visualize how a rural area might change to an urban area. What do you think might be built? What features might disappear?

Predict Think about what happened when oil and natural gas were discovered in Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. How do you think those discoveries affected the economies of those states?

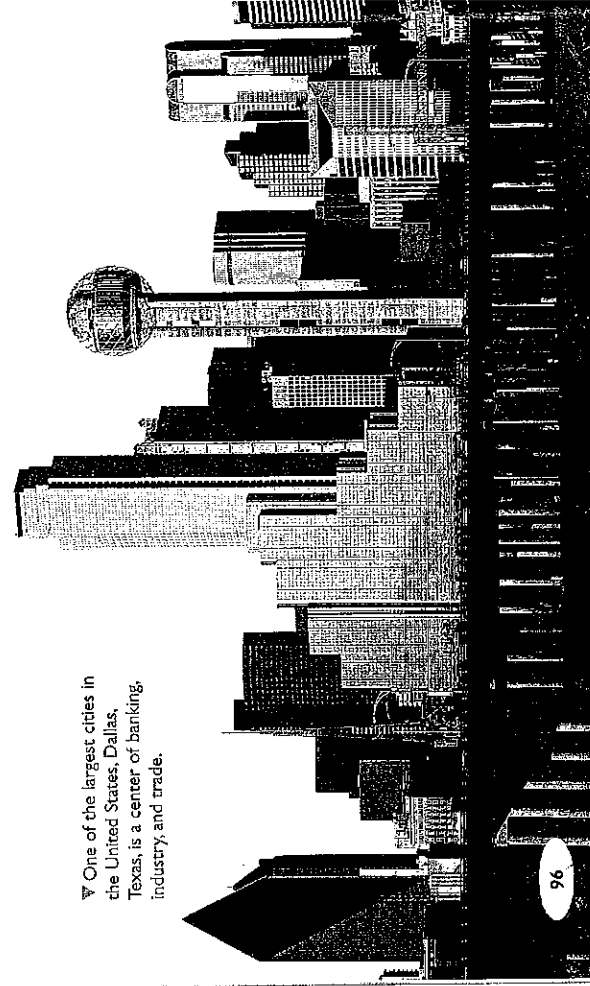
Southern Fish and Forests People in the South can also make a living in fishing and forestry. The Chesapeake Bay area near Maryland and Virginia is famous for its shellfish. However, the South's fishing industry is strongest in Louisiana and Texas. The timber industry works in every southern state except for Delaware. Softwood trees like southern pine are used for building or for paper. People use hardwood trees to make furniture. North Carolina has the nation's largest hardwood furniture industry.

Southern Cities and Industries

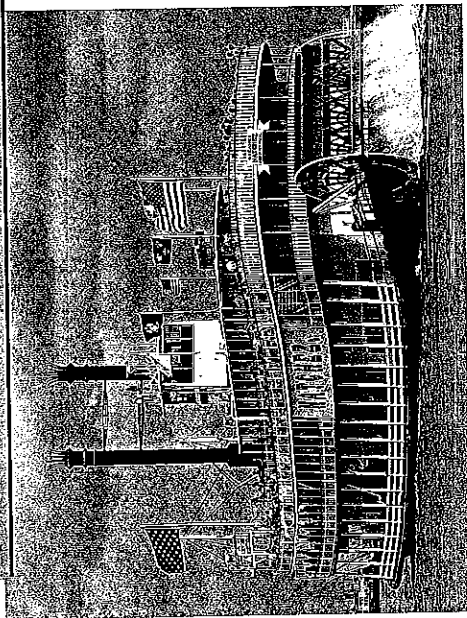
Until recently, people often thought of the South as a slow-moving, mostly rural region. But over the past 50 years, this region has gone through lots of changes. Though the South's rural areas are still important, most people in the South today live in cities. Some work in factories or in high-technology firms. Others work in tourism or in one of the other industries in this region's growing economy. This change from an agriculture-based economy to an industry-based economy is called industrialization.

Textiles and Technology One of the most important industries in the South is the textile industry. Textile mills make cloth. They were first built in this region to use the South's cotton. Today, many mills still make cotton cloth. Many others now make cloth from synthetic, or human-made, materials. The textile industry is strongest in Georgia, the Carolinas, and Virginia.

▼ One of the largest cities in the United States, Dallas, Texas, is a center of banking, industry, and trade.



A Mile to the 1800s



The tourists on this steamboat are getting a taste of what it was like to travel on the Mississippi River more than 100 years ago. They are taking a trip on the *Natchez*, which sails out of New Orleans, Louisiana. In the 1800s and early 1900s, steamboats were an important form of transportation on rivers in the United States. **Critical Thinking** What part of a steamboat is used to push the ship through the water?

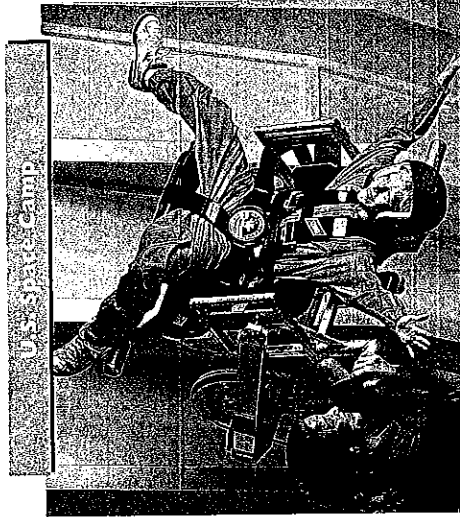
The textile industry was an early arrival in the South. The first mills in the region were built in the 1800s. Now, more than 100 years later, new industries are growing all across the South. One is the high-technology industry. Workers in this industry try to improve computers and figure out better ways to use them. Some centers of high technology are Raleigh, North Carolina, and Austin, Texas. Another forward-looking industry is the aerospace business. In Cape Canaveral, Florida; Houston, Texas; and Huntsville, Alabama, people work for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Some train as astronauts and run the space shuttle program. Atlanta, Georgia, is now a center for the cable television industry. If you watch the news on cable television, you are probably watching a program from Atlanta.

Transportation and Tourism A big part of the South's economy depends on moving goods and people into and out of the region. Most of the South's largest cities play big roles in this transportation industry. Miami, Florida, and New Orleans, Louisiana, are major ports. Miami is a center for goods and people going to and from Central and South America. New Orleans is a gateway between the Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi River system. It is also an important port for oil tankers.

Some of the people the transportation industry brings to the South come to stay. Thousands come to work in the South's new industries. Thousands more choose to move to the South because of its climate. The South is part of the Sun Belt. This broad area of the United States

stretches from the southern Atlantic Coast to the coast of California. It is known for its warm weather. The population of the Sun Belt has been rising for the past few decades. Some arrivals are older adults who want to retire to places without cold winters. Others come to take advantage of both the weather and the work that the Sun Belt offers.

Warm weather also brings people to the South who only plan to visit. These people fuel the region's tourist industry. In winter, tourists come to enjoy the sunny beaches of Florida and the Gulf Coast. In the summer, they can hike in the mountains of the Appalachians and Ozarks. They can visit historic cities like Charleston, South Carolina, or New Orleans, Louisiana, at any time of the year. In states throughout the South, there are always fun and exciting things to see and to do.



Every year, people from ages 10 to 92 come to Huntsville, Alabama, to go to U.S. Space Camp. Here, a student experiences "weightlessness."

Our Nation's Capital The city of Washington is not in any state. Instead, it is in the District of Columbia, which lies between the states of Maryland and Virginia. This area of land was chosen as the site for the nation's capital in 1790. Located on the shore of the Potomac River, Washington, D.C., was the first planned city in the nation. It has wide avenues, public buildings, and dramatic monuments. Many people consider Washington to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world. As the nation's capital, it is home to the nation's leaders and to hundreds of foreign diplomats.

SECTION 2 REVIEW

4. How has the South changed in the 1900s?

Critical Thinking
5. **Recognizing Cause and Effect** In this section, you have learned that the population of the South is growing. How have the South's geography and economy affected this growth?

1. **Define** (a) petrochemical, (b) industrialization, (c) Sun Belt.

2. **Identify** (a) Atlanta, (b) Washington, D.C.

3. How have the geography and climate of the South shaped its economy?

6. **Writing to Learn** You work in an advertising firm in Atlanta, Georgia; Houston, Texas; or Miami, Florida.

Create an advertisement to persuade people to move to your city or state. The advertisement can be designed for a newspaper or a magazine. It can also be for radio, television, or the Internet.