



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live


Quick Notes



Section 1: The Tidewater Region

➤ Essential Question:

- What are the main features and rivers of the Tidewater region and how have the barrier islands influenced this region?




3

Section 1: The Tidewater Region

➤ What terms do I need to know?

- sound
- barrier island
- inlet
- Gulf Stream
- wetland
- estuary
- pocosin
- savanna



4



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

Introduction

- The Tidewater is a narrow strip of land extending along the Atlantic Ocean
- The Tidewater includes land on North Carolina's mainland and the Outer Banks
- This region is heavily influenced by the movement of the ocean's tides
 - The tides alter the currents in streams and sounds (inland bodies of mixed fresh and salt water found throughout the Tidewater)



5

Barrier Islands

- The islands along the coast of North Carolina form most of the beach of the Tidewater and have influenced life from the first explorations to the present
- Only a few islands sit alone, most are part of a long chain of sand spits called **barrier islands**, the most famous of which are the Outer Banks
 - Barrier islands are long ridges of sand spread across the ocean floor, with the tops showing above the water
 - In low places of sand, **inlets** allow seawater to come in and out with the tides
- Very eastern tip of state, Cape Hatteras, sticks out into ocean for miles. The current running by it is the Gulf Stream, a major influence on the world's weather
- The only true break in the barrier islands is Cape Fear, where the river flows directly into the ocean. All other rivers in the eastern half of the state flow into the sounds behind the islands



6

The Sounds

- North Carolina has five major sounds
 - Currituck Sound, Albemarle Sound, Pamlico Sound, Core Sound, and Bogue Sound
- All are fed fresh water from rivers coming from the Coastal Plain region
 - Earliest towns in North Carolina were along these rivers, served as trading centers where goods could be moved along the river to the ocean
- Sedimentation (the depositing of clay or silt or gravel) has kept the sounds from being deep enough for large ships
- A large portion of the land of the Tidewater is wetland for much of the year, meaning the soil is soaked or flooded
- Along shore of the Tidewater are salt marshes where shellfish live and breed.
- Estuaries: places where fresh water and salt water meet



7



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

Swamps and Lakes

- The most common type of wetland other than estuaries is the pocosin
 - American Indian term for “swamp on a hill” made of peat that fills with water
- Pocosins are distinguished by their vegetation, often having a mix of laurel, bay, and scrub oak trees
- Tidewater region also contains savannas, where tall grass mixes with different types of pines
 - Parts of the Green Swamp, the most extensive wetland in southern Tidewater, become savannas in drier parts of the year
- Most of the natural lakes in North Carolina are in the Tidewater
 - Largest is Lake Mattamuskeet
- Tidewater is one of the least populated areas of the state



[Return to Main Menu](#)

8

Section 2: The Coastal Plain Region

- Essential Question:
 - What are the features of the Coastal Plain region and what types of traditional communities exist in the region?



9

Section 2: The Coastal Plain Region

- What terms do I need to know?
 - crossroads hamlets
 - tobacco towns
 - Carolina bays



10



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

Introduction

- The Coastal Plain has some of the richest soil in North Carolina and is about a third of the area of the state
- Is a part of the Atlantic Coastal Plain, which extends from New York to Florida
- Coastal Plain has two main characteristics: its flatness and its soil
 - Make this the chief farming region in the state
- Most rivers flow into the sounds of the Tidewater region
- Large areas of land cleared for farming, making the area extremely rural
- Residents of the Coastal Plain have traditionally lived in one of two types of communities: rural crossroads and small tobacco towns



11

Crossroads Hamlets

- Found throughout the Coastal Plain region
- Often have a store or school or church that provides goods and services to the nearby farmers who don't have money or time to go to town frequently
- Generally named for local residents
- In more recent times, they have become locations for convenience stores



12

Tobacco Towns

- Tobacco Towns have been part of the Coastal Plain since it was first settled
- Towns grew in the 20th century when popularity of smoking increased
- Towns had many tobacco warehouses
- Everyone scheduled their business around the tobacco harvest
- Traditional tobacco barns were tall, thin squares of logs or planks, and were once seen everywhere along the Coastal Plain
 - Tobacco was flue-cured, drying it for the market and making it mild enough to smoke
- Fewer and fewer Coastal Plain residents grow tobacco in modern times



13



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

Longleaf Pine Forests and Carolina Bays

- Before tobacco fields, longleaf pine was the most common sight in the Coastal Plain
- Because of its historical significance, the Longleaf Pine is North Carolina's state tree
- In the southern Coastal Plain, there are hundreds of elongated depressions in the ground called Carolina bays
 - No one knows for sure why they exist or how they were created; some are filled with water and others are similar to pocosins, being wet or dry in different parts of the year



14

The Sandhills

- Northwest of the Carolina bays
- Sandhills are concentrations of rolling sand ridges left over from an ancient change in the shoreline of the Atlantic Ocean
- They have the poorest soil in the state, because the sand allows the topsoil nutrients to drain away
- In the 20th century, two uses were found for the Sandhills: golf courses like Pinehurst, and Fort Bragg, originally designed to be a training ground for artillery



15

People of the Coastal Plain

- Area has long attracted people of different ethnic backgrounds with its dark soil and other resources
- The most distinctive people of the Coastal Plain are the Lumbee of Robeson County, forming the largest population of Native Americans in the state



[Return to Main Menu](#)

16



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

Section 3: The Piedmont Region

- Essential Question:
 - What are the features of the Piedmont Region, specifically the significance of the fall line?



17

Section 3: The Piedmont Region

- What terms do I need to know?
 - fall line
 - headwaters
 - sectionalism
 - mill village
 - NASCAR
 - monadnock



18

Introduction

- North Carolina's Piedmont region is easily recognized by its red clay
- A problem in the region has been erosion and poor soil conservation, rain and wind have washed away the valuable topsoil
 - To control the erosion, state officials planted millions of kudzu plants in the 1930s hoping to save the soil
 - The kudzu nearly took over the state, growing several inches on a hot, wet day



19



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

The Fall Line

- The red clay of the Piedmont erodes easily because the land is filled with hills and hollows
- Most of the Piedmont (which means “foot of the mountains”) is actually plateau, a step above the Coastal Plain and below the Blue Ridge Mountains
- Line that divides the Coastal Plain and the Piedmont is called the fall line (the place where rivers flowing out of the Piedmont go down their last hill, becoming flatter and smoother below the fall line)
- Two principal rivers of the Piedmont are the Yadkin-Pee Dee and the Catawba, neither of which run to the fall line
- The main reason that sectionalism (intense concern for local interests and customs) developed in North Carolina was the lack of connection between the rivers of the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain
- More than half of the Piedmont is covered in forests



20

Farms and Factories

- Farming is as much a tradition in the Piedmont as the Coastal Plain, but farming is more of a struggle in the Piedmont
- Farmers depended on livestock to make a living
- As farms declined, building of factories increased and people made their living processing and manufacturing materials
- Textiles, tobacco, and furniture were considered the main industries in the state in the 20th century
- Many factory workers lived on the edges of town in clusters of housing called mill villages. The company owned the houses, provided stores and schools, and influenced lives of workers inside and outside the factory
- All three industries were declining in 1990s due to foreign competition



21

Banking, Racing, and Medicine

- Many cities of the Piedmont struggled to find other economic outlets
- Over the last two decades, Charlotte has become a world leader in banking as well as a center for stock car racing
 - NASCAR (National Association of Stock Car Automobile Racing) has its Hall of Fame in Charlotte
- Community leaders attempted to turn around the decline in industrial jobs with the growth of medical services and medical schools like Wake Forest University and Duke University



22



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

The Uwharries

- Most distinctive natural feature of the Piedmont is the monadnock
 - A monadnock is a geological condition where a point of land stands out because all of the land around it has been eroded away
- Most famous is Pilot Mountain north of Winston-Salem
- The Uwharrie Mountains are a group of monadnocks that have shaped North Carolina nearly as much as the barrier islands
- They resemble miniature mountains from a distance, elevations rarely reach more than 2,000 ft
- Were not as thickly settled as the rest of the Piedmont due to their slopes and slate in the soil



[Return to Main Menu](#)

23

Section 4: The Mountains Region

- Essential Question:
 - What features and characteristics of the Mountains region have impacted the growth of tourism and tree farming in the region?



24

Section 4: The Mountains Region

- What terms do I need to know?
 - elevation
 - bald
 - cove



25



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

Introduction

- The Mountains region begins at the Blue Ridge, which forms the eastern boundary of the Appalachian Mountains
- The eastern Continental Divide runs along the Blue Ridge, as does the Blue Ridge Parkway



26

The Blue Ridge

- Name comes from the mist evaporating off the mountains which often seems to look blue
- Runs from New Jersey into the Deep South
- Really just one long landform with peaks of various heights and gaps
- Many places west of the Blue Ridge were more isolated than the barrier islands, which encouraged unique cultural developments
- Travel over the Blue Ridge was hard and expensive before the building of railroads in the late 1800s



27

The Appalachians

- Runs from New York to Alabama, highest peaks are in North Carolina
 - Highest elevation (height above sea level) is Mt. Mitchell at 6,684 ft
- Appalachians contain more than a dozen different mountain ranges in North Carolina
 - Great Smokey Mountains are most notable
 - More varieties of plants are found in the Smokey Mountains than almost anywhere else on earth
 - The Great Smokey Mountains National Park is the most visited national park in the United States
- Some of the Smokey Mountains have balds, places that are usually above 6,000 feet where few trees ever grow, but many flowers and shrubs grow



28



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

Mountain Streams and Rocks

- Mountain rivers run north and west
- New River starts just west of the Blue Ridge and flows straight north
- Tributaries of the Tennessee River flow all the way to the Mississippi River
 - Cherokee built most of their villages along the Tennessee River tributaries
- There are more than 100 lakes in the Mountains region, but nearly all are man-made
- There are many natural wonders in the Mountains region
 - Blowing Rock, Chimney Rock, Grandfather Mountain, and the Nantahala River Gorge



The Mountain Economy

- Region was never as populated or developed as the other regions of the state
- First settlers lived in coves (valleys where streams had cut out areas of land large enough for farming)
- It was very difficult to get from one cove to the next or get goods out of the mountains
- Families raised livestock, sold plants with medicinal properties to make money
- Recently, tourism has become the largest part of the Mountain economy
 - Retirement and vacation homes becoming more common throughout the region
- Most distinctive recent economic development is the Christmas Tree industry, mainly in Ashe and adjoining counties



Section 5: North Carolina's Weather and Climate

- Essential Question:
 - What are the differences in weather and climate and what kinds of precipitation and temperatures are common in North Carolina?





North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

Section 5: North Carolina's Weather and Climate

- What terms do I need to know?
 - weather
 - climate
 - westerlies
 - humidity
 - precipitation
 - tornado
 - hurricane



32

“It’s Not the Heat; It’s the Humidity”

- North Carolina’s temperatures run about the same throughout the state
 - Caused by westerlies, winds that bring warmer air in the winter and cooler air in the summer
- The Sandhills have more extremely hot days than any other area of the state
- Highest Mountain peaks have the lowest temperatures, being the most likely to have temperatures below zero degrees
- It doesn’t feel very temperate most days due to humidity (a measure of the amount of moisture in the air), which is often more than 50% in most areas of the state



33

Different Storms in Different Places

- The rate of precipitation (rain, sleet, snow, or hail) varies greatly throughout the regions of North Carolina
- Highest levels of rain occur in the southwest mountains, where westerlies bring storms from the Great Plains
- This causes the Piedmont to be the driest area of the state
- Mountains get the bulk of the snow
- The whole state experiences thunderstorms in the summer, with large storm fronts bringing hail from the west
 - Tornadoes (funnel-shaped storms with winds that can reach more than 200 mph) come with storm fronts, and are most frequent in the Sandhills region



34



North Carolina: People, Places, and Progress

Chapter 1: The Land Where We Live

Quick Notes

The Path of Hurricanes

- Hurricanes are tropical storms that bring high winds and heavy rains, most often from the Atlantic Ocean
- Hurricanes cause great damage to North Carolina in three major ways:
 - Wind and rain create a storm surge (a huge tide) that wipes out sand, plants, and anything else on the beach
 - The swirling winds can do great amounts of damage
 - Hurricanes usually slow and weaken over land, causing them to drop huge amounts of water and causing widespread flooding
- Most hurricanes develop during hurricane season starting in June, peaking in September, and ending at the end of November



[Return to Main Menu](#)