

Human Geography of Latin America**Section 3**

Spanish-Speaking South America

Terms and Names

Inca descendants of people who came from Asia and crossed into South America, where they created a great civilization in the Andes Mountains of Peru

Quechua language of the Inca

Mercosur economic common market that began operating in southern South America in 1995

Before You Read

In the last section, you read about the culture, economics, and life of Central America and the Caribbean. In this section, you will learn about the history and development of Spanish-speaking South America.

As You Read

Use a graphic organizer to take notes about the history, economy, and culture of Spanish-speaking South America.

CONQUEST AND THE END OF SPANISH RULE (Pages 230-232)**Where did the Inca build their empire?**

The Inca built a great civilization in the Andes Mountains of Peru. The **Inca** were descendants of people who came across a land bridge from Siberia. They crossed the Isthmus of Panama into South America.

From their capital at Cuzco in Peru, the Inca conquered other tribes. By 1500, the Inca Empire extended 2,500 miles along the west coast of South America. A system of roads linked the empire.

Then, in 1532–1533, Francisco Pizarro and his soldiers invaded and conquered the Inca Empire. Spanish settlers forced the natives to work in mines and on farms and ranches. Many settlers abused the natives or worked them to death. The Inca were forced to move from their villages to large

plantations. This broke down families and communities.

Spanish rule in the region lasted for almost 300 years. The **Quechua** language of the Inca was largely replaced by Spanish. The Inca religion was replaced by Catholicism. However, millions of native peoples still speak Quechua.

The people of South America sought independence from Spain in the early 1800s. Two great leaders of the region's independence movement were Simón Bolívar and José de San Martín.

Oligarchy (government by the few) and military rule have been common in many South American countries.

1. Which two leaders helped win the region's independence?

A CULTURAL MOSAIC**(Pages 232-233)****What elements make up the cultural heritage of Latin America?**

South America is one of the most culturally complex regions in the world. Societies with different cultures live near each other but do not mix.

Spanish-speaking South America has a strong literary heritage. Among the most famous of this region's writers is Gabriel García Márquez of Colombia. He won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1982.

Popular music and folk music are important traditions. Street musicians can be heard everywhere. Classical music is also important. Many cities have symphony orchestras.

Beautiful craftwork and handmade items can be found throughout Latin America. Pottery, textiles, glasswork, and metalwork combine beauty and usefulness.

2. Who is Gabriel García Márquez?

ECONOMICS: RESOURCES AND TRADE (Pages 233-234)**Which country has been most successful?**

Many people in Latin America are poor. However, economic development hopes to improve people's lives.

Different resources, landforms, climate, and vegetation enable the region to create a variety of products. Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana grow crops for export. Colombia and Venezuela have huge oil reserves. Peru has an important fishing industry.

Ecuador exports shrimp. Bolivia mines tin, zinc, and copper. Argentina produces

grain and livestock. Uruguay has major farming and grazing areas. Paraguay exports soybeans, cotton, and animal hides.

Chile is South America's greatest success story. It is an associate member of **Mercosur**. Mercosur is an economic common market that created a free-trade zone among its South American member states. The export of fruit and vegetables to North America is an important part of the economy, though copper remains Chile's largest export.

3. Which countries have huge oil reserves?

EDUCATION AND THE FUTURE**(Pages 234-235)****Who is General Pinochet?**

Literacy rates in Spanish-speaking South America are higher than they are elsewhere in Latin America. In Chile, the adult literacy rate is about 96 percent. For Chileans between the ages of 15 and 24, it is close to 99 percent. In several countries, including Chile and Uruguay, literacy rates are higher than 90 percent. Most countries support colleges, universities, and technical schools.

In Chile, public education is free. All children between the ages of 6 and 13 must attend school. Salvador Allende's government was overthrown by General Augusto Pinochet in 1973. The military introduced reforms that undermined higher education. Since Pinochet's departure from power in 1990, universities have regained some independence and standards.

4. What are the literacy rates in Chile?

Section 3, *continued*

Use the chart below to make generalizations about factors that have shaped Spanish-speaking South America.

Factors That Have Shaped the Subregion	
1. history	
2. economics	
3. education	