

Concept of Region and Regional Geography of The World

Textual Questions And Answers:

Q1. What do you mean by a region? Explain the importance of region in geographical study.

Ans: Any tract of the earth's surface which stands unique and different from the areas around it is called a region in geography. In other words, the terms 'region' refers to a part of the earth's surface which is characterised or marked by certain noticeable natural or man-made features, making it distinguishable from its surrounding areas. For example, different places in the world that receive high rainfall on account of monsoon winds in summer are placed together under the category of 'monsoon region.'

Regions are identified either on the basis of natural characteristics include the amount of rainfall, extent of temperature, type of soil, kind of natural vegetation, nature of topography, etc. Man-made characteristics include density of population, economic activities, industrial development, etc.

One of the aims of geography is to study the surface of the earth. But, this is really very difficult as the earth's surface is very extensive and diverse. However, this task becomes much easier when we divide the whole earth into certain regions and study them one by one. In this respect, demarcation of a region has assumed great importance in geography. It makes the study of geography simple and clear.

Understanding of different regions is also very important for agencies and government which are engaged in bringing about regional development, parity in development, etc. The experience obtained in a particular region is highly helpful in avoiding certain mistakes in the development, etc. The experience obtained in a particular region is highly helpful in avoiding certain mistakes in the developmental activities in places having similar characteristics.

The study about different regions helps us to make a comparative study about them. Moreover, the study of the whole world becomes simpler and systematic when we do it from the angle of region. Regional approach in geographical study is one of the most accepted ways of studying the earth. That is why, the topic of region is an important section in regional geography.

Q2. Explain how a region can be identified on the earth's surface.

Ans: A part of the earth's surface which is characterised or marked by certain noticeable natural or man-made

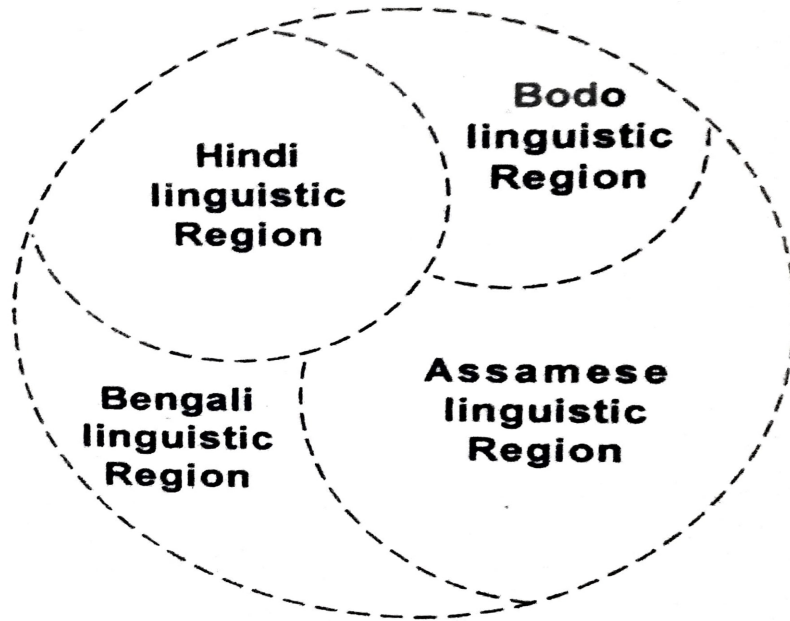
features, making it distinguishable from its surrounding areas is known as a region in geography. In other words, any tract of earth's surface which stands unique and different from the areas around it is called a region. A region can be identified on the basis of two aspects :

(i) On the basis of homogeneity

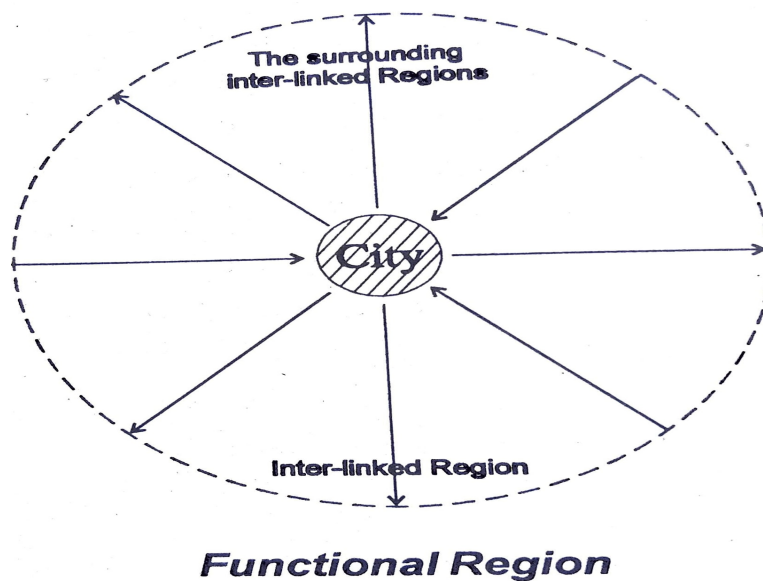
(ii) On the basis of functional interrelationship

(i) On the basis of homogeneity : One of the main features of the earth's surface is its diversity. Due to factors such as earth's position in the solar system, earth's shape and structure, its rotation, revolution, etc., different places on the earth have different climate, rainfall, temperature, topography, soil conditions while many others have different physical environment.

The places that have similar climate, rainfall, temperature, soil conditions, etc. are grouped together to form a region. This division is done on the basis of homogeneity of the selected elements. For example, the entire Assam valley can be grouped together as a region since almost all places in the Brahmaputra valley have similar climate, rainfall, temperature, soil conditions, etc. Thus, a region can be identified on the basis of homogeneity of physical features such as soil, climate, natural vegetation, etc.



(ii) On the basis of functional interrelationship : Another way to identify a region is on the basis of functional interrelationship among the different elements.



Generally, a functional region is identified around a town or market centre. Every region has a town, market, etc. around which certain activities take place. The surrounding region is functionally interlinked through interdependent activities with the town or market. In this way, the boundary of the region linked with the town can be easily determined.

For example, the region around the city of Kolkata is closely linked to the city as the region supplies essential goods and men for its different activities. The people in the surrounding region totally depend on the city for their daily business and life and the city sustains on these interlinked areas. Thus, there is a functional region around the city of Kolkata in which the internal elements are dissimilar but are closely interlinked through an interdependent relationship. So is the case with all other cities, towns, industrial centres, tourist spots, educational centres, etc.

Q3. Bring out the difference between the homogeneous region and the functional region.

Ans: The differences between the homogeneous region and the functional region are :

Sl. No.	Basis of distinction	Homogeneous Region	Functional Region
(i)	Meaning	It is a region having similarities of the selected elements.	It is a region whose socioeconomic activities are linked to a common town, market, etc.
(ii)	Basis	It is based on homogeneity of elements.	It is based on functional interrelationship of elements.
(iii)	Elements	There exists distinct similarities of the chosen elements over the entire region.	The internal elements of the region are not similar.
(iv)	Dependency	Different parts of the region are not interdependent.	The town and its surrounding regions are interdependent.
(v)	Examples	The Brahmaputra valley, the Amazon basin, the equatorial region, etc.	Regions around the cities of Guwahati, Kolkata, Delhi, etc.

Q4. What do you mean by regional geography of the world? What is the importance of this study?

Ans: The branch of geography which studies the natural and man-made characteristics of a region is known as regional geography. In other words, the term 'regional geography' refers to a branch of study engaged in understanding the distinguishable features of an area with a view to understand better, the geographical diversities of the entire earth. Regional geography provides us a detailed geographical picture of any region, country or a continent.

The earth is a big planet covering over 510 million sq. km of total surface area (149 million sq. km of land area and 361 million sq. km of water surface area) which cannot be studied as one piece. Moreover, the entire earth is marked by diversities of different types.

However based on the similarities of certain elements or on the functional interrelationship of the elements, the entire earth can be divided into regions and these can be studied one by one making the study of earth easier, simpler and clearer. The study of such regions is called regional geography.

Some of the major reasons that explain the importance of the study of regional geography are :

(i) It helps us to understand why certain regions lag behind in development.

(ii) Such a study helps us to undertake proper development plans for the various regions of a country.

- (iii) Geography can be better understood when we study it from the regional basis.
- (iv) Such a study gives an overall picture of the whole region.
- (v) A detailed account of physical environment, economic condition, human settlement, state of development of transport and communication, etc. of a place can be found through this study.
- (vi) Regional geography gives us an idea about spatial variations within a region.
- (vii) Such a study helps us to understand the nature of geographical relationship that exists between the concerned region and its neighbouring region.
- (viii) Through regional studies, the socio-economic progress of a country or region and the problems associated with it can be assessed.

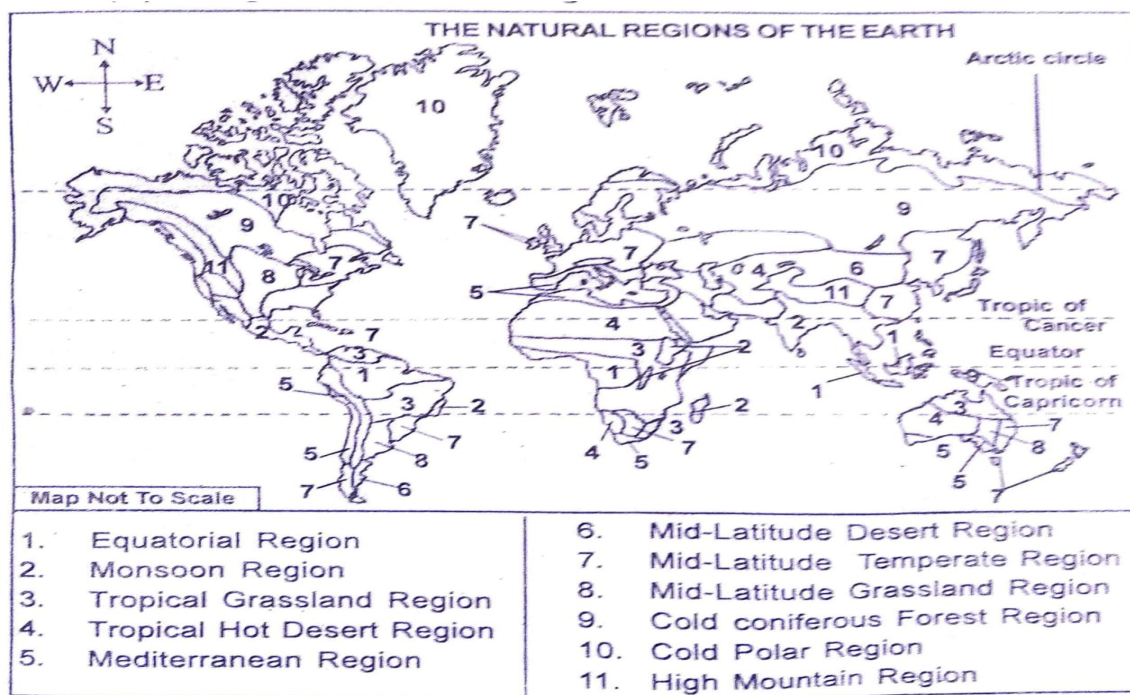
Q5. What do you mean by 'natural region'? Into how many natural regions, the whole earth can be divided? Write their names and show in the map.

Ans: Natural region is the division of earth into certain geographical units that have similar geographical characteristics such as relief, climate, rainfall, temperature, soil, natural vegetation, etc. In other words, an area having more or less uniformity in certain

physical and geographical elements is known as a natural region.

The whole earth can be divided into the following eleven natural regions :

- (i) Equatorial region
- (ii) Monsoon region
- (iii) Tropical grassland region
- (iv) Tropical hot desert region
- (v) Mediterranean region
- (vi) Mid-latitude desert region
- (vii) Mid-latitude temperate region.
- (viii) Mid-latitude grassland region
- (ix) Cold coniferous forest region
- (x) Cold polar region
- (xi) High mountainous region



Q6. How can the regional geography of the world be understood through the study of natural regions? Write in brief.

Ans: Natural region is the division of earth based on similarity of certain geographical characteristics such as relief, climate, rainfall, temperature, soil, natural vegetation, etc. The main basis for the division of earth into natural regions is geographical homogeneity. Due to similarity of climate, soil, vegetation, etc. different places in the world can be grouped under one division. One of the most important advantages of the study of natural region is that it helps in understanding the regional geography in a better way. For example, the Coastal Californian region has Mediterranean climate which is normally found in the region surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. Therefore, the climate condition, the economic occupation, the vegetation of California can be understood well when we look at it from the angle of natural regions. The study of natural regions will help us

to see the interrelationship that exists between the various regions of the world. In other words, the study of regional geography becomes much simpler, easier and clearer when we study them or look at them from the angle of natural regions. The study of natural region is also a source of great help in planning developmental projects in various regions of a country.

The various agencies engaged in the development of a particular region will find highly useful the lessons gained from similar work done in a similar natural region. Such a comparative study will also help the concerned authorities to avoid costly mistakes and to plan the development of the region in a better manner.

Q7. Write about the physical environment of each of the natural regions of the world.

Ans: The physical environment of each of the eleven natural regions of the world is discussed below :

(i) Equatorial region : This region is characterised by a hot and wet climate with heavy rainfall. The region is almost entirely covered by dense evergreen forests. As this region experiences vertical sunrays, the temperature difference between day and night and summer and winter is very low here.

(ii) Monsoon region : This region has warm and wet summers and cold and dry winters. The average annual rainfall is 200 cm and deciduous vegetation is prevalent.

The highlands have laterite soil while the low-lying areas and river valleys have fertile alluvial soil.

(iii) Tropical grassland region : This region experiences a short and warm summer season and a long and dry winter season, with high diurnal and seasonal range of temperature. The amount of rainfall is moderate i.e. about 25--100 cm and tropical grasslands are seen in this region.

(iv) Tropical hot desert region : This region has a hot and dry climate throughout the year, with high diurnal range of temperature. Rainfall is almost negligible (20-25 cm annually). Unlike other regions, most part of this region remains covered with sand. Only short grass and thorny shrubs are found over the vast sandy areas.

(v) Mediterranean region : The climate here is a hot and dry summer and cold and wet winter. The average annual temperature is 8°-25°C and annual rainfall is 25-75 cm. The vegetation consists of evergreen short trees and shrubs.

(vi) Mid-latitude desert region : This region is surrounded by high mountains on almost all sides. The rainfall is very low and the seasonal and diurnal range of temperature is very high. A little amount of snowfall also occurs in the winter season.

(vii) Mid-latitude temperate region : The coastal areas of this region have an equitable climate with average winter temperature 5°-10°C. In the mid-latitude temperate region, the intensity of summer and winter is

less. The rainfall too is between 75-150 cm annually but decreases with increase in distance from the sea. Winters are dry. Though deciduous vegetation is common, evergreen trees are found in areas of higher rainfall and coniferous trees are found on hill slopes.

(viii) Mid-latitude grassland region : This region receives very low rainfall, only 15-50 cm annually. The seasonal range of temperature is high and winters are severe. Though vegetation is almost absent, grasslands are common. The soil is rich in organic matter and thus fertile.

(ix) Cold-coniferous forest region : The climate here is dry and cold. Summer temperatures reach 15°C and snowfall occurs in winter. The little rainfall is received in summer. Softwood evergreen forests called Taiga, cover the region.

(x) Cold polar region : This region is covered with snow almost throughout the year. The short summers have temperatures from 0°-18°C with heavy snowfall. Almost no vegetation except for some grass, moss, fern, etc. is found here. Rainfall is almost nil in this region.

(xi) High mountainous region : In these high peak areas, temperatures decrease with altitude. While windward sides receive rainfall and have forest growth, the leeward sides are dry and devoid of vegetation. High peaks are always covered with snow.

Q8. Discuss about the climate and vegetation as found in different natural regions of the world.

Ans: The regions that have similar climate, rainfall, soil conditions, natural vegetation, etc. are placed in geographical units called natural regions. Each of the natural regions is characterised by the following climate conditioners and natural vegetation :

(i) Equatorial region :

Climate : (a) This region experiences hot and wet climate.

(b) As this region gets vertical sunrays, the temperature difference between day and night and summer and winter is very low.

(c) The average annual temperature is 27°C .

(d) The region experience rainfall throughout the year. The average annual rainfall throughout the year. The average annual rainfall being 200 cm.

Vegetation : (a) The entire region is covered with dense evergreen forests.

(b) Innumerable variety of shrubs and climbers are also found.

(c) A kind of dense forests known as Selvas are seen in the Amazon river basin.

(d) Some of the agricultural crops cultivated in this region include rice, rubber, tea, coffee, etc.

(ii) Monsoon region :

Climate : (a) The region gets rainfall mainly in summer. The average annual rainfall is 200 cm.

(b) It has warm and wet summer and cold and dry winter.

(c) The temperature difference between summer and winter seasons is 15°C.

Vegetation : (a) Due to seasonal changes, deciduous trees are found in this region. They shed their leaves in the dry winter due to shortage of moisture.

(b) Agriculture crops like rice, sugarcane, wheat, cotton, jute, oilseeds, tea, etc. are cultivated in this region.

(iii) Tropical grassland region :

Climate : (a) The climate of this region is characterised by short warm summers and long dry winters.

(b) The diurnal and seasonal range of temperature is quite high.

(c) The annual rainfall is quite moderate, i.e. 25-100 cm.

Vegetation : (a) Due to scanty rainfall, the main vegetation is grass variety plants with height up to 3m.

(b) The vast grasslands of the tropical region are called Savannah. Locally, it is called Llanos in Venezuela and Campos in Brazil.

(c) Crops such as jowar, cotton, groundnut, etc. are also cultivated in this region.

(iv) Tropical hot desert region :

Climate : (a) The climate is always very hot and dry.

(b) The difference of day and night temperature is high.

(c) During summer, temperature reaches 45°C.

(d) The rainfall gets negligible rainfall. The annual rainfall is 20-25 cm.

Vegetation : (a) Due to scanty rainfall, only short grass and thorny vegetation is found.

(b) Most areas of this region are of desert type and remain covered with sand.

(c) Some amount of cultivation is done in the scattered patches of oasis in the desert including growth of date palm variety of plants.

(v) Mediterranean region :

Climate : (a) The region is noted for hot and dry summer and cold and wet winter.

(b) The summer season is little longer in this region.

(c) The average temperature is 8°-25° C.

(d) The average annual rainfall is 25-75 cm with most of rain coming in winter.

Vegetation : (a) The natural vegetation mostly consists of evergreen short trees and shrubs.

(b) Crops such as wheat, barley, maize, cotton, tobacco, etc. are cultivated in this region.

(c) A variety of fruits including grapes, apples, etc. are growth on the hill slopes of the region.

(vi) Mid-latitude desert region :

Climate : (a) The summer and winter difference of temperature is quite high.

(b) Amount of rainfall is very low.

(c) The region experiences some amount of snowfall during winter.

Vegetation : (a) Except for shrubs and thorny bushes there is hardly any vegetation in the region.

(vii) Mid-latitude temperate region :

Climate : (a) The intensity of summer and winter is less. The average temperature is 15°C in summer and 5°C-10°C in winter.

(b) The climate of the coastal area is of equitable nature.

(c) The average annual rainfall varies between 75 to 150 cm.

(d) The rainfall decreases with the increase in the distance from the sea.

(e) Winters are very dry.

Vegetation : Due to variation in the occurrence of rainfall, a wide variety of natural vegetation is found in this region.

(a) Deciduous vegetation is largely seen in this region.

(b) Areas that get high rainfall have evergreen vegetation.

(c) Coniferous vegetation is seen in the hill slopes.

(d) The forests of this region are not very dense.

(e) Crops produced in this region include cotton, barley, tobacco and potato.

(viii) Mid-latitude grassland region :

Climate : (a) The climate is severely cold.

(b) The difference in winter and summer temperature is quite high due to its inland or continental location.

(c) The region gets very little rainfall in summer with an annual average of 15-50 cm.

Vegetation : (a) The vegetation cover is almost nil in this region due to less rainfall and severe cold.

(b) The region has been converted into grasslands. The grasslands are known as steppes in Asia and Europe, Prairies in North America, Pampas in Argentina, Veld in South Africa and Downs in Australia.

(ix) Cold coniferous forest region :

Climate : (a) The climate of the region is dry and cold to some extent.

(b) The average temperature in summer increases up to 15°C.

(c) This region experiences snowfall in winter due to fall in temperature.

(d) The region is marked by short summer and long winter.

(e) During summer, this region receives a little amount of rainfall.

Vegetation : (a) The region is covered with evergreen coniferous forests known as Taiga.

(x) Cold polar region :

Climate : (a) The region is characterised by extreme cold.

(b) Summers are very short and winters are long.

(c) During summer, the temperature ranges between 0°C and 10°C and during winter it goes down to -18°C .

(d) There is hardly any rainfall here. Heavy snowfall occurs in winter.

Vegetation : (a) As most of the region is covered with snow throughout the year, only some grass, moss, fern, etc. are found in the areas of melting ice.

(xi) High mountainous region :

Climate : (a) The region is marked by very cold weather conditions.

(b) The temperature and climate conditions change depending on the altitude and wind direction.

(c) Windward sides of slopes receive heavy rain, and leeward sides remain dry.

Vegetation : (a) Vegetation varies with altitude and rainfall.

(b) Dense forests cover windward slopes while leeward slopes are devoid of vegetation.

Q9. Give a description of the lifestyle of the people living in different natural regions of the world.

Ans: The economic occupation and the lifestyle of the people living in different natural regions are not same due to variations in climate, soil, topography, location, distance from the sea, altitude, etc. The main economic activities found in different natural regions of the world are :

(i) Equatorial region : The main areas that fall under the equatorial region are the Amazon river basin of South America, Congo basin (now called Zaire basin of Africa), Guinea coast of west Africa, Malaysian peninsula, Indonesian and Philippines islands of south-east Asia. The people of both Amazon and Congo basin make their living through hunting, fishing and gathering food from the forest. Due to dense forest and lack of transport and communication, agriculture and human settlement have not developed greatly. Although, Malaysia and Indonesia also belong to this natural region, yet these regions, have made a lot of progress in agriculture, particularly in plantation agriculture such as coffee, tea and rubber.

(ii) Monsoon region : The areas included under monsoon region are South Asia including India, south-east Asia, north-eastern part of Australia, eastern part of Africa, eastern part of Brazil, Central America, etc. It is one of the most thickly populated regions of the world. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people of the monsoon region. Crops such as rice, jute, tea, oilseeds, cotton, sugar cane, wheat, etc. are extensively cultivated. Many of the countries of this group are rich in natural resources and so a good number of people are also engaged in the extraction, purification and development of the resources leading to economic advancement of this region.

(iii) Tropical grassland region : This area which includes the regions of South America, Africa and Africa that lie between 10° -- 25° latitudes, mostly consists of grasslands which are generally called Savannah. They are also known by different names in different names in different countries. For example, in Venezuela and Brazil they are called Llanos and Campos respectively.

Primitive groups of people live in this region. They are mostly engaged in animal rearing and hunting.

Cultivation of crops such as jowar, cotton, groundnut, etc. is done on a small-scale in some parts. The human habitation is quite thin in this region. Due to lack of sufficient transport and communication facilities, this region lags behind in economic and social development.

(iv) Tropical hot desert region : The deserts of Arabia, Iran, Afghanistan, Indian Thar desert of Asia, Sahara and Kalahari deserts of Africa, Antacama desert of South America, Great desert of Africa, Atacama desert

of South America, Great desert of Australia, etc. fall under tropical hot desert region. Most areas are inhabited by pastoral nomads. The Bushmen of Kalahari desert, the aborigines of Great desert of Australia, Bedouins of Sahara and Arabia are the main groups of people who live in this region. Most people of this region earn their livelihood by rearing camel, horse, sheep, goat, etc. The Nile valley region has made some progress in agriculture while the Arabian countries Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, etc. have made economic progress due to the discovery of oil.

(v) Mediterranean region : The Mediterranean region is largely found in the neighbouring areas of the Mediterranean Sea including southern Europe, south-western Asia, northern Africa, coastal California of North America, central Chile of South America, Cape coast of South Africa, south-west coast of the Mediterranean region is agriculture. The crops cultivated in the region include wheat, barley, maize, cotton, tobacco, etc. These crops are cultivated depending on winter rainfall and irrigation facility. This area is famous for the cultivation of several fruit trees such as grapes, apples, etc. This has helped the development of fruit-based industries on a large-scale, which includes the world famous wine production.

(vi) Mid-latitude desert region : The Tibetan plateau, Gobi desert, basins surrounded by the Rocky mountains of North America, Patagonia plateau of South America, etc. belong to this natural region. Some pastoral nomadic groups of people inhabit the Tibetan and

Patagonia plateaus and parts of Gobi desert. They move around in search of food for animals and have no permanent settlements. Agriculture is practised in irrigated areas and exploitation of minerals has led to some industrialisation and resultant economic progress.

(vii) Mid-latitude temperate region : This includes northern and eastern China, some parts of southern Canada, England, north-western Europe, south-eastern Brazil, Uruguay, southern Chile and eastern coasts of South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. The main occupation of the people of this region is agriculture. Highly developed form of agriculture is practiced here. Crops like cotton, tobacco, barley, potato, wheat, rice and sugar cane are grown extensively. Animal rearing is also practised commercially in many parts of this region. Industrial activities have also developed due to the availability of mineral resources. The whole region is industrially advanced.

(viii) Mid-latitude grassland region : The mid-latitude grasslands are situated in almost all countries. These grasslands are known by different names in these continents. They are known by different names in these continents. They are known as Steppes in Asia and Europe, Prairies in North America, Pampas in Argentina of South America, Veld in South Africa and Downs in Australia. Most of the people living in these grassland regions are aborigines. Livestock rearing is the main economic activity over here. Nevertheless, large-scale agricultural production is done in the grasslands of the United States, Canada, Argentina, Australia and Russia.

Wheat is cultivated in many parts of this region. Animal rearing has also reached high development and so dairy milk industries have come up as a result of the application of modern scientific methods of rearing of cattle, buffalo, cows and sheep. Wool is also exported from these countries.

(ix) Cold coniferous forest region : This region is spread from Scandinavia of Europe to the Pacific coast in the east and from Alaska of north America to the Atlantic coast in the east. This region is not suitable for agriculture and livestock rearing. Most of the people of this region earn their livelihood by animal hunting and wood collection. The European countries such as Norway, Finland, Sweden, etc. have developed paper industries and wood-based industries. The discovery of several minerals in Canada, Alaska and Siberia has quickened the economic development of this region. A little agriculture and sheep rearing is now practised in the southern part of the Taiga region.

(x) Cold polar region : The areas around the poles including parts of Asia, Europe, North America, Greenland, Siberia and Antarctic fall under the cold polar region. This region is mostly inhabited by aborigines called Eskimos and Lapps. They live in Igloos in winter and in tent houses called Tupik in summer. They live by fishing and hunting. The sledge vehicle pulled by reindeer is the most important means of transport among these people. With the gradual expansion of communication, many people of this region have started living in permanent homes. Fishing and

animal hunting have become more modern. In Siberia, reindeer is reared scientifically on commercial basis. The discovery of petroleum and gold in Alaska, iron in Labrador and nickel in Siberia has brought in a lot of economic progress in the region.

(xi) High mountainous region : This region includes the mountain ranges of the Himalayas, the Alps, the Rockies and the Andes. This region is thinly populated. Livestock rearing and lumbering are the main occupations of the people living in these hilly regions practise shifting cultivation or jhum cultivation. Exploration of minerals is also done where available. Many places of mountainous region have become tourist and health resort centres. This has led to the fast development of the region.

Q10. How many and what are the continents in the world? Give a brief geographical introduction of each of the continents.

Ans: There are seven continents in the world. Among these seven, the snow-covered continent of Antarctic does not have any permanent human settlement and so this continents are Asia, Africa, Europe, North America, South America and Oceania.

(i) Asia : Asia is the largest continent in the world. It has a geographical area of 44.4 million sq. km which constitutes about 30% of the earth's land surface area. It lies mostly in the northern hemisphere. The continent spreads from 1°N latitude in the south to 78°N latitude in the north and 25°E longitude in the west to 170°W

longitude in the east. The continent of Asia is surrounded by the Northern Ocean in the north; the Bering Strait and the Pacific Ocean in the east; Indian Ocean in the south and the Red Sea, the Suez Canal, the Mediterranean Sea, the Ural river and the Ural mountains in the west. Its length from north to south is 8,400 km while its width from east to west is 9,600 km. It has a coastline of 58,000 km.

(ii) Africa : Africa is the second largest continent in the world. Its total geographical area is 30 million sq. km. It has 20% of the world's total land area. The equator passes through the middle of the continent and divides it into two parts. It lies between 37°N latitude in the north to 34°S latitude in the south and 51°E longitude in the east to 17°W longitude in the west. Africa is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea in the north; the Southern Ocean in the south; the Indian Ocean in the east and the Atlantic Ocean in the west. It has a coastline of 30,000 km.

(iii) Europe : The continent of Europe is situated completely in the northern hemisphere. It has a geographical area of 10.9 million sq. km which constitutes about 7.3% of the world's land area. It lies between 36°N latitude in the South to 71°N latitudes in the north and 10°W longitude in the west to 65°E longitude in the east. The northern boundary of Europe is the Northern Ocean while the Mediterranean Sea, the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea constitute the southern boundary. The continent of Asia lies in the east and the Atlantic Ocean on the west. The

Ural mountain ranges and the Ural river separate the continent of Europe from Asia. Europe from Asia. Europe has a coastline of 38,000 km.

(iv) North America : North America is the third largest continent in the world. Its total geographical area is 24.3 million sq. km. North America has 16.3% of the world's total land area. It lies from 7°N latitude in the south to 83°N latitude in the north and 50°W longitude. The north to south distance is 9,600 km while the east to west distance is 4,960 km. This continent is bounded by the Northern Ocean in the north; South America, the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific Ocean in the south; the Atlantic Ocean in the east and the Bering Sea, the Bering Strait and the Pacific Ocean in the west.

(v) South America : The continent of South America extends from 12°N latitude in the north to 55°S latitude in the south and 35°W longitude in the east to 81°W longitude in the west. It has a reversed triangle shape. In other words, its northern part is very wide and southern part is quite narrow. The total geographical area of South America is 18 million sq. km. which constitutes about 12.2% of the world's total land area. Its length from north to south is 7,500 km and 5,100 km, from east to west. The continent of South America is bounded by North America, the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean in the north; the Southern Ocean on the south; the Pacific Ocean on the west and the Atlantic Ocean in the east.

(vi) Oceania : The continent of Oceania consists of the great island of Australia and other islands such as New Zealand, Tasmania, New Guinea, etc. It lies completely in the southern hemisphere. It spreads from 0° equator in the north to 48°S latitude in the south, and 113°E longitude in the west to 180° longitude in the east. Total land area of Oceania is 9 million sq. km. It is the world's smallest continent. It is surrounded by the Java-Sumatra-Celebes islands of the South-East Asia and the Pacific Ocean in the north; the Southern Ocean and Antarctic on the South; the Pacific Ocean on the east and Indian Ocean on the west.

Q11. Which is the largest continent in the world? Write briefly about the physiographic character of the continent.

Ans: Asia is the largest continent in the world. It has a geographical area of 44.4 million sq. km which constitutes about 30% of the world's total land area. The continent of Asia is mostly located in the northern hemisphere. The continent has the following physiographic characteristics :

(i) Mountain ranges : The central part of Asia comprises a chain of young fold mountains which spreads from the west to the east. The mountain ranges of this region emerge from two important knots, namely, the Pamir Knot and the Armenian Knot. Important mountain ranges of this continent are the Ural mountain ranges, the Himalayan ranges, the Karakoram mountain ranges, the Hindu Kush mountain ranges, the Aravali mountain

ranges, etc. The world's highest peak, Mt Everest is situated in the Himalayan range while the world's second highest peak, Godwin Austin is situated in the Karakoram mountain system.

(ii) Plateaus : The Asian continent has a series of plateaus. The world's highest plateau, the Pamir plateau are the Tibetan plateau, the Siberian plateau, the Mongolian plateau, the Deccan plateau, the Iranian plateau, etc.

(iii) Rivers : The continent of Asia is blessed with many rivers. Many large rivers originate from the central mountain ranges and flow towards the oceans and seas in the north, south and east directions. The important rivers include the Indus, Ganges and the Brahmaputra of south-central Asia; Ob, Yenisei and Lena of north Asia; Amur, Hwang-ho, Yangtze, Si kiang and Mekong in the eastern part; Mahanadi, Krishna, Kaveri, Menam, Irrawadi and Mekong in south and south-east Asia.

(iv) Fertile plains and deltas : The rivers of Asia have created a number of fertile plains and deltas. Besides, a number of coastal plains have also been formed by the oceans and the seas along the north-east and southern boundaries of Asia.

(v) Islands : The important islands of Asia are Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Sri Lanka, Lakshadweep, Maldives, Bahrain, etc. The economic development of these islands varies depending on the nature of topography, climate, location, etc.

(vi) Deserts : There are three deserts in Asia. These are the Gobi, the Thar and the Arabian deserts. The Thar desert of India and the Arabian desert belong to the tropical hot desert region while the Gobi desert belongs to the mid-latitude desert region.

Q12. Which is the most populous continent in the world? Write in brief about the population and economic characteristic of that continent.

Ans: Asia is the most populated continent in the world. The population of Asia is 401 crores as per the 2007 estimate. It has three-fifth of the world's population. Due to variation in climate, altitude, soil, distance from the sea, etc., the population distribution is quite uneven. About three-fourth of its population lives in south, south-east and eastern regions of Asia. About 61% of Asia's total population lives in India and China. China is the most populated country in the world followed by India. Tokyo with 34 million population is the most populated city in the world. Other highly populated cities of this continent are Beijing, Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Singapore, Seoul, Sanghai, Hongkong, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, Taipei, etc. Nearly 41% of the people of Asia are urban dwellers.

Asia is rich in natural resources. Hence, the economic activities of the people of this continent are centered around the natural resources such as forest, agricultural and mineral resources. However, the economy of Asia is mainly dependent on agriculture. The main crops produced in this continent are rice, wheat, sugarcane,

tobacco, cotton, tea, rubber, coffee, etc. The major mineral resources of Asia include petroleum of Saudi Arabia and other parts of south-west Asia, India, Myanmar, Indonesia, China and Siberia; iron ore of India, China, Siberia, Indonesia and Philippines; and manganese of India and Siberia.

Q13.Mention the geographical characteristics of the continent of Europe.

Ans: The total geographical area of Europe is 10.9 million sq. km which is 7.3% of the world's total land area. The continent of Europe is located completely in the northern hemisphere. Following are the chief geographical characteristics of Europe :

(i) Physiographic divisions : Geographically, Europe can be divided into two parts :

(a) The northern part and

(b) The southern part.

The northern part extends from coastal France on the west to the Ural mountain ranges in the east. This area is a plain. The southern part extends from Spain to the Black Sea. This area is covered with hills, mountains and plateaus. The northern frontier region and the southern highland region of North America are quite under the influence of glaciers.

(ii) Mountain ranges : Europe has a series of mountain ranges such as the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Carpathian and the Caucasus mountain ranges. Albrus peak (5,633 m) situated in the Caucasus mountain range is the highest peak of Europe while Mount Blanc (4,807 m) is the highest peak of the Alps.

(iii) Rivers and lakes : Europe is blessed with several rivers. The important rivers of this continent are the Elbro of Spain; the Rhone and the Seine of France; the Rhine and the Elbe of Germany; the Oder and the Vistula of Poland; the Danube of Austria, Hungary and Romania; the Dnieper of Balarus and Ukraine; the Po of Italy; the Thames of Great Britain; the Don, the Volga and the Ural of Russia, etc. The Onega, the Ladoga, the Chudskoye, the Vanern, etc. are the important lakes of Europe.

(iv) Islands : Europe has several islands. These include the British Isles, Ireland, Iceland and Shetland of the Atlantic Ocean; Crete, Sicily, Malta, Sardinia, Corsica and Belcaric islands of the Mediterranean Sea and Gotland, Aland, Novaya, Jemiya, Svalbard and Greenland of the Northern Ocean.

Q14. Write briefly about the topography and mineral resources of the continent of North America.

Ans: North America is the third biggest continent in the world. It has a total geographical area of 24.3 million sq. km which constitutes about 16.3% of the world's total area. The following topographical features can be noticed in this continent :

[I] Physiographic divisions : Physiographically, North America can be divided into the following four divisions :

(i) The Rocky mountainous region : The Rocky mountainous region is located in the western part of North America. It consists of a series of lofty folded mountain ranges running from Alaska to Mexico in the South. The important mountain ranges of this region are the Brooks range, the Mackenzie range, the Coast range, the Cascade, the Sierra Nevada, the Sierra Madre, etc. There are two major north-south parallel mountain ranges, namely the Rocky mountain system of the east and the Coastal mountain range system of the west.

(ii) The Great upland plain region : This is a wide area lying to the east of the Rocky mountain region and west of the Appalachian highlands and stretching from the northern part of Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. This region consists of erosional plateaus and fertile plains. The rivers like Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, etc. have converted the southern part of this region into fertile levelled land.

(iii) The Appalachian Highlands region : The rugged region in the eastern part of North America stretching from Newfoundland in the north to Florida in the south and consisting of hills and mountains, narrow river valleys, fragmented plateaus, etc. is known as the Appalachian highlands. The Allegheny and the Blue Ridge mountains are located in the southern part of this

region. This region is rich in mineral resources and highly advanced in economic development.

(iv) The coastal plain region : There exists a small plain land on the Atlantic Ocean coast located to the east of the Appalachian highlands and stretching from Nova Scotia in the north to Panama in the south. This region is rich in resources like mineral oil, natural gas, salt, etc. There is no wide plain area in the west coast of North America except the narrow Coastal plain of California. The northern Coastal land stretching from Alaska in the west to New Foundland in the east is highly fragmented.

[II] Rivers : The continent of North America has several important rivers such as Missouri, Mississippi, Yukon, Mackenzie, Rio Grande, Red, Colorado, Columbia, Snake, Ohio, Tennessee, Hudson, St Lawrence, etc. There are also several lakes which include Superior, Huron, Michigan, Erie, Ontario, Great Bear, Great Slave, Winnipeg and Great Salt Lakes.

[III] Islands : There are a number of small and large islands in the north and the south-eastern parts of North America. Mineral resources : North America has an abundant supply of several minerals. This has been one of the reasons for the rapid economic growth of this continent.

Minerals such as iron, nickel, cobalt, mica, etc. are easily available in this continent. Similarly fossil fuels such as coal, petroleum and natural gas are produced in large quantities in Canada, the USA and Mexico.

Canada has made great progress in the production of hydroelectric power.

Q15. Write in brief about the drainage and vegetation of the continent of South America.

Ans: South America is the fourth largest continent in the world. Its total geographical area is 18 million sq. km. The important rivers of South America are Amazon, Orinoco, Parana, Uruguay, Paraguay, etc. The Amazon river rises in the Andes mountains, flows through the equatorial forests of Brazil and falls into the Atlantic. It has a large number of tributaries. The flow separately for some distance and then meet together under the name of Parana. Further south, the river Uruguay meets Parana and the combined river flows into the Atlantic Ocean under the name of the Rio De La Plata. This river system in the south is very useful as it flows through the rich and productive areas of Uruguay, Paraguay and Argentina. These river systems have created numerous plains which cover almost the whole continent. The natural vegetation in South America varies with the climate and relief. The Amazon basin in the equatorial region with high temperature and heavy rainfall has evergreen dense equatorial forests. This region is known as the Selvas. The amount of rainfall gradually decreases to the north and south of the equatorial region. This has led to the growth of grasslands in these regions. The grasslands of Paraguay-Parana-Uruguay basin are called Campos, Granchaco and Pampas.

Q16. Mention the major mountain systems and rivers of the world and show them in the map.

Ans: The major mountain systems of the world are:

(i) The Central mountain ranges of Asia.

(ii) The Alps mountain system of Europe.

(iii) The Rocky mountain system of North America.

(iv) The Andes mountain system of South America.

The major rivers of the world are:

(i) Asia : Indus, Ganges, Brahmaputra, Mekong, Hwang-ho, Tigris, Euphrates, etc.

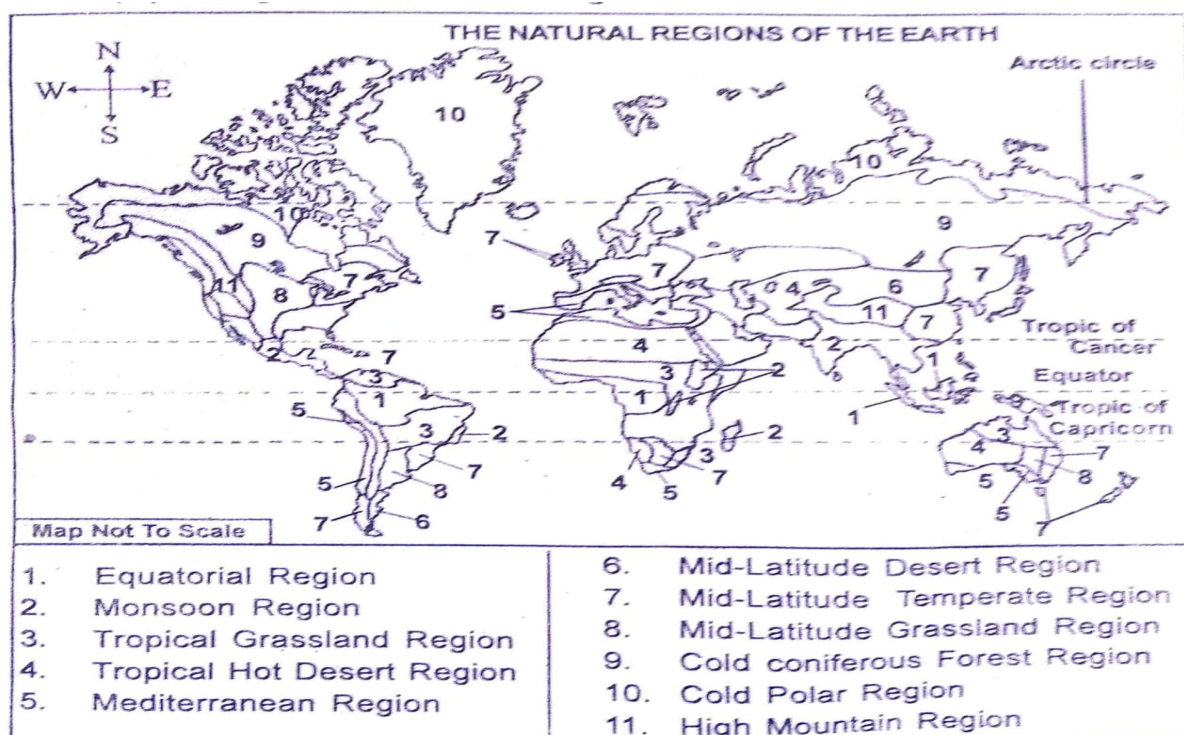
(ii) Europe : Volga, Don, Danube, Rhine, Seine, Ural, etc.

(iii) Africa : Nile, Congo, Orange, Limpopo, Volta, Senegal, Niger, Zambazi, etc.

(iv) South America : Amazon, Orinoco, Uruguay, Paraguay, etc.

(v) North America : Columbia, Colorado, St Lawrence, Mississippi, Mackenzie, etc.

(vi) Oceania : Murray and Darling.



Q17. Write in brief about the climate and mode of living in the continent of Africa.

Ans: Climate : Africa is the second largest continent in the world. It has a geographical area of 30 million sq. km. The continent of Africa is bisected by the equator and as a result the northern part of the continent lies in the southern hemisphere while the southern part of the continent lies in the southern hemisphere. Accordingly, there is a great difference in the climatic conditions in the various regions of Africa. A large part of the continent enjoys tropical climate. Only the northern and southern margins experience sub-tropical and temperate climate. The plain regions and the coastal regions of Africa get high rainfall but there is hardly any rainfall in the desert regions of Sahara, Kalahari and Namibia. Owing to this reason, many areas of Africa are gradually getting dry.

Mode of living : The continent has rich water, forest and mineral resources. The economy is however mainly agro-based. Nearly 70% of the population of Africa is engaged in agriculture. The main agricultural items produced are maize, jowar, bajra, rice, sweet potato, groundnut, cotton, coffee, tea, sugar cane, tobacco, banana, etc. Africa also has minerals resources like petroleum, natural gas, iron, copper, gold, diamond, uranium, etc. The average per capita income of the African continent is about US dollar 2,550. About 37% of the total population lives in urban areas.

Q18. Which is the smallest continent in the world? Write briefly about the geographical situation of that continent.

Ans: Oceania is the smallest continent in the world. The total geographical area of Oceania is about 9 million sq. km. It consists of the great island of Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, New Guinea, etc. This continent lies completely in the southern hemisphere. It extends from 0° equator in the north to 48° S latitude in the east. It is surrounded by Java-Sumatra-Celebes islands of south-east Asia and the Pacific Ocean on the north, southern Ocean and Indian Ocean on the west. Besides the main islands of Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania, there are numerous other islands that are part of this continent. These islands are grouped under Micronesia (the islands located to the north of Indonesia and Papua New Guinea including north Mariana islands, Marshall islands, Guam, Carolina islands, Gilbert, etc.), Melanesia (the islands located to the east of Indonesia including Papua New Guinea, Solomon, New Caledonia,

New Hebrides, etc.) and Polynesia (the islands like Hawaii, Cook, American Samoa, Society, French Polynesia, Marquesas, Tokelau, etc.

Q19. Write short notes :

(a) Major grassland regions of the world.

(b) Equatorial natural region.

(c) Mediterranean natural region.

(d) Monsoon region.

(e) Topography and climate of Asia.

(f) Tundra region.

(g) World population and its distribution.

(h) Tropical grassland region.

(i) Tropical hot desert region.

(j) Cold coniferous forest region.

Ans: (a) Major grassland regions of the world : The grasslands of the world are found in two natural regions, i.e. the tropical grassland region and the mid-latitude grassland region.

(i) Tropical grassland region : Do your Self

(ii) Mid-latitude grassland region : Do your Self

(b) Equatorial natural region : Do your Self

(c) Mediterranean natural region : Do your Self

(d) Monsoon region : Do your Self

(e) Topography and climate of Asia :Do your Self

(f) Tundra region : Do your Self

(g) World population and its distribution : The total geographical area of the world is 510 million sq. km. Out of this, the land surface area constitutes about 29% (149 million sq. km) while the water bodies constitutes about 71% (361 million sq. km). The world's total population is over 662 crores as per 2007 estimate. Currently, the total population of the world is estimated to be around 7000 million or 7 billion. As per 2007 estimate, the population of Asia is over 401 crores which is 60.50% of the total world population. Africa has a population of 944 million while the third biggest continent, North America, has a population of 523 million. The population of Europe is around 733 million though it is fifth in size among the continents. On the other hand, South America, fourth in size, has a population of 381 million while the population of Oceania

is just 35 million. About 90% of the world's population lives in the northern hemisphere. Thus, we see that the distribution of world population is quite uneven. This is due to the variations in topography, climate, soil, altitude, distance from the sea, vegetation, etc. Due to variations of different elements of natural environment, the population distribution and man's ways of living are not the same in different places of the earth.

(h) Tropical grassland region : Do your Self

(i) Tropical hot desert region : Do your Self

(j) Cold coniferous forest region : Do your Self