**United States and Canada**

Cultural Characteristics notes

Colonized by Europeans

     United States--

       England colonized Eastern US

       France colonized Louisiana Territory

       Spain colonized Florida, American Southwest (and Mexico)

       Russia colonized Alaska

     Canada--

       England colonized Western Canada, parts of eastern Canada, took over French areas

       France colonized Eastern Canada (Quebec region)

Multicultural Societies

     United States and Canada are made up of many different ethnic, language, and religious groups

     Total Populations:

       US—295,700,000

       Canada—32,800,000

     Major Ethnic Groups:

       US—Caucasian, African-American, Hispanic, Asian

       Canada—British, French, other European

     Religion:

       US—Protestant 52%, Catholic 24%

       Canada—Catholic 43%, Protestant 23%

     Language:

       US—English 82%, Spanish 11%

       Canada—English 59%, French 23%

Increasingly diverse populations

     US receives many immigrants from Latin America

     Canada receives many immigrants from Europe

     Challenges because of diverse populations:

                  --Communication

                  --Racism

High literacy rates

     US—97%

     Canada—97%

     World Average—82%

     Reason for high literacy rates:  education

     Result of high literacy rates:  wealth

High standard of living

     GDP per capita:

       US—$40,100

       Canada--$31,500

       World Average--$8,800

--Services/luxuries available because of high levels of wealth:

                        health care, entertainment, better education, public services

Highly urbanized

     US:  75% urban, 25% rural

     Canada:  78% urban , 22% rural

     World:  47% urban, 53% rural

      --high rates of urbanization are usually found in developed countries

Canada’s Struggle to Maintain National Identity

     Canada is made up of provinces and territories loosely tied together at the national level

     Quebec is very different from much of the rest of the country.  It wants to maintain the French language and culture, and has even attempted to secede a few times in the last half century.

Highly Mobile Populations

     Transportation technologies and infrastructure are well developed in US and Canada

     Transportation technologies:  cars, planes, trains

     Transportation infrastructure:  roads, airports, railroads

World’s Longest Unfortified Border

     Border between US and Canada is the world’s longest unfortified (undefended) border.

     US and Canada aren’t enemies and are often military allies (NATO) and trade partners (NAFTA).

Democratic Governments

     US:  Representative Democracy

       People elect executive (President)

       People elect lawmakers (Congress)

     Canada:  Constitutional Monarchy; Parliamentary Democracy

       British monarch (queen or king) is the figurehead ruler

       people elect lawmakers (Parliament)

       lawmakers elect executive (Prime Minister)

            --elected governments allow for freedom, opportunity

Arts that Reflect Multicultural Societies

     Different music, architectural styles, etc. are contributions from different cultural groups:

     Examples:

       Jazz music

       Spanish mission-style homes

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

     US and Canada belong to NATO

     Original purpose of NATO:  military alliance against the former Soviet Union and its communist allies (Warsaw Pact countries)

     Current purpose of NATO:  military alliance that cooperates to fight worldwide terrorism

     Other NATO members:

      --Germany

      --United Kingdom

      --Spain

      --Italy

      --Russia is now a partner member