**Chapter 10  
Geography of Mexico**

* Hernan Cortes - Spanish explorer who conquered Mexico
  + - Described physical features of Mexico as: Crumpled piece of paper
* Mountain ranges –
  + Sierra Madre Occidental –\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ coast
  + Sierra Madre Oriental – –\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ coast
  + Plateau (area of high, flat land) lies between
* The Heartland Region
* Natural Hazards
  + Central plateau is geologically unstable
  + Mexico is located at the intersection of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tectonic plates – North American, Caribbean, Pacific, and Cocos plates
* Climate Factors
  + Low precipitation to the north, moderate to the south
  + Higher elevation keeps temperatures mild, even though it is in the tropics

The Four Coastal Regions

1. Northern Pacific Coast
   * Dry, hot, and little population
   * Some of countries best farmlands – because of irrigation
   * Baja California – mostly mountainous desert
2. Southern Pacific Coast
   * Smaller mountain ranges
   * Little farmland
   * Large tourism business
3. Gulf Coast Plain
   * Vast deposits of petroleum and natural gas along the lain and offshore
   * One of world’s major oil-producing regions
4. The Yucatan Peninsula
   * Generally flat
   * Limestone bedrock that creates underground caverns, Landscape is dotted with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* A Place of Three Cultures
* Plaza de las Tres Culturas
  + The Three Cultures – is located on the site of an Aztec center that fell to the Spanish in a 1521 battle
  + In the center there are restored ruins of an Aztec temple pyramid
    - One side has a 1609 Spanish church
    - Another side has twin office buildings of glass and concrete
    - A busy eight-lane highway runs past the plaza
* 3 Cultures

1. Native American
2. Spanish
3. mestizo

* Aztecs and Spaniards
* Early 1400’s, Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlan was center of an empire
  + Built on an island in a lake, current site of Mexico City
* The Spanish Conquest
  + Hernan Cortes, with 600 soldiers, marched into Tenochtitlan in 1519
  + Spaniards destroyed the Aztec empire within 2 years
  + Became colony of New Spain
* New Spain
  + Four social classes emerged
    1. Peninsulares – born in Spain
    2. Criollos – Spanish ancestry born in America
    3. Mestizos – mix of Native American and Europeans
    4. Indians – Native to America
* Road to Democracy

What events led to the eventual development of Democracy in Mexico?

* Resentment between classes
  + \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ – a criollos priest
  + Sparked a war for independence
* Independence did not mean democracy
  + 100 years to achieve democracy
  + End of 1800’s, Mexico stable enough to attract foreign capital and industry
    - Oil reserves developed
  + Gap between rich and poor grew even bigger

The Mexican Revolution

* + 1910, peasants and middle-class Mexicans rebelled, standing up to the military dictator
  + By 1920, a new president and a new constitution
* Social Conditions
* Rural Life
  + After the revolution, the government began program of buying out landowners and breaking up large haciendas – **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
  + **Ejidos** – farmland owned by members of a rural community practiced **subsistence farming**
  + 1/3 of Mexican farms are **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**(large commercial farms)
  + 3-4 million rural families are **migrant workers**
* Urban Life
  + ¾ of Mexico’s population live in cities
  + Better opportunity for jobs
  + Majority of people are very poor
* Economic Activities
* 1993, **NAFTA** (North American Free Trade Agreement) was designed to compete with the European Union, a free-trade network in Europe
* Major Industries
  + Petroleum
  + \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ – the “smokeless industry”
* Border Industries
  + **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**- factories that assemble products almost exclusively for consumers in the U.S.
    - Responsible for large amount of air and water pollution