

LOUISIANA SPEAKS: OUR VOICE. OUR PLAN. OUR FUTURE.

A LONG-TERM REGIONAL PLANNING INITIATIVE OF THE LRA



CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

(ACTIVITY FOR GRADES 8 THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL)



Challenge:

How would you rebuild the coastal regions of Southeastern or Southwestern Louisiana? Regional recovery demands comprehensive and highly inclusive large-scale planning to make multi-parish areas smarter, safer and stronger. A regional plan would include alternatives to restore and preserve the coastline and wetlands; maximize use of transportation such as railways, waterways, and highways; and provide alternative ways that growth and development can be accommodated in the context of varying environmental, economic, and cultural patterns.

According to the Comprehensive Coastal Restoration Plan, Preliminary Draft, four objectives of an effective plan would be to:

- Reduce economic losses from storm based flooding to residential, public, industrial, and commercial infrastructure, making sure assets are protected, at a minimum, from a storm surge that has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year
- Promote a sustainable coastal ecosystem by harnessing the processes of the natural system
- Provide habitats suitable to support an array of commercial and recreational activities coastwide
- Sustain, to the extent practicable, the unique heritage of coastal Louisiana by protecting historic properties and traditional living cultures and their ties and relationships to the natural environment.

In addition to preserving the coast, three growth options have been suggested:

- Keep building and developing as we are. Continue to build mostly single-family homes, mainly at the edge of metropolitan areas, connected by roadways.
- Modify development patterns. Build more in-town condos, apartments and townhouses, as well as single-family homes. Balance new public transit with road improvements.
- Focus development on existing cities and towns. Build mainly-in-town condos, apartments, and townhouses, connected by public transit such as modern buses or commuter trains.

Process:

Divide students into small groups.

- Visit the Louisiana Speaks Web Site <http://www.louisianaspeaks.org/> to learn about the regional planning initiative. Read the questions and answers in the *Louisiana Speaks Regional Vision* questionnaire and complete the online poll.
- Read the Introduction: *What is at Stake?* and *Chapter 1: Building Blocks of the Master Plan*.

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www.lpb.org/lps

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- Select one of the five planning units for your project (see page map on page 17):
 - *Pontchartrain Basin (area east of the Mississippi River)*
 - *Barataria Basin (from the Mississippi River west to Bayou Lafourche)*
 - *Eastern Terrebonne Basin (from Bayou Lafourche west to Bayou de West)*
 - *Atchafalaya Influence Area (from Bayou de West to Freshwater Bayou Canal)*
 - *Chenier Plain (from Freshwater Bayou Canal to the Sabine River)*
- Review Chapter 2 of the *Comprehensive Coastal Protection Master Plan for Louisiana* (Preliminary Draft) for the selected area.
- Review *Envisioning the Future of the Gulf Coast of Louisiana*. Final Report and Findings by the Technical Group, *Envisioning the Future of the Gulf Coast Conference*, New Orleans, June 1, 2006 <http://www.americaswetland.com/assets/EFGCReport.pdf>
- Use Google Earth to view the area to rebuild. Google Earth is free and can be downloaded at <http://earth.google.com/>.
 - o Identify the distinguishing characteristics of the selected area.
 - o Consider how or why specific regions are changing as a result of physical phenomena.
 - o Identify factors that affect how the region is used.
 - o Analyze the benefits and challenges of the region.
 - o Search for the web site of the official parish web sites and major cities within the selected region. Read about the economy, population, industries, culture of the area.
- Review the **Louisiana Speaks Regional Vision brochure** ([pdf file](#)). Decide what you think the priorities should be, how you think the coast should be protected, what values you think are most important, how we should grow, and the right balance of property and community rights.
- Then based on your choices, draft your own regional plan incorporating transportation, economic development, and coastal restoration and protection.

- **Submit plans to Louisiana Speaks**
 - by email to: laspeaks@c-pex.org**
 - or by mail to: Louisiana Speaks Regional Vision**
721 Government Street, Suite 103-230
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

**GRADE LEVEL EXPECTATIONS:**

GLE # GLE Text and Benchmark

World Geography**Unit 1: Location and Geographic Tools**

3. Analyze or interpret a map to locate geographic information, using a variety of map elements (e.g., compass rose, symbols, distance scales, time zones, latitude, longitude) (G-1A-H1)
5. Construct a map based on given narrative information (e.g., location of cities, bodies of water, places of historical significance) (G-1A-H1)
6. Construct a chart, diagram, graph, or graphic organizer to display geographic information (G-1A-H1)
7. Analyze, interpret, and use information in charts, diagrams, and graphs to explain geographic issues (G-1A-H1)

Unit 2: Places and Regions

Places and Regions

9. Identify and analyze the distinguishing physical or human characteristics of a given place (e.g., landforms, precipitation, ecosystems, settlement patterns, economic activities) (G-1B-H1)
10. Evaluate how location, topography, climate, natural resources, and other physical characteristics affect human activities (e.g., cultural diversity, migration, physical features, historical events, plantation, subsistence farming) or the significance of a place (G-1B-H1)
11. Draw conclusions about a place or area from its geographic or physical features (G-1B-H1)
12. Explain how topography, climate, soil, vegetation, and natural resources shape the history of a region (G-1B-H2)
13. Explain how location, physical features, and human characteristics of places influenced historical events (e.g., World War II, Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam, Middle East conflicts) (G-1B-H2)
14. Explain ways in which regional systems are interconnected (e.g., interstate transportation and trade, interconnecting rivers and canals) (G-1B-H3)
16. Explain how physical or geographical characteristics (e.g., mountain ranges, interconnecting waterways) facilitate or hinder regional interactions (G-1B-H3)
17. Explain how technological advances have led to increasing interaction between regions (e.g., use of satellites for monitoring and exploration) (G-1B-H3)
19. Describe how physical and cultural characteristics give definition to a place or region (e.g., New South, Jerusalem) (G-1B-H4)
31. Compare the role that culture plays in incidents of cooperation and conflict in the present day world (G-1C-H4)
37. Analyze regional issues and alliances in terms of common interests related to territory and resources (e.g., oil, water, boundaries) (G-1C-H6)
39. Describe challenges to human systems and activities posed by the physical environment or the impact of natural processes and disasters on human systems (e.g., infrastructure) (G-1D-H2)
50. Evaluate options for solving a local or regional problem involving physical processes or environmental challenges (e.g., government disaster aid, environmental clean-up cost responsibility) (G-1D-H5)

World Geography

Unit 3: Physical Systems

41. Analyze the relationships between the development of natural resources in a region and human settlement patterns or regional variations in land use (G-1D-H3)

World Geography

Unit 4: Human Systems

26. Assess the role of environmental changes, economic scarcity, conflict, political developments, cultural factors, and prosperity in human migration (e.g., escape from persecution or famine, migration to the suburbs) (G-1C-H2)
27. Analyze patterns of urban development in an area or region (G-1C-H3)
28. Compare, contrast, and analyze the distribution, growth rates, and other demographic characteristics of human populations in various countries or regions (G-1C-H3)

Physical and Human Systems

31. Compare the role that culture plays in incidents of cooperation and conflict in the present-day world (G-1C-H4)
32. Analyze how certain cultural characteristics can link or divide regions (e.g., language, religion, demography) (G-1C-H4)
33. Identify the geographical distribution of the different economic systems (market, command, traditional, mixed) (G-1C-H5)

Unit 5: Environment and Society

10. Evaluate how location, topography, climate, natural resources, and other physical characteristics affect human activities (e.g., cultural diversity, migration, physical features historical events, plantation, subsistence farming) or the significance of a place (G-1B-H1)
11. Draw conclusions about a place or area from its geographic or physical features (G-1B-H1)
12. Explain how topography, climate, soil, vegetation, and natural resources shape the history of a region (G-1B-H2)
15. Analyze world regions in terms of given characteristics (e.g., population density, natural resources, economic activities, demography) (G-1B-H3)
16. Explain how physical or geographical characteristics (e.g., mountain ranges, interconnecting waterways) facilitate or hinder regional interactions (G-1B-H3)
19. Describe how physical, historical, and cultural characteristics give definition to a place or region (e.g., New South, Jerusalem) (G-1B-H4)

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21. Characterize areas or regions in terms of the physical processes that affect them (e.g., Pacific Ocean "Rim of Fire", San Andreas fault) (G-1C-H1)
26. Assess the role of environmental changes, economic scarcity, conflict, political developments, cultural factors, and prosperity in human migration (e.g., escape from persecution or famine, migration to the suburbs) (G-1C-H2)
39. Describe challenges to human systems and activities posed by the physical environment or the impact of natural processes and disasters on human systems (e.g., infrastructure) (G-1DH2)
40. Analyze or evaluate strategies for dealing with environmental challenges (e.g., dams or dikes to control floods, fertilizer to improve crop production) (G-1D-H2)
41. Analyze the relationship between the development of natural resources in a region and human settlement patterns or regional variations in land use (G-1D-H3)
44. Analyze the relationship between a country's standard of living and its locally accessible natural resources (e.g., the effects of oil or natural gas reserves in a region) (G-1D-H3)
45. Describe the impact of natural resource scarcity (e.g., water shortage) or pollution (e.g., air, water) (G-1D-H3)
50. Evaluate options for solving a local or regional problem involving physical processes or environmental challenges (e.g., government disaster aid, environmental clean-up cost responsibility) (G-1D-H5)