

Places in B.C.

This handout package provides students with a brief overview of one of seven regions in B.C. These descriptions will help students audit the different types of energy (see the Energy Primers) found in their assigned region.

This handout package includes the following regions:

- Vancouver Island and Coast
- North Coast
- Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley
- Kootenay
- Thompson-Okanagan
- Cariboo
- Northeast

Instructions:

1. Hand out a different region to each group.
2. Each group should research their region (based on the information provided and other sources, as desired) as well as the different types of energy found in that region.
3. Each group should then complete one Our Place Our Energy Our Future Student Handout.



Vancouver Island and Coast

Vancouver Island is the furthest west of all regions in B.C. It's completely surrounded by ocean. The island has many rolling valleys and plateaus, a mountain range and a significant amount of rainfall.



Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • highly varied • mountain range down the middle of the island • many plateaus and valleys • several small-to-medium-sized rivers
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant rainfall each year • can be very windy due to storms and currents rolling in from the open ocean
Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • temperate rainforest with several old growth forests • key plant species: Western red cedar, Douglas fir, Garry oak • key animal species: black bears, Vancouver Island marmot, orca whales
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • population of approximately 745,000 people (2015) • communities include: Victoria, Duncan, Nanaimo, Campbell River, Courtenay-Comox, Port Alberni, Port Hardy
Major features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on an active tectonic plate (Juan De Fuca plate) • significant agricultural and tourism region in B.C.



North Coast

The North Coast is the location of B.C.'s Great Bear Rainforest. Much of the land is almost untouched by humans and is partially protected within provincial parks. The region is known for steep fjords, a large biodiversity of life and some of the heaviest rainfall on Earth.



Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • highly varied • Coast Mountain range provides shelter for interior • many islands, valleys, fjords, and glaciers • several medium-sized rivers
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant amount of rain each year • can be very windy due to storms and currents rolling in from the open ocean
Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • temperate rainforest with several old growth forests • key plant species: Western red cedar, Douglas fir, Sitka spruce, lodgepole pine • key animal species: grizzly bears, spirit bears, orca whales, Pacific salmon
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • population of approx. 96,000 people (2015) • communities include: Queen Charlotte City, Masset, Prince Rupert, Kitimat, Terrace
Major features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • active geological hot spot and tectonic plate boundary runs along coastline • many small and tight-knit communities inhabit the region



Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley

The Lower Mainland is in the southwestern region of B.C.'s mainland. It's surrounded by ocean on one side, the United States on another side and the Coast Mountains on the other two sides. The Lower Mainland has a major, fast-flowing river, a wide agricultural valley and significant rainfall each year.



Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mountain range surrounding a river valley and ocean coastline • Vancouver and other large communities use a significant portion of the area • one large major river (the Fraser)
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant amount of rainfall each year • can be very windy due to storms and currents rolling in from the ocean
Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • temperate rainforest with several old growth forests • key plant species: Western red cedar, Douglas fir, Sitka spruce • key animal species: black bears, orca whales, Pacific salmon
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • population of approximately 2,880,000 people (2015) • communities include: Vancouver, North Vancouver, Surrey, Richmond, Burnaby, Squamish, Abbotsford
Major features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • active geological hot spot and tectonic plate boundary runs along coastline • significant agricultural region in B.C., with large farming industries



Kootenay

The Kootenay area encompasses the southeastern region of B.C. It is the home of the Rocky Mountains, some of the highest mountains in North America. The Kootenays sit atop significant stores of decayed matter and has several major rivers running through the valleys.



Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • several mountain ranges, including the Rocky Mountains, with valleys between each range • many glaciers • several large major rivers
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moderate amount of rain each year • has very cold winters with significant snowfall and mild summers
Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boreal, old growth forests and alpine meadows • key plant species: many alpine wildflowers, Western red cedar, Douglas fir, lodgepole pine • key animal species: elk, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, grizzly bears, timber wolves
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • population of approximately 145,000 people (2015) • communities include: Cranbrook, Nelson, Castlegar, Revelstoke, Golden
Major features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large stores of decayed matter in multiple forms lie underneath the Rocky Mountains • many hydroelectric projects are already in the area that generate power for many B.C. regions



Thompson-Okanagan

The Thompson-Okanagan is in the southern interior of B.C. It's surrounded by high mountains on both sides protecting it from harsh climates. The Thompson-Okanagan has two major lakes and several medium-sized rivers, a wide agricultural valley and significant hours of sunlight each year.



Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plateau and valley protected on each side by major mountain ranges • numerous lakes and a medium-sized river system
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant amount of sun each year • can be very hot; parts of the region are classified as desert • some areas are very windy, with wind coming off the leeward side of the mountains
Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • boreal forests, grasslands, desert • key plant species: ponderosa pine, cottonwood, prickly pear cactus, big sagebrush • key animal species: mountain goats, black bears, white-tailed deer, rattlesnakes, cougars
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • population of approximately 545,000 people (2015) • key communities include: Kelowna, Kamloops, Salmon Arm, Vernon, Penticton, Osoyoos
Major features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two large lakes and several large communities • significant agricultural and tourism region in B.C.



Cariboo

The Cariboo is the geographical center of B.C. It features many high rolling plateaus and several major rivers running through it. The Cariboo has significant hours of sunlight each year.



Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • many high rolling plateaus • many smaller communities that lie in the river valleys
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant amount of sunlight each year • lots of wind coming off Coast Mountains • cold winters with mild summers
Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grasslands, boreal and temperate forests • key plant species: ponderosa and lodgepole pine, cottonwood, big sagebrush, Western red cedar, Douglas fir • key animal species: caribou, elk, black bears, grizzly bears, white-tailed deer, cougars
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • population of approximately 155,000 people (2015) • key communities include: Prince George, Williams Lake, Quesnel, 100 Mile House, Fort St. James
Major features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stores of natural gas lie deep underground in several areas • significant agricultural region in B.C., with large cattle-farming industries • lies on top of several smaller geological hotspots



Northeast

The Northeast is the northeastern region of B.C. It's surrounded by the start of the Rocky Mountains to the west and Alberta's plains to the east. It has a major river and several vast open plains.



Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> vast and open plains many smaller communities embedded throughout region one large major river (the Peace)
Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> significant amount of sunlight each year can be very windy
Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> grasslands, boreal forests key plant species: ponderosa and lodgepole pine, cottonwood, big sagebrush, Western red cedar, Douglas fir key animal species: elk, caribou, Dall sheep, black bears, grizzly bears, gray wolves
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> population of approximately 70,000 people (2015) key communities include: Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, Dawson Creek, Chetwynd, Mackenzie
Major features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> major stores of natural gas and other fossil fuels lie deep underground significant agricultural region in B.C., with large farming industries

