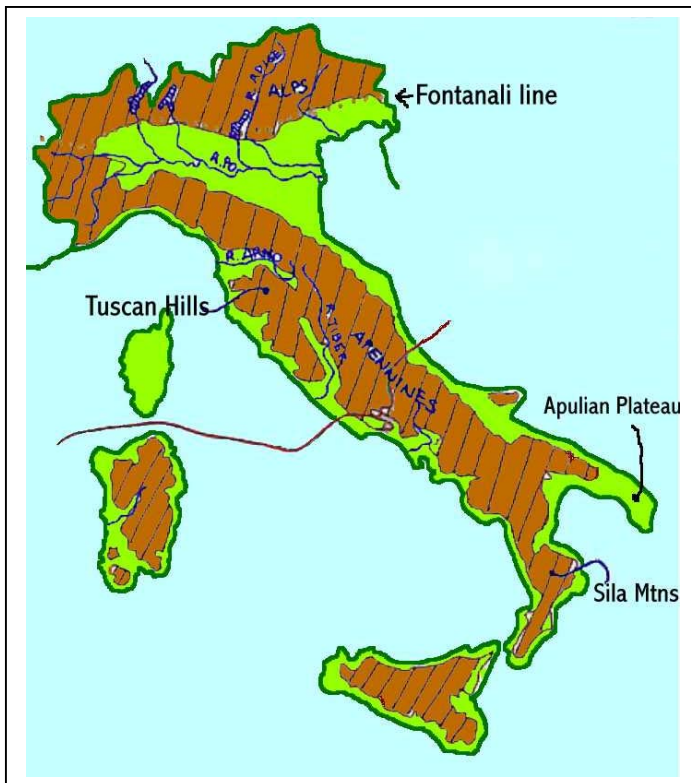


## ITALY

Read the following text and answer the questions which follow



Italy is a boot shaped peninsula jutting 1200 kilometres into the Mediterranean sea. Politically unified in 1870, it failed to industrialise until the post 1945 era. Since then two distinct regions have emerged. The north represents the economic core of the country whilst the south remains peripheral, and with the exception of four growth centres, economically underdeveloped. This essay examines the physical, agricultural and industrial characteristics of Italy's two distinctive regions, the North Italian Plain and the Mezzogiorno.

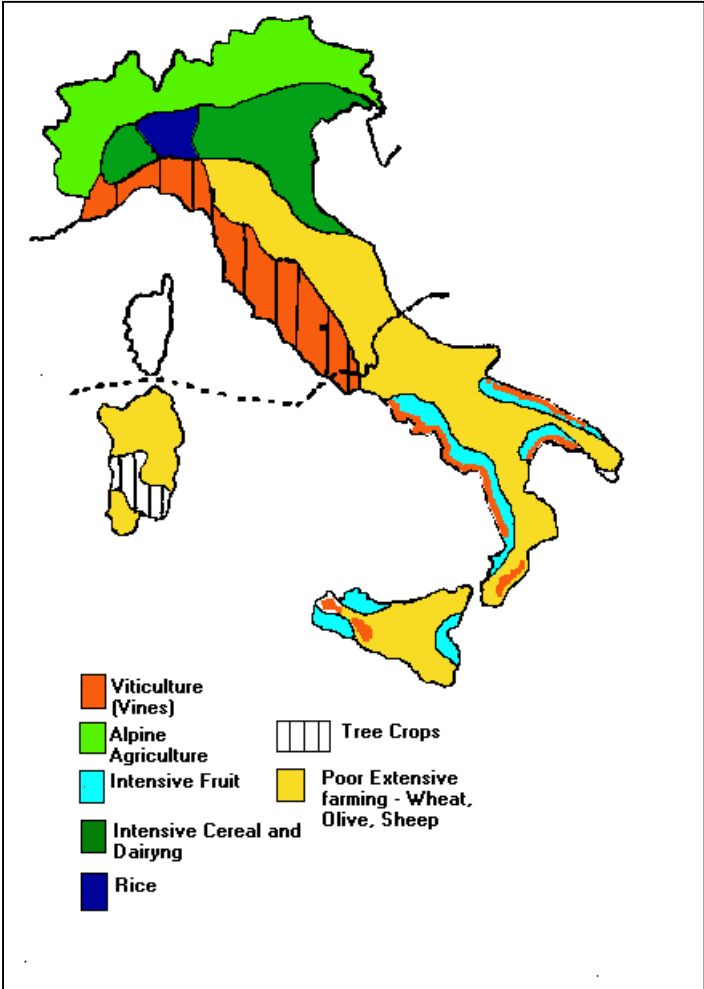
The North Italian Plain exhibits contrasts in its physical geography. To the North the region is bounded by the Alpine fold range, to the south the Apennines dominate, while sandwiched between these is Italy's only extensive lowland - the Po Basin. Meltwater from the Alpine

glaciation deposited coarse and fine glacial gravels and sands on lower slopes to the north of the Po basin. The intersection between these coarse and fine deposits resulted in a spring line known as the Fontanali Line, where the water table comes to the surface. The Po basin was initially a shallow inlet of the Adriatic Sea. As this area drained, fertile alluvial soil remained behind. This soil in the Po basin together with the irrigation provided by the Fontanali Line produces a very fertile agricultural landscape which supports the high population density of the region. In addition the continental climate, with 800mm of rainfall spread throughout the year and a summer maximum temperature of 23 Celsius (winter minimum, 0 C) is conducive to highly productive agriculture.

Agriculture in the North Italian Plain is intensive, mechanised and highly productive. The Alpine slopes are important for grazing with transhumance being practised. However on south facing lower slopes fruit growing and vineyards are important. The Po Basin is Italy's most intensive cereal producing region. Lowland relief, fertile soils, sunshine, good drainage and irrigation together well distributed rainfall and large scale cost effective farming contribute to the Po Basin's productivity. Wheat is dominant however maize and barley are important. Lombardy, Emilia and Veneto are the main cereal producing areas. Rice is also grown in the Po Basin. Increasingly cereal production has been geared towards cattle and especially pig rearing. Market gardening and co-operative dairies operate to supply the large urban industrial markets of Milan, Turin and Genoa. Soils in the Northern Apennines are thin and together with the aspect of the landscape, they are not conducive to intensive agriculture. However, vines are grown on south facing slopes. Olive growing and extensive sheep rearing is evident here also.

Industrially the North Italian Plain developed only in the post 1945 period with the aid of Marshall Plan funds. The construction of Alpine passes and tunnels linked Northern Italy to the industrialised European core. This allowed the north to industrialise with the aid of a developed

hydroelectric program and the use of natural gas supplies. The absence of large deposits of local iron ore restricted the development of heavy industry, except at coastal locations which afforded cheap importation of raw materials. The combination of these factors allowed the development of the Milan Turin Genoa Industrial triangle. Local and imported raw materials, plentiful energy supplies, a large labour market and excellent communications allowed northern industry to prosper. Petrochemicals, food processing, textiles, clothing and footwear developed in Milan. However engineering is the most important activity including motor vehicles, machine tools and precision instruments. Turin is heavily dependent on the presence of the Fiat motor company. Connected industries such as sheet steel, ball bearings and machine tools are important. Food processing and textiles supply local markets. Genoa is Italy's main port. Its deep waters have long been important for the region and is vital for the receipt of raw materials feeding northern industry. Other important industries include food processing, soap manufacture, grain milling and sugar refining.



In contrast to northern Italy stands the Mezzogiorno. Physically it is 80% mountain with 20% lowland confined to coastal areas. The soils are thin, infertile, and as a result of overgrazing, upper Apennine slopes experienced erosion. The climate is Warm Mediterranean with a summer maximum of 23 C and a winter minimum of 10 C. Annual rainfall is 1800mm but it is concentrated in the winter on the west coast. Therefore the landscape is poorly suited to intensive agriculture. Extensive grazing was dominant with vine and olives being the only crops of any significance. Additionally, traditional landholding structures mitigated against productive farming. Large estates or Latifundia owned by absentee landlords went largely under used whilst the majority of the population subsisted on small acreages called Minifundia. Poor education and service provision and the unavailability of jobs forced many of the younger generations to migrate north, leaving behind an ageing farm populace least likely to implement vital farm improvements.

The fear of social unrest prompted rural land reforms in the 1950's. The government appropriated the Latifundia and two new classes of farms were established - small 20-hectare holdings in lowland areas and 50-hectare holdings in upland areas. Emphasis was placed on intensive citrus fruit production geared towards northern markets. These offered a higher return than vines and olives. Irrigation schemes in Calabria and Apulia allowed more intensive cereal production and market gardening.

Industrially, the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno promoted growth centres, from the 1950's by offering financial incentives to companies establishing plants at Naples, and Bari, Brindisi and Taranto. The latter three form a southern industrial triangle. These three ports are important for oil refining, petro-chemical production and the processing of cheap iron ore imports. The processed steel is then transported north via the new Trans-Appenine motorway, built to improve communications or via Genoa. Education and service provision was enhanced to support industry and retain younger population.

Stiff competition from, and the cost effectiveness of northern industry due to its greater proximity to the European industrialised core continues to challenge southern economic development and so the Mezzogiorno remains peripheral. As Europe's economy shifts to a greater emphasis on tertiary activities, especially tourism, the south may continue to develop but this will depend on the south's responsiveness to change, and government investment.

## ITALY

### QUESTIONS ON THE NORTH ITALIAN PLAIN

Answer the following using KEY WORDS (not sentences). As far as possible, try to fit the answers on ONE page.

1. Where is Italy located?
2. Name the economic core of Italy.
3. Name the most peripheral region in Italy.
4. Name and locate the two mountain ranges in the north of Italy.
5. Name and locate Italy's only extensive area of lowland.
6. Identify the type of deposits laid down by the Alpine Glaciation in northern Italy.
7. What is the Fontanali Line and where is it located?
8. How was the Po Basin formed?
9. How would you describe the agricultural potential of the Po Basin?
10. In what way does this agricultural potential benefit the north of Italy?
11. Describe the climate of the North Italian Plain.
12. How would you describe the agriculture of the North Italian Plain?
13. Describe the agriculture practiced in the North Italian Plain.
14. What crops are grown in the Po Basin?
15. Identify SEVEN factors affecting agriculture in the North Italian Plain.
16. Identify the main cereal producing areas in the North Italian Plain.
17. What is Market Gardening?
18. Why is agriculture in the Northern Appenines un-intensive?
19. What crops are grown in the Northern Appenines?
20. What processing industries are supported by the agriculture in the Northern Appenines?
21. What American programme helped northern Italy industrialise after World War II?
22. Identify the THREE largest industrial centres in northern Italy.
23. How is northern Italy linked to the economic core of Italy?
24. Identify TWO sources of energy used to drive industry in the north of Italy.
25. Identify ONE restriction to the development of industry in northern Italy.
26. What factor helped Italy overcome this problem?
27. Identify FIVE factors contributing to the growth of Italian industry in the north.
28. Identify FIVE industries in Milan.
29. On what industry is Turin dependent and in what way?
30. What advantage does Genoa have to offer industry?
31. Identify FOUR other industries in Genoa.

## **QUESTIONS ON THE MEZZOGIORNO**

Answer the following using Key Words.

1. Describe the location of the Mezzogiorno.
2. How would you describe the topography of the Mezzogiorno?
3. What factor led to soil erosion in southern Italy?
4. Describe the climate of the Mezzogiorno.
5. Describe the agriculture practiced in the Mezzogiorno.
6. What crops were dominant in the Mezzogiorno?
7. Identify two types of landholding in the Mezzogiorno.
8. In what way did the landholding contribute to the problems of the Mezzogiorno?
9. Identify three push factors contributing to migration from the Mezzogiorno.
10. What effect did this migration have on southern Italy?
11. What social consequences spurred the Italian government into action over conditions in the Mezzogiorno?
12. What actions did the government take through the Enti di Reforma?
13. How would you describe the landholding structure now?
14. In what way was agriculture reoriented?
15. What approach did the government take to develop the Mezzogiorno industrially?
16. What industrial activities were promoted as a result of this approach?
17. How was communications improved between the north and south of Italy?
18. What actions were taken to reduce migration?
19. What challenges continue to face the Mezzogiorno?
20. On which economic activity must the Mezzogiorno focus in the future?