**I. Geography of the Middle East**

A. Physical Geography

* Most of this area is covered by sand
* **Fertile –**
* **Desertification –**
* **Oasis –**

B. Black Gold

* At one time a huge lake covered this entire region
* **Fossil Fuels –**
* Around 50% of the world’s oil is located in the Middle East
* **Saudi Arabia –**
* Major trading partner of the United States today

C. Taking Control of Oil

* **OPEC –**
* Member countries: Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Venezuela
* Controls the price and amount of oil produced
* Money from fossil fuels supports most of the economies in the Middle East today

D. Population Patterns

* People tend to cluster to areas with access to water
* **Desalination –**
* Money from oil results in government payouts in some countries and immigration
* Arabia and Iraq currently have one of the highest rates of population in the world

E. People with No Country

* **Kurds –**
* Spread throughout the Middle East

**1)**

**2)**

**3)**

**4)**