**Characteristics of a Region:**  
  
Q. A region is an area that has one or more characteristics that distinguish it from other areas. Describe the key characteristics of a climatic region.

* Cool Temperate Oceanic/Maritime Region of NW Europe.
* This type of climate is found between 40° -50° N/S of the equator on the western edges of continents.
* Because of its latitude this climatic region experiences a moderate climate with a temperature range of 9°C.
* Summer temperatures average 15°C. Winter temperatures average 6°C.
* Rainfall occurs throughout the year with most rainfall in winter.On average 1,500mm of precipitation is recorded, but variations in relief may increase this in mountainous areas - Relief rain in the W of Ireland.
* Rainfall amounts may be lower than average due to the rain shadow effect - The E coast of Ireland.
* The cool temperate oceanic climate is influenced by the sea.The warm North Atlantic Drift ocean current flows along the west coast of Europe keeping winter temperatures warmer than they should be for this latitude.
* Summer temperatures are cooler than normal. This is due to fact that the sea is warmest in winter and coolest in summer.
* A key characteristic of the cool temperate oceanic climatic region is that it is also influenced by warm, prevailing SW winds.
* This wind brings warmth and moisture to Europe having taken up heat and water vapour from the Atlantic Ocean.
* Another key characteristic of this climatic region is the presence of frontal depressions that pass across the region.
* These bring very changeable weather to Western Europe.
* The depressions develop there the Tropical air mass meets the Polar air mass - at the Polar Front - at 40-60°N, depending on season.
* They move eastwards across the region bringing a variety of weather conditions to the area. In Summer the region is under the influence of the Azores Anticyclone. Conditions are warm, with clear skies and generally dry weather.