World Geography

This chapter requires a companion activity book in which students respond to questions on text content. A quiz follows every fifth lesson. Answers are found in the *Teacher's Resource Kit.*



Chapter 1

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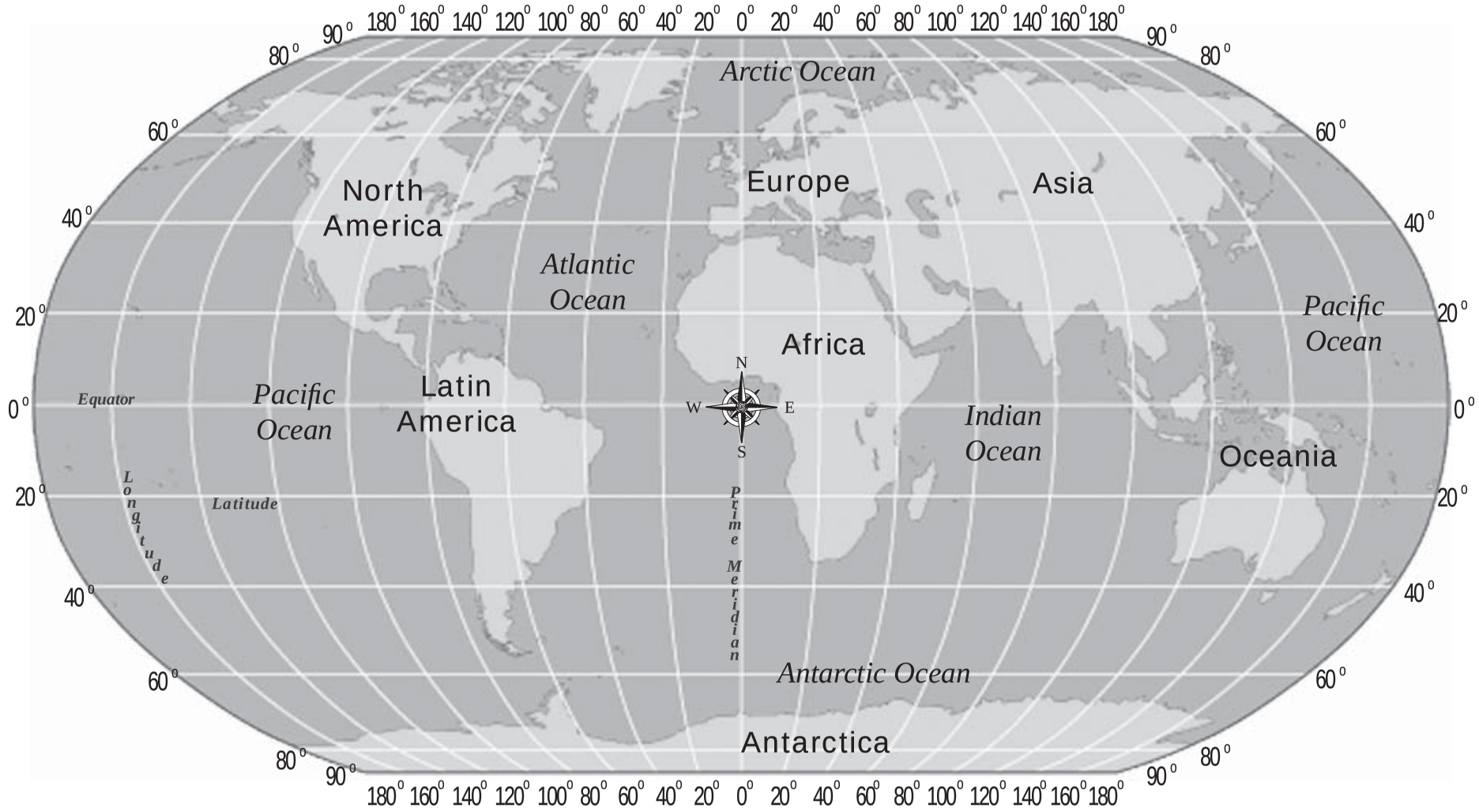

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MAP A

The World



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U.S. and Canada

States and Provinces

MAP D



Canada

AB Alberta
BC British Columbia
MB Manitoba
NB New Brunswick
NL Newfoundland
NT Northwest Territory
NS Nova Scotia
NU Nunavut
ON Ontario
PE Prince Edward Island
QC Quebec
SK Saskatchewan
YT Yukon Territory

United States of America

AL Alabama
AK Alaska
AZ Arizona
AR Arkansas
CA California
CO Colorado
CT Connecticut
DE Delaware
FL Florida
GA Georgia
HI Hawaii
ID Idaho
IL Illinois
IN Indiana
IA Iowa
KS Kansas
KY Kentucky
LA Louisiana
ME Maine
MD Maryland
MA Massachusetts
MI Michigan
MN Minnesota
MS Mississippi
MO Missouri
MT Montana
NE Nebraska
NV Nevada
NH New Hampshire
NJ New Jersey
NM New Mexico
NY New York
NC North Carolina
ND North Dakota
OH Ohio
OK Oklahoma
OR Oregon
PA Pennsylvania
RI Rhode Island
SD South Dakota
SC South Carolina
TN Tennessee
TX Texas
UT Utah
VT Vermont
VA Virginia
WA Washington
WV West Virginia
WI Wisconsin
WY Wyoming

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Largest Metropolitan Areas

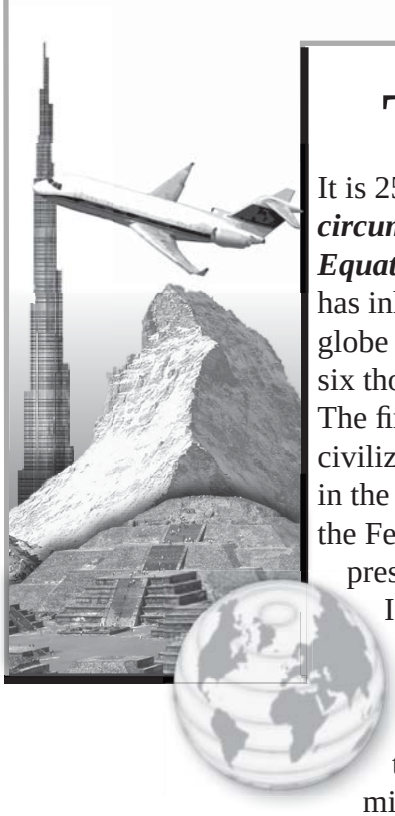
North America



World Rank	Rank	Central City	Country	Population	Outlying Areas / Suburbs
3	1	Mexico City	Mexico	22,900,000	Nezahualcóyotl, Ecatepec, Naucalpan
6	2	New York City	United States	21,900,000	Newark, Paterson
9	3	Los Angeles	United States	18,000,000	Riverside, Orange County
27	4	Chicago	United States	9,850,000	
36	5	Washington, D.C.	United States	8,250,000	Baltimore, Manassas, Gaithersburg
42	6	San Francisco	United States	7,300,000	Oakland, San Jose
46	7	Dallas	United States	6,350,000	Fort Worth
49	8	Philadelphia	United States	6,000,000	
52	9	Houston	United States	5,800,000	Galveston
=54	=10	Atlanta	United States	5,700,000	
=54	=10	Detroit	United States	5,700,000	Windsor (Canada)
=57	=12	Boston	United States	5,650,000	
=57	=12	Toronto	Canada	5,650,000	
63	14	Miami	United States	5,500,000	Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach
74	15	Guadalajara	Mexico	4,550,000	Zapopan
=77	16	Phoenix	United States	4,400,000	Tempe
=85	17	Monterrey	Mexico	4,075,000	
90	18	Seattle	United States	3,950,000	Tacoma, Bellingham
=95	19	Montreal	Canada	3,750,000	
=109	20	Minneapolis	United States	3,450,000	St. Paul
126	21	Santo Domingo	Dominican Republic	3,150,000	
=134	22	San Diego	United States	2,975,000	Chula Vista, Oceanside
=140	23	St. Louis	United States	2,850,000	
=142	24	Tampa	United States	2,825,000	
144	25	Denver	United States	2,800,000	Boulder

All information from http://www.citypopulation.de/world/Agglomerations.html and accurate as of December 31, 2009.

World Geography
Introduction



The world is a big sphere. It is 25,000 miles in ***circumference*** at the ***Equator***. Humankind has inhabited the globe for at least six thousand years. The first recorded civilizations occurred in the region known as the Fertile Crescent, present-day Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia. From that area families, tribes, and clans migrated to the "far corners of the Earth." They walked along game trails, rafted down rivers, and hiked over mountains. Eventually they established villages, towns, and nations, defined by boundaries that set apart customs, traditions, and languages. The human race became diversified according to cultural distinctives impacted by biological factors in DNA, diet, climate, religious experiences, and local customs.

Since dispersing from the Fertile Crescent, man has always explored beyond the next mountain, valley, or river. Such men were the earliest students of ***geography***. Pathfinders led the way to unexplored regions. Eventually other people followed in search of food, safety, or a new beginning. They carried knowledge, tools, clothes, seeds, and weapons. The land was cultivated and dwellings were constructed. Commerce emerged as people bought, sold, and traded—or stole and pillaged. Trade routes became the paths for warriors and armies. As technology developed, exploration occurred on wagons, ships, and eventually in airplanes. Today, satellite cameras map the globe and pinpoint locations with sophisticated global positioning systems (GPS). Now, man can run, but he cannot hide. The once wild and uncharted Earth is crisscrossed by uncharted supersonic aircraft, radar, text messages, and photos in nanoseconds.

Cartographers have developed systems of mapmaking and measuring the globe in both flat and spherical representations of Earth's surface. To mark distances on a map or globe, they employ a grid system. Grid lines measure distance north or south of the Equator and east or west of the ***Prime Meridian***. Distances are not marked in miles or kilometers, but rather in degrees—the North and South Poles are both marked 90°, while the Prime Meridian and the ***International Date Line*** are marked 0° and 180°, respectively. These degree markings are considered ***latitude*** and ***longitude*** lines, and because every spot on the globe is located at a specific north–south position and a specific east–west position, every spot is designated both by latitude and by longitude. So, if you wanted to give the approximate location of Chicago, Illinois, you might say, "Chicago is located at 42 degrees north latitude and 88 degrees west longitude." Or, let's say you wanted to specify where Nairobi, Kenya is located.

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You'd say, "Nairobi falls at 1° south latitude and 36° east longitude." Because the world is so big, degrees of latitude and longitude are spaced relatively widely apart, so smaller units called minutes and seconds measure distances within degrees. These measurements are on a scale with a base of 60, just like a clock. They are spoken in the same way degrees are identified. For instance, you could say, "I live at 50 degrees, 37 minutes, 12 seconds north latitude, and 92 degrees, 6 minutes, 58 seconds west longitude"—which would put you somewhere in Ontario, Canada. These measurements are written with the form [degrees latitude]°[minutes latitude]'[seconds latitude]"[north or south] [degrees longitude]°[minutes longitude]'[seconds longitude]"[east or west]. In the above example, you'd write, "My house is located at 50°37'12"N 92°6'58"W." Often, cartographers and geographers will refer to lines of latitude as ***parallels***—because, amazingly, they run parallel—and lines of longitude as ***meridians***.

This course of study opens to your mind the wonderful places available to you through personal travel, books, Internet, and media. You will learn of mountains, rivers, climates, commerce, languages, religions, economics, and much more. Enjoy your journey as you explore the world.

VOCABULARY

Circumference: the distance around a sphere
Equator: an imaginary line running around the Earth that is equidistant from both poles
Geography: study of Earth's surface and human characteristics
Cartographer: mapmakers
Prime Meridian: meridian at which longitude is defined to be 0°
International Date Line: meridian at which longitude is defined to be 180°
Latitude: location north or south of the Equator
Longitude: location east or west of the Prime Meridian
Parallels: imaginary lines running east to west around the Earth that connect all locations on a given latitude
Meridians: imaginary lines on the surface of the earth passing through the north and south poles at right angles to the equator

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World Geography

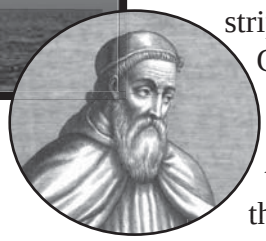
Chapter 1

Lesson 1
Borders and Boundaries

Section 1
Lessons 1-5

Borders and Boundaries of North America





Sprawling across the globe's northwest corner and comprising 16.5% of the world's landmass, North America is the third-largest continent and the larger of the two Americas. It includes the countries of Canada and the United States, which are respectively the second- and third-largest nations in the world; and generally Mexico, the Danish island of Greenland, and to a lesser extent, the Caribbean islands. According to some sources, Central America, which encompasses the connecting strip of land between Mexico and Colombia, is North American; culturally, however, these countries share far more similarities with South America, and they are excluded in this text. While the continent's two anchor nations account for 80% of North American land area and are far more developed than their southern neighbors, other nations are important both locally and internationally. Mexico City, for instance, is the third-most populous metropolitan area in the world, and Cuba is one of only five communist nations worldwide. The continent wields far-reaching influence politically, economically, socially, and spiritually, a fact owed in part to its vast territorial holdings, free enterprise economics, and Judeo-Christian heritage.



As with many place names, the origins of the term "America" are questionable, in part because different people

VOCABULARY

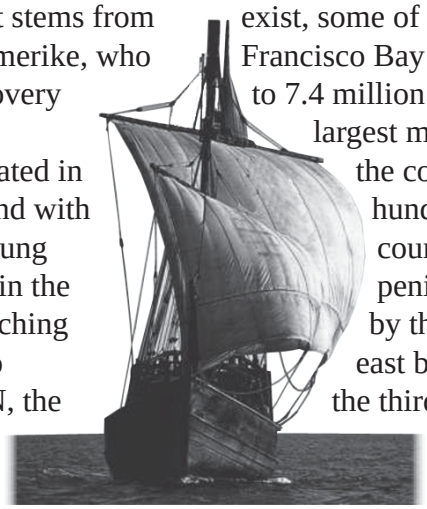
Archipelago: group of islands
Estuary: broad mouth of a river into which the tide flows
Pack ice: crust of ice formed when seawater freezes, typically seasonally
Colonies: region politically controlled by a distant country; a dependency
States: political subdivision of a nation
Provinces: administrative district or division of a country

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Amerigo Vespucci

groups throughout the continent have tended to elevate their own role in its naming. It is generally accepted that both North and South America were named after Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci, who ventured west several years after Christopher Columbus and proposed that America was not the India that European sailors hoped to reach, but was an unknown and uncharted landmass. In his travels, Vespucci actually reached only South America, but his name was pinned to North America, as well, when it was mapped in the 16th century. Nonetheless, other accounts point different directions. Some postulate that the term derives from a Native American tongue, while one theory suggests it stems from Welsh merchant Richard Amerike, who financed John Cabot's discovery of Newfoundland in 1477.

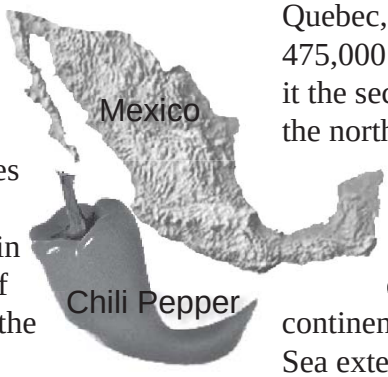
North America is located in the Northern Hemisphere and with the exception of some far-flung Aleutian Islands is entirely in the Western Hemisphere. Stretching from approximately 165° to 15°W and from 15° to 83°N, the continent begins in the state of Alaska, which carves an irregular path through the Arctic Ocean en route to its juncture with Canada. At 71°23'N, Point Barrow, Alaska is the northernmost point in the United States, and the nearby town of Barrow is the northernmost inhabited place on the North American mainland. In the state's southwest, the Aleutian Islands jut out 1,200 miles into the North Pacific Ocean, collectively inhabited by less than 10,000 people. The easternmost island in the ***archipelago***, Semisopochnoi Island, is located at 179°37'E and is therefore the only part of North America in the Eastern Hemisphere. From the Aleutians, the coastline is a thin strip of southeast running land that shields Canada from the Pacific for several hundred miles. Where Alaska ends and Canada's British Columbia picks up, the southeast trajectory continues down to the U.S. border, where the coast turns more directly south (see Map C).


Ship Similar to Vespucci's

From the northwestern state of Washington through Oregon and California, the coast turns slightly southwest, bulging in Northern California and gradually curving southeast again toward the south. While the California coast is not as rugged or irregular as the Alaskan or Canadian coastlines, several bays, inlets, and natural harbors exist, some of which are populous. The San Francisco Bay area, for instance, is home to 7.4 million people and is the U.S.'s fifth largest metropolitan area. In Mexico, the coastline continues for several hundred miles on the same course along the Baja California peninsula, bordered on the west by the Pacific Ocean and on the east by the Gulf of California, the third-largest inland sea on the continent. The Mexican mainland roughly parallels the peninsula and continues past it, gradually scooping east and curving northeast around 95°W (see Map B). In the southeast, the Central American countries of Guatemala and Belize attach to the Yucatán Peninsula, which divides the northern Gulf of Mexico from the southern Caribbean Sea; Mexico hooks around the peninsula and backtracks north and northwest. The shape of the country generally resembles that of a

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chili pepper. As Mexico reconnects with the U.S., the coastline along the Gulf of Mexico takes an easterly course, at times giving way to small bays and harbors, particularly in Louisiana, where much of the population lives near the water.



In Florida, the coast turns sharply south before curving back north several hundred miles later; the tip of the state spawns a chain of islands similar to the Aleutians known as the Florida Keys. In the eastern United States, the Atlantic Ocean washes upon a meandering coastline that travels first northeast and then northwest past North Carolina, whose scenic shores bump out far into the ocean. Further north, the land becomes more irregular, as larger bays and inlets proliferate in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York. The Chesapeake Bay in Maryland divides the western part from the eastern and is the U.S.'s largest ***estuary***. New York's Long Island and Massachusetts's Cape Cod peninsula carve into the Atlantic and are developed and affluent, and off the coast of Maine are numerous islands, the most notable of which is Canada's Prince Edward Island.

Located across the Gulf of St. Lawrence is the island of Newfoundland, the world's 15th largest island. It is separated from the Canadian mainland by just nine miles, and from there the coast extends northwest. For more than 1,000 miles the North Atlantic ocean broadens to the west, forming the Labrador Sea. Rounding the tip of Quebec, the Hudson Bay stretches across 475,000 square miles of wilderness, making it the second-largest bay in the world. To the north, Canada begins to fragment more dramatically. Nunavut Territory in the far north traces a somewhat westerly path through bays, straits, channels, and small seas. In the continent's extreme northwest, the Beaufort Sea extends the reach of the frigid Arctic Ocean (see Map C).

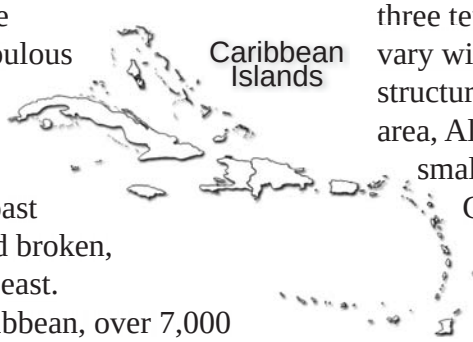
The 36,563 islands that comprise the Canadian Arctic Archipelago are one of the world's most fascinating geographical phenomena. This region, which is considered to mean the islands north of the Canadian mainland between the Arctic and Atlantic Oceans, is sparsely populated, its cold climate rendering it largely inhospitable to settlement. Three of the world's ten largest islands are here, including fifth-place Baffin Island. The sheer number of isles and their irregular coasts dramatically extend Canada's total length of coastline to 125,566 miles, the world's longest. The Northwest Passages, a modestly used sea trade route that connects the North Atlantic Ocean to the North Pacific, carve through the region and convey shipping traffic during summer months when ***pack ice*** is less widespread.



Several islands and outlying territories round out the North American continent. Greenland is technically owned by Denmark but functions largely as a sovereign nation. With the exception of Alaska, whose Aleutian Islands cross the International Date Line into the eastern hemisphere, Greenland is the easternmost place in North America and the world's largest island. At 836,109 square miles, it covers an area over three times the

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size of Texas, and with less than 60,000 residents, it is the world's least populous island. Over half of its bulk is in the Arctic Circle, and its coast is also varied and broken, especially in the east.



In the Caribbean, over 7,000 islands dot the tropical waters, where pleasant climate and pristine beaches attract a thriving tourist industry. Most were ***colonies*** of Europe, beginning in the 16th century, and many retain their own character in religion, language, customs, and governance. Some of these are independent nations, others merely territories; in the south, many of these island nations identify more with Latin America than with North America. Cuba is the largest Caribbean nation at 42,803 square miles; other large islands include Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic), Jamaica, Puerto Rico, and the string of small isles known as the Bahamas. Spanish and French are among the strongest influences here, while close proximity to and an influx of tourists from the United States have also shaped island culture and customs. 2,500 miles southwest of California, the island state of Hawaii is another bastion of tourism, boasting spectacular scenery and a booming agricultural industry.



The United States, Canada, and Mexico are subdivided into territories whose names vary by country. The United States and Mexico term their divisions ***states***, while Canada has ten ***provinces*** and three territories. In the United States, states vary widely by area, population, political structure, and other aspects: the largest by area, Alaska, is 429 times larger than the smallest, Rhode Island. In Mexico and Canada, states and provinces are considerably closer in area, though population figures diverge widely (see Map B). These three nations are home to all of North America's largest metropolitan areas, some of which are among the most populous in the world. The population of the Mexico City metropolitan area is over 24 million, placing it in close competition with Seoul, South Korea for the second-largest worldwide, and others such as New York (22 million metro), Los Angeles (14-18 million metro), and Chicago (10 million metro) serve as political and economic capitals within their respective regions. North America's total population hovers around 490 million, or about seven percent of the world. The United States accounts for around 310 million, Mexico for 115 million, and Canada for 34 million; the remaining population are scattered chiefly throughout the Caribbean.

Life Principle

Balance, peace, and joy are the fruits of a successful life. It starts with recognizing your talents and finding ways to serve others by using them.

- Thomas Kinkade

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World Geography

Chapter 1



Lesson 2
Terrain



Terrain of North America

Section 1
Lessons 1-5



North America's terrain displays the level of diversity one would expect from the world's third-largest continent. Similar to other large landmasses, North America features high mountain ranges, broad plains and grasslands, barren deserts, rugged coastlines, and a host of other features throughout its 9.5 million square miles. The Rocky Mountains, the continent's premiere mountain chain, carve through the western and central-western lands, originating in northern British Columbia and carving a 3,000-mile path south to New Mexico, where the Sierra Madre series picks up and runs through Mexico, eventually tapering off near the Yucatán Peninsula. West of these, the topography varies by location: in Canada and the northern United States, lush green hills dominate, watered by Pacific rains that cannot pass the high peaks. Farther south, mountains in California buffer the land from rains, and the alternately flat lands and rolling hills are a barren desert. East of the Rockies, the land is low-lying and gradually grows more fertile. West of the Atlantic coast, the Appalachian Mountains rise modestly from the ground from Canada to northern Alabama, and eastward the coast is flat and winding, especially north of South Carolina.

VOCABULARY

Valley: low land between hills or mountains
Plains: flat stretch of land
Fourteener: in the United States, a mountain higher than 14,000 feet
Megalopolis: extensive metropolitan area or chain of roughly continuous metropolitan areas



Because North America is so vast, topographical features vary dramatically between locations. Alaska is predominantly a mountainous region, with two main ranges—the Brooks and the Alaska—accounting for most peaks. The Brooks Range lies in the state's north, directly south of the North Slope, which is home to

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the towns of Barrow and Prudhoe Bay. This range forms a largely east/west arc across the state, linking with the Yukon's Richardson Mountains in the east. Further south, the Brooks give way to plateaus and ***valleys*** interspersed with highlands from the Kuskokwim Mountains. The 2,300-mile Yukon River traverses this region, crossing the country west from the Yukon to its mouth at the Bering Sea (see Map C). South of Fairbanks, the spectacular Alaskan Range curves northeast from the Aleutian Islands, wrapping widely around Alaska's largest city of Anchorage before turning southeast near the Yukon border. Mt. McKinley crowns this ridge spectacularly, at 20,320 feet, making it North America's highest peak. (Many Alaskans refer to this mountain as Denali, which means "The Great One" in a native tongue. Despite recent pushes to change its name officially, however, the U.S. government still recognizes it as Mt. McKinley.) Towards the Bering Sea, the terrain levels out, flattening considerably on the coast and near the Yukon River's mouth. The Aleutian Islands are mostly low-lying hills.



These two ranges are actually the beginning of the American Cordillera, an unbroken sequence of mountain ranges that runs from northern Alaska to the southern tip of Chile in South America. The feature, which has been subdivided into many different ranges, forms the western backbone of the Americas, and in the far north extends east into the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. The Yukon is largely hilly: in addition to the Richardsons, the MacKenzie Mountains and the Coast Mountains originate here, the former crossing into the Northwest Territories and the latter into British Columbia. The land roughly encircled by these peaks is the Yukon Plateau, which covers most of the non-mountainous territory. The territory is indeed the highest in Canada: elevations are, on average, several thousand feet above sea level, and Mount Logan, Canada's highest summit, lies in the southwest.

In the Northwest Territories, the MacKenzie range slowly declines in elevation, largely ending at the MacKenzie River. Rolling foothills and lower plateaus rise above the surrounding ***plains*** here, and some towns such as Fort McPherson and Inuvik in the northwest are near sea level. Two of the world's largest lakes, Great Bear and Great Slave, lie in the middle of the territory. Yellowknife, the territory's capital, is on the north shore of Great Slave. Great Bear is covered by ice most of the year and headquarters a historically productive mining region. East of the territory lies Nunavut, Canada's largest district and home to the Canadian Arctic Archipelago. On the mainland, elevations are higher in the east, where low plateaus and high plains proliferate, gradually giving way to coastal areas in the north and east. The Hudson Bay bounds the eastern Nunavut mainland, while the islands of Banks, Victoria, and colossal Baffin spread across its north.

The series of islands known as the Canadian Arctic Archipelago are a rich, varied, dangerous, and fascinating locale. Many of them, such as Baffin Island and

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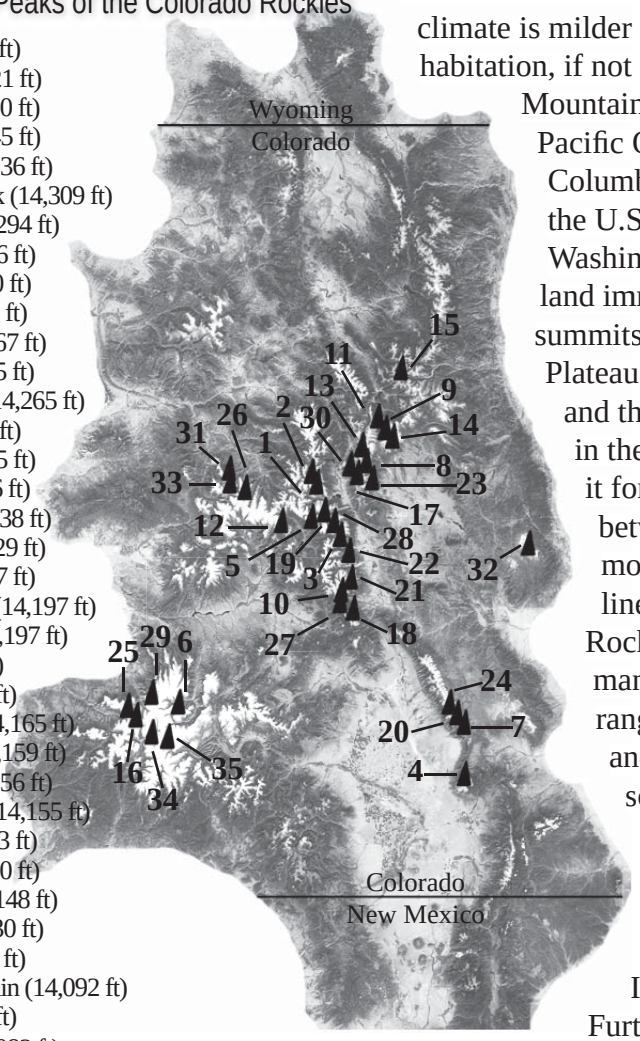
Ellesmere Island, are united by the Arctic Cordillera mountain range, while others like Prince of Wales and Prince Patrick are relatively flat. A dizzying series of straits, bays, and channels, none but Foxe Basin and Parry Channel being of significant size, creates a web among the islands. The land is cold, desolate, and largely uninhabited, though tiny populations do exist on some larger islands: Ellesmere, Canada's northernmost and most mountainous island, counted 146 residents in 2006, scattered between two settlements. In total, some 35,000 islands comprise the archipelago, ultimately bordered by the Baffin Bay in the east and the Beaufort Sea in the west.

Southeast of Nunavut, Ontario and Quebec border the Hudson Bay, flat near the coasts and hilly further inland. The independent provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia cap the U.S.'s New England region, where a rugged coastline and the northern reaches of the Appalachians dominate. The island of Newfoundland spurs out to the east of the Canadian mainland, and atop it the Labrador Sea separates the Canadian Shield from Greenland, mixing with the open Atlantic in the southeast (see Map C).

Below the Canadian territories, the climate is milder and more welcoming to habitation, if not less rugged. The Coast Mountains continue along the Pacific Ocean through British Columbia, connecting with the U.S.'s Cascade Range in Washington and Oregon. The land immediately east of these summits is known as the Fraser Plateau in British Columbia and the Columbia Plateau in the United States, and it forms a scenic valley between the western mountains and the main line of the Rockies. The Rockies are comprised of many individual mountain ranges in this region and trace a general southeasterly path along the British Columbia–Alberta border and through the U.S. states of Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming. Further east, the terrain

Thirty-Five Tallest Peaks of the Colorado Rockies

1. Mt. Elbert (14,433 ft)
2. Mt. Massive (14,421 ft)
3. Mt. Harvard (14,420 ft)
4. Blanca Peak (14,345 ft)
5. La Plata Peak (14,336 ft)
6. Uncompahgre Peak (14,309 ft)
7. Crestone Peak (14,294 ft)
8. Mt. Lincoln (14,286 ft)
9. Grays Peak (14,270 ft)
10. Mt. Antero (14,269 ft)
11. Torreys Peak (14,267 ft)
12. Castle Peak (14,265 ft)
=12. Quandary Peak (14,265 ft)
14. Mt. Evans (14,264 ft)
15. Longs Peak (14,255 ft)
16. Mt. Wilson (14,246 ft)
17. Mt. Cameron (14,238 ft)
18. Mt. Shavano (14,229 ft)
19. Mt. Belford (14,197 ft)
=19. Crestone Needle (14,197 ft)
=19. Mt. Princeton (14,197 ft)
22. Mt. Yale (14,196 ft)
23. Mt. Bross (14,172 ft)
24. Kit Carson Peak(14,165 ft)
25. El Diente Peak (14,159 ft)
26. Maroon Peak (14,156 ft)
27. Tabeguache Peak (14,155 ft)
28. Mt. Oxford (14,153 ft)
29. Mt. Sneffels (14,150 ft)
30. Mt. Democrat (14,148 ft)
31. Capital Peak (14,130 ft)
32. Pikes Peak (14,110 ft)
33. Snowmass Mountain (14,092 ft)
34. Mt. Eolus (14,083 ft)
35. Windom Peak (14,082 ft)



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levels off, although the range's slightly eastern orientation means that Canadian cities well east of the mountains lie on the same longitude of U.S. cities that are west of them. Through Alberta and Saskatchewan, foothills transition to plains, a trend the U.S. echoes in eastern Colorado, the Dakotas, and Nebraska. Central and western Colorado is a perennial vacation destination for skiers, backpackers, outdoor enthusiasts, and those looking for a scenic getaway: most of the country's ***fourteeners*** lie in the state.



The region throughout central Canada and the U.S. is often termed the Great Plains, a nickname that refers to its stable elevation and vast treeless stretches. Water is relatively scarce here, more so in the west than the east, and place names like South Dakota's Badlands pay homage to the undesirability of the land. Several moderately-sized cities exist—Calgary and Saskatoon in Canada, and Bismarck in the U.S.—but in general, residents are sparse. The Dakotas are among the U.S.'s five least populous states, and Alberta, Saskatchewan, and neighboring Manitoba have small population totals as well. Several large rivers carve wet paths through the dryness, however, including the Missouri and the Saskatchewan. Lakes are common and widespread further east.

Through the U.S. Midwest, the climate grows wetter, lands turn greener, and waterways are wider and more pronounced. Minnesota is nicknamed the "Land of 10,000 Lakes." Rivers like the Mississippi and Missouri carry huge volumes of water used for shipping cargo and irrigation. In Manitoba, Lake Winnipeg and its sister, Lake Winnipegosis, cover much of the province's center, their namesake city of Winnipeg lying nearby downriver. In the U.S., the region is referred to both as the Midwest and the Great Lakes region; the latter term more narrowly applies to the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, upper Illinois and Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and western Pennsylvania and New York. Ontario is also part of this region, which derives its name from the five lakes that largely divide Canada from the United States—Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario. The lakes drain a massive system of rivers, are home to over 35,000 islands, and contain 22% of the world's fresh surface water. Shores of these lakes are home to a densely populated region: Chicago, Toronto, Detroit, and Cleveland populate the area (see Maps B and C). Intensive agriculture also occurs here.

Further east, the landscape grows rugged into the Appalachians. The New England region is hilly and rolling except on the Atlantic coast, where most of its residents live. The far northeastern reaches of the United States were the first to be colonized and are among North America's most densely populated areas. The 2006 census estimated that the northeastern ***megalopolis***, which stretches from Washington, D.C. to Boston and includes all major metropolitan areas therein, is home to 55 million people, or one-sixth of the U.S. population.


Mt. Whitney

Across the southern United States, topography roughly mirrors trends in the northern region. Coastal mountain ranges trace down the California

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coast, flanked by the high Sierra Nevada mountains on the eastern border. Although this range is not part of the Rockies and is far narrower, it boasts peaks that compete in elevation, including Mt. Whitney, the highest in the contiguous United States. In Northern California, the San Joaquin Valley fills in the gap between the two ranges and has a strong agricultural sector with a distinct culture. Most of Nevada, along with small portions of Idaho, Utah, and Arizona are in the Great Basin, an extraordinarily flat plateau with scattered mountains rising abruptly, without foothills. The area is a desert—little life, human or otherwise, exists here, and spectacular land formations such as Arizona's Grand Canyon distinguish the region. Despite the region's hostility, several large metropolitan areas exist, including Phoenix and Las Vegas; both of these are among the fastest-growing cities in the U.S. Southeastern California annually endures the hottest temperatures in the nation, and some places lie below sea level. In Utah, the Rockies begin to rise, and the desert begins to break in favor of ***highlands*** and plateaus. A few large cities, such as Salt Lake City, Denver, and Albuquerque lie on both sides of the Rockies.


Grand Canyon

The south central U.S. is a zone of rapidly changing topography and climate. In the north, plains and prairies spring up in the wake of the Rockies, while in West Texas, desert restakes its claim on the land, once again prohibiting most life and breaking into crags and the occasional low outlying peak. Kansas and Oklahoma are prairies resembling their northern neighbors, and in Texas, the Edwards Plateau slowly turns into beautiful hill country. Precipitation increases quickly across this region, allowing a change from desert and scrublands west of San Antonio to evergreen forests in East Texas. The Arkansas River cuts through Kansas and Oklahoma en route to its juncture with the Mississippi, and population centers are prevalent here. Along the Gulf of Mexico coast, the land is low-lying and generally well-watered, though areas in extreme southern Texas remain quite dry.

In the U.S. southeast, the topography is low and flat. With the exception of the Ozarks in Arkansas and the Appalachians in Alabama and Georgia, most of the land is coastal, with alternating forests and tropical vegetation. The highest point in Florida is just 345 feet above sea level, while large areas of Louisiana actually lie below sea level, a precarious reality as Gulf storms and hurricanes regularly pound the state. New Orleans, the largest city in the state, lies largely below sea level. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina decimated the city and wreaked havoc on the surrounding region, and four years later population figures had not reached their former levels. Beaches along the Alabama and Florida coasts are among the most scenic and most visited in the nation. Slightly north, the Appalachian Mountains


Effects of Hurricane Katrina

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stretch from Alabama and Georgia into western Tennessee and Kentucky.

Mexico is essentially formed by the Sierra Madre mountain ranges and their foothills, as virtually the entire nation is rugged and mountainous. The two largest ranges, the Sierra Madre Occidental and the Sierra Madre Oriental, flank the country from the U.S. border down to Mexico City, and the plateau in between does not taper off much. Mexico City is thus one of the highest national capitals in the world at an elevation over 7,300 feet. The country is bounded by the Gulf of Mexico in the east and both the Gulf of California and the open Pacific Ocean in the west. On the Yucatán Peninsula, Mexico hosts its lowest elevations in a ***fertile*** agricultural zone. Several important cities, such as Veracruz and the popular tourist destination of Cancún, lie in this eastern region.

Outside the mainland, the rest of North America varies. The Caribbean islands are generally low and flat, with the exception of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, which are mountainous. In Greenland, much of the country is covered by mountains, although these are mostly frozen year-round under the ***ice cap***. Only the coastal regions are not frozen, although these often freeze seasonally. The limited population and few settlements are a testament to this land's hostility to life. In the north, Greenland is separated from Canada's Ellesmere Island by the Kennedy Channel, which measures just 14 miles at its narrowest point (see Map C).

VOCABULARY

Highland: regions that is higher or hillier than the neighboring country
Fertile: lush; capable of producing vegetation
Ice cap: mass of ice and snow that permanently covers a large area of land

Life Principle

There are no great limits to growth because there are no limits of human intelligence, imagination, and wonder.

-Ronald Reagan

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World Geography

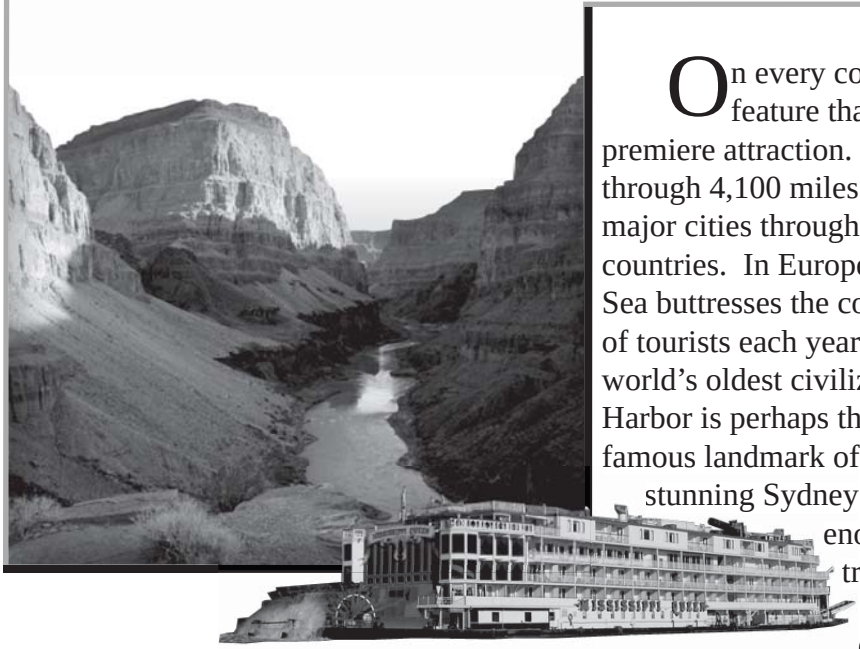


Chapter 1

Lesson 3
Bodies of Water

Section 1
Lessons 1-5





On every continent, there is one water feature that stands out as the land's premiere attraction. In Africa, the Nile snakes through 4,100 miles of desert and forest, watering major cities throughout Egypt and neighboring countries. In Europe, the massive Mediterranean Sea buttresses the continent, attracting millions of tourists each year and claiming some of the world's oldest civilizations. Australia's Sydney Harbor is perhaps the island continent's most famous landmark of any kind, flanked by the stunning Sydney Opera House and carrying enormous volumes of sea traffic to and from the city's shores. In Asia, perhaps China's Yangtze River is the continent's most important waterway, the third-longest in the world and of immeasurable importance to China's cultural and economic livelihood. In South America, the Amazon River and its basin are among the most incredible natural features on Earth, draining nearly half the continent and accounting for a huge percentage of the world's total river flow.

In North America, the Mississippi River earns this designation. At 2,320 miles, it is the second-longest river in North America and the United States. Together, the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers form the fourth-longest river system in the world. The river's name derives from a Native American dialect and means "Great River," and it is often referred to by its nickname, the "Mighty Mississippi." Both names are fitting descriptions for the waterway, whose ***headwaters*** originate in northern Minnesota and traverse ten states en route to their ***mouth*** near New Orleans.

VOCABULARY

Headwaters: source of a river
Mouth: location on a river where its waters are emptied into a larger body of water
Irrigation: the use of river or sea water for agricultural or other human interests
Hydroelectric power: generation of electricity by the conversion of the energy of running water

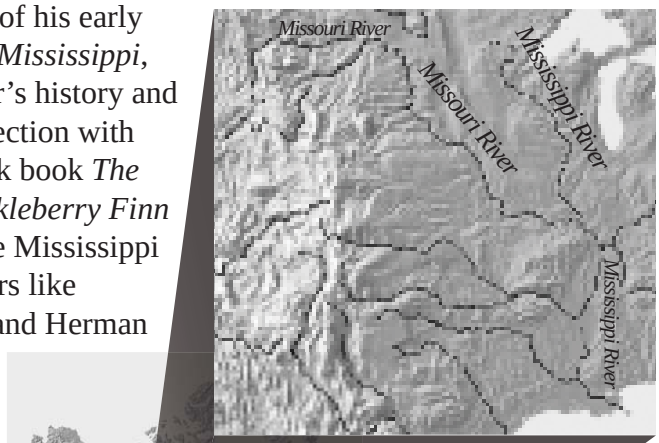
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Several major American cities, including Minnesota's Twin Cities (Minneapolis–St. Paul); St. Louis, Missouri; and Memphis, Tennessee; depend on the river as a transportation route and an economic asset, and its drainage basin covers 1.25 million square miles—nearly one third of the country—across thirty-one states.



Mississippi River Boat

If the Mississippi's girth and extent are not proof enough of its significance to the United States, its immortalization in historical and popular literature, music, and film is. Because of its length and relatively central location in the country, novels, films, and songs have referenced the river extensively, and indeed the entire genre of jazz is intimately bound to it. Best known among literature is probably the works of Mark Twain. One of his early works, *Life on the Mississippi*, chronicles the river's history and Twain's own connection with it, and his landmark book *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is set largely on the Mississippi itself. Other authors like William Faulkner and Herman Melville, and the creator of cartoon character Scrooge McDuck, Don Rosa, feature the region prominently in their works. In other media, Johnny Cash's "Big River" is about the Mississippi, and the song "Moon River" from the film Breakfast at Tiffany's refers to the river. Jazz's creation and infancy in the southeast and largely in New Orleans also owes to the Mississippi.



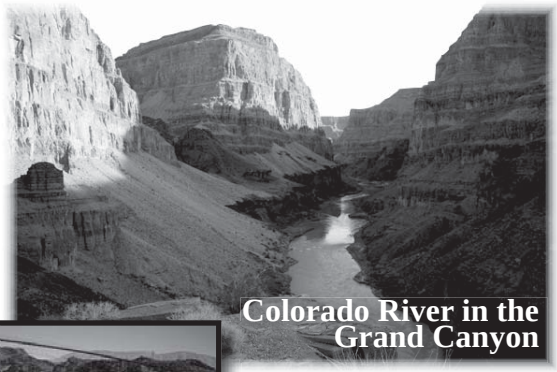
Mississippi River
Missouri River **MAP**

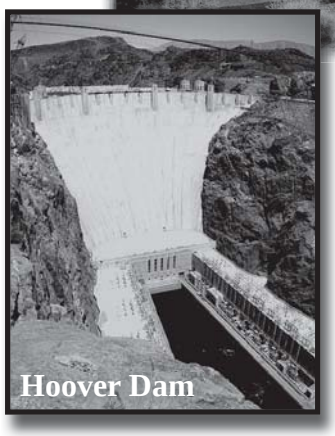
Despite its size and local significance, however, the Mississippi is not the longest river in North America. That distinction belongs to the Missouri River, a tributary of the Mississippi and a 2,540-mile meandering waterway through the Rocky Mountains and the Great Plains. The Missouri originates from Brower's Spring in Montana at 4,045 feet in elevation, significantly higher than the Mississippi's 1,475-foot source, and waters the semi-arid Dakotas, Nebraska, and Iowa before crossing into Kansas and Missouri. ***Irrigation*** and ***hydroelectric power*** have historically been important along the Missouri, the former particularly on the upper river where rainfall is scarcer. After running through cities such as Bismarck, Omaha, and Kansas City, the river finally meets with the Mississippi just north of St. Louis, where it nearly doubles the Mississippi's ***discharge***. The combination of the two rivers—a measure geographers frequently use to gauge the true length of a river from source to mouth, accounting for tributaries that meet up with a larger river

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first—measures 3,902 miles (see Map C).

The United States does not have a monopoly on the continent's longest rivers, however. The Mackenzie River in northern Canada originates at Great Slave Lake, cutting through 1,080 miles of taiga and tundra before emptying into the Beaufort Sea. Frozen for over half the year, the river drains much of the Northwest Territories, British Columbia, and the Yukon, most notably incorporating the Peace and Finlay rivers to form North America's second-longest river system at 2,635 miles. Although settlements are sparse at the Mackenzie's high latitudes, several towns exist along the waterway and in its delta, the largest of which is Inuvik in the Northwest Territories.


Colorado River in the Grand Canyon


Hoover Dam

Other rivers are of considerable local and regional importance throughout the continent as well. The U.S.'s Ohio River, the Mississippi's largest (though not longest) tributary, snakes from Pittsburgh through the Midwest, following a roughly southwestern course before connecting with the Mississippi at Cairo, Illinois. The river marks the borders of several states, including Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, and Indiana, and claims several major Midwestern cities along its path. Impressive in both its width and volume, the Ohio reaches a maximum depth of 168 feet near Louisville, Kentucky, where its widest point measures a mile across. The river has historically been a well-traveled shipping channel, and still handles large volumes of traffic each year.

The longest river in the dry, western U.S. is the Colorado, which covers 1,450 miles from its mountain source in Colorado to its mouth at the Gulf of California. Heavily irrigated, the river runs through Utah before forming part of the Arizona-Nevada border and the entire Arizona-California border. The river is most famous for two landmarks along its path: the Hoover Dam just south of Las Vegas, Nevada, among the largest hydroelectric stations in the world; and the Grand Canyon, a stunning gorge in northern Arizona formed by a cataclysmic event centuries ago and among the world's most visited places. The river's flow has provided valuable water to settlements and agricultural interests along its arid banks and has recently seen so much irrigation in the Imperial Valley near its mouth that it no longer reliably reaches the sea.

Of lesser commercial importance, the Yukon River in northwest Canada and Alaska, the Rio Grande along the U.S.-Mexico border, and British Columbia's Fraser River all run for more than 850 miles. The Yukon, frozen most of the year, is nonetheless navigable during warmer months, beginning in the mountains of the Yukon and carving across Alaska to the Bering Sea. The Rio Grande originates in southwestern Colorado and forms the entire southern border of Texas before dumping

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into the Gulf of Mexico. Among the most polluted rivers on the continent, heavy irrigation and a dry climate reduce the river to a trickle at points. The Fraser takes a southern course from the Canadian Rockies before reaching its mouth at the Strait of Georgia.

Other bodies of water dot the North American continent. The Atlantic and Pacific Oceans bound the landmass on the east and west, respectively, while the Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico, and Hudson Bay jut out from open ocean and have somewhat different characteristics. The Caribbean, home to thousands of islands and a perennial tourist destination for many North Americans, spans over a million square miles and boasts a deepest point over 25,000 feet below the surface. This island-speckled sea lies southeast of the Gulf of Mexico, and is bordered by Central America to the west, South America to the south, and the open Atlantic Ocean to the east. Once a site of intense European colonization, the islands still retain considerable European influence and are famous for buccaneers and their historical association with piracy and seafaring culture. The Gulf of Mexico occupies a smaller area, approximately 615,000 square miles, and is bounded by the United States to the north and Mexico to the south and west. In Canada, the Hudson Bay is the second-largest bay in the world, despite its shallowness. Strong Arctic influences, including glacial runoff and extensive river inflow have lowered the Hudson's salinity in comparison to the open ocean, and the sea freezes for several months each winter (see Map C).



The Great Lakes are among the most important bodies of water to Americans. A collection of five lakes on the U.S.-Canada border, the lakes hold over one-fifth of the world's fresh surface water and cover 94,710 square miles. Tens of thousands of islands dot the lakes, several of which are large enough to afford permanent populations. They are a popular tourist destination, particularly in the summer when the weather is friendlier. Other large seas and bodies of water, such as the Arctic's Bering Sea, Beaufort Sea, Labrador Sea, and Baffin Bay, and Mexico's Gulf of California, are significant locally in their respective regions. Some smaller features, like the Chesapeake Bay and Great Salt Lake, exist, and along the U.S. East Coast, smaller inlets and straits divide ***barrier islands*** from the mainland.

VOCABULARY

Discharge: rate of flow
Barrier island: long narrow island running parallel to a shore

Life Principle

Courage is not simply one of the virtues, but the form of every virtue at the testing point.

-C. S. Lewis

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World Geography

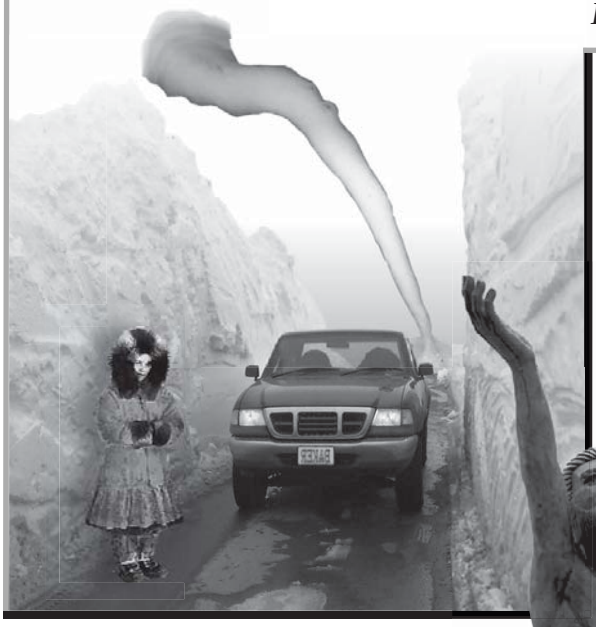
Chapter 1



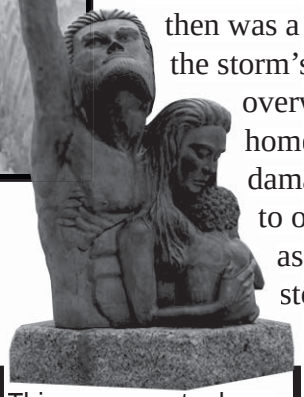
Lesson 4
Climate and Precipitation

Section 1
Lessons 1-5

Climate and Precipitation of North America



In September of 1900, a hurricane rolled out of the Gulf of Mexico and into the coastal city of Galveston, Texas. The Category 4 storm, whose winds reached speeds of 135 miles per hour, had been brewing for several days at sea and over Caribbean islands, gradually picking up force en route to Texas's largest city, then home to 42,000 residents. Much smaller in its extent than it covers today, Galveston's highest point then was a mere nine feet above sea level; the storm's fifteen-foot storm surge quickly overwhelmed the city, decimating homes and buildings and causing damage which would today amount to over half a billion dollars. Costly as the monetary toll was, when the storm finally left the city, the human toll was far more staggering: 8,000 dead. It was the third deadliest Atlantic hurricane recorded, and to this day remains the worst natural disaster ever to strike the United States.



This monument adorns the Galveston beach in honor of those who survived—and the 8,000 people who died in the 1900 hurricane.

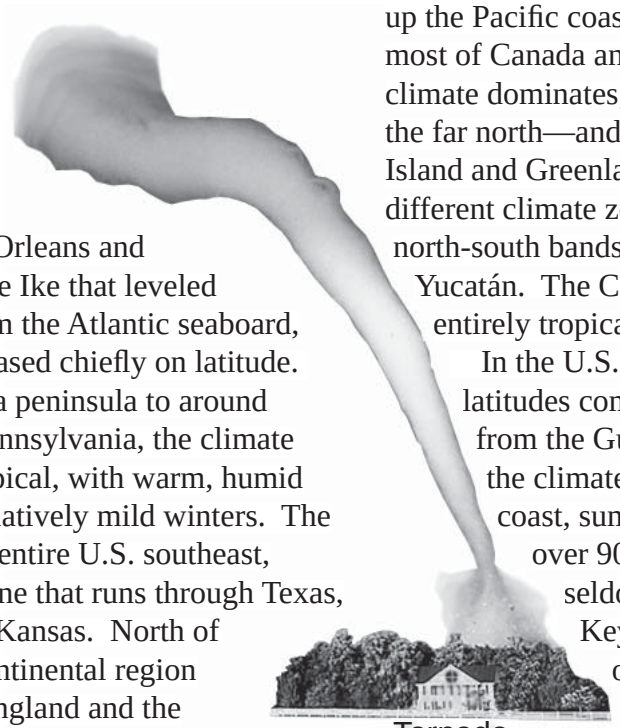
While catastrophes of this magnitude are not typical on the North American continent, hurricanes, tornadoes, and other natural phenomena are widespread from the northern reaches of Canada to the Yucatán Peninsula. These extreme climate conditions, which have spawned regional nicknames across the continent like the infamous midwestern "Tornado Alley," underlie a varied and diverse climatological landscape with over ten distinct climate zones. Violent storms hit

VOCABULARY

Arid: very dry
Wind chill: measure of apparent temperature based on both temperature and wind
Nor'easter: storm in Eastern U.S. and Canada caused by clashing polar and Caribbean air masses
Prairie: treeless grassy area of level or gently rolling land
Rain shadow: area of land in which significant rainfall is blocked by adjacent mountains
Chinook: warming wind in the interior west of North America

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coastal areas of North America, as well, such as 2005's Hurricane Katrina that destroyed New Orleans and 2008's Hurricane Ike that leveled Galveston. From the Atlantic seaboard, conditions are based chiefly on latitude. From the Florida peninsula to around Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the climate is humid subtropical, with warm, humid summers and relatively mild winters. The zone covers the entire U.S. southeast, stretching to a line that runs through Texas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. North of this, a humid continental region blankets New England and the U.S. Midwest, extending through Toronto and Montreal and southern areas of Ontario and Manitoba. This area endures cold, even harsh winters, but summers can be warm and precipitation is generally widespread. Toward the west, however, rainfall diminishes considerably, and near the Rocky Mountains a semi-arid zone picks up, accounting for the entire Rocky Mountain region from Edmonton, Alberta to Mexico City. The region is dotted by highland climate zones along tall mountain peaks that are usually snowcapped during winter.



Tornado

In the south, through parts of Arizona, Nevada, and California, along with the Baja California Peninsula, conditions are decidedly ***arid***, with scant rainfall and scarce vegetation. To the west of California's Sierra Nevada range, the climate is Mediterranean, growing rainier to the north, where Seattle, Washington is in the middle of North America's only marine climate zone. This zone extends up the Pacific coast to Alaska. Throughout most of Canada and Alaska, a subarctic climate dominates, giving way to tundra in the far north—and ice caps on Ellesmere Island and Greenland. In rugged Mexico, different climate zones stripe the country in north-south bands, turning tropical in the Yucatán. The Caribbean islands have an entirely tropical climate.

In the U.S. southeast, southern latitudes combine with warm air from the Gulf of Mexico to make the climate subtropical. Near the coast, summer highs can average over 90° F, and winter lows seldom drop below freezing. Key West, Florida, at the tip of the Florida Keys and the southernmost city in the continental U.S., advertises that it is the nation's only frost-free city. In Pensacola, Florida, residents endure only around fifteen sub-freezing nights a year, and summer highs sometimes top the 100°F mark. Further north, temperatures grow more moderate based on latitude. Atlanta, Georgia typically sees the freezing point every winter, while places like Richmond, Virginia, and Nashville, Tennessee, regularly experience winter lows in the 10s and 20s. In the west, the Texas cities of Houston and San Antonio have very warm climates, both with regular, prolonged summer periods over 90°F, and through central Texas and Oklahoma precipitation can vary widely. Most of the region, however, enjoys considerable rainfall—the Alabama coast is among the stormiest in the country, with thunder reported 60 to 70 days a year.

In the northeastern United States, the climate is continental, with greater extremes and rapid temperature fluctuations. Even

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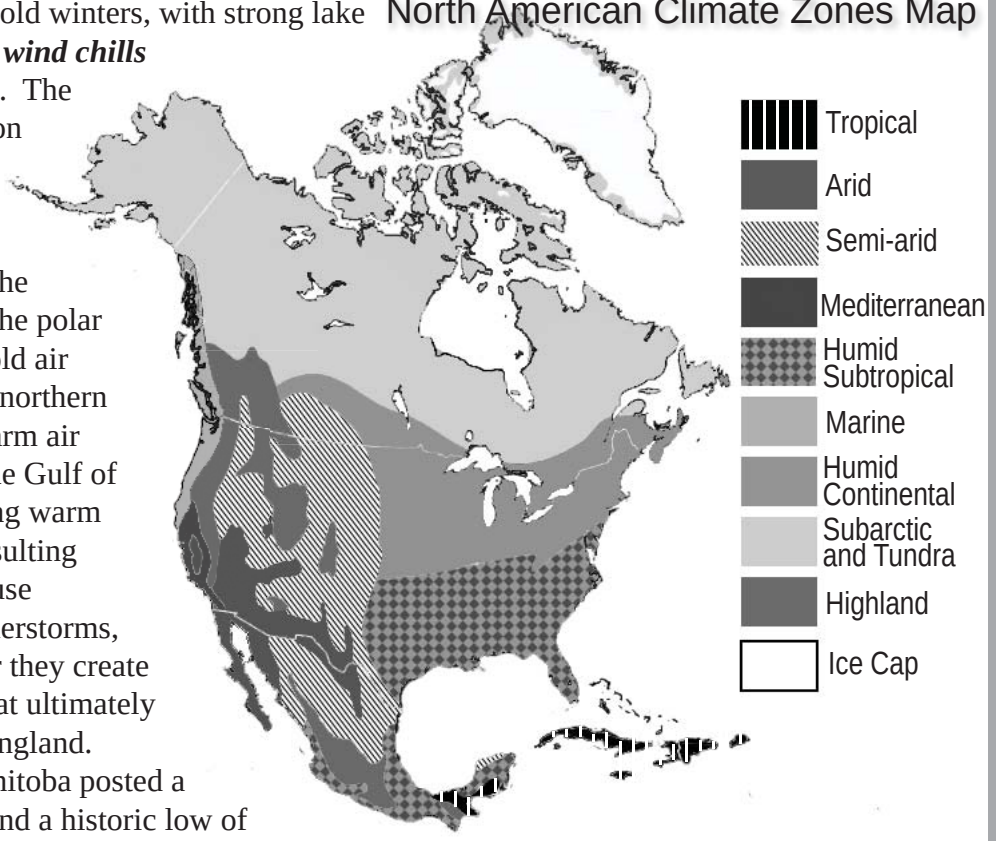
along the Atlantic coast, major northeastern metropolises exhibit characteristics of more inland regions: Boston, for instance, has warm, humid summers but considerable snowfall in the winter. Precipitation is common throughout New England and the Midwest, with small pockets of New York and West Virginia receiving over 60 inches a year. What form the precipitation takes, however, differs radically, as snowfall in coastal cities is somewhat moderated by the Atlantic, but towns such as Syracuse, New York receive over 110 inches of snow per year. Farther inland, temperatures can undergo even more drastic swings, particularly in the Great Lakes region. Chicago has warm, humid summers and cold winters, with strong lake winds creating ***wind chills*** below freezing. The region's location is behind much of the climate here: it lies at the confluence of the polar jet stream, a cold air route from the northern Pacific, and warm air masses from the Gulf of Mexico. During warm months, the resulting clashes can cause dramatic thunderstorms, while in winter they create ***Nor'easters*** that ultimately head to New England. Winnipeg, Manitoba posted a record 105°F and a historic low of -49°F. U.S. states like Missouri and Illinois also experience dramatic seasonal swings.


Snow Buildup

Through the western parts of this zone, winds can be very high.

Across the Great Plains, a broad ***prairie*** stretching from central Texas to southern Canada, the semi-arid zone takes over. This region lies just east of the Rocky Mountains, whose high peaks block precipitation from the Pacific and create a ***rain shadow*** here. While the semi-arid zone extends across the Rockies in some areas into Nevada and Idaho, the bulk of it is in Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, and western Texas. From east to west, rainfall declines rapidly in this zone, dropping from over 40 inches per year in central Oklahoma to fifteen in the state's Panhandle. Parts of Montana,

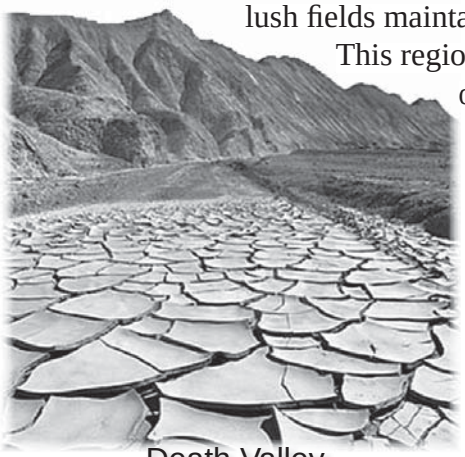
North American Climate Zones Map



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especially in the north, receive less than ten inches of rain a year, as do portions of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Temperatures vary according to latitude: west Texas can be hot most of the year, even in the winter, while in Alberta cold winters are the norm. Calgary is similar to Winnipeg in its temperature fluctuations—long winters and heavy snowfall rack the city in winter, although ***Chinooks*** can warm the land and melt snow quickly. In some of the higher elevations, sunshine is prevalent: Albuquerque, New Mexico enjoys over 300 sunny days each year.

In the southwestern U.S., what limited rainfall exists in the semi-arid zone vanishes to create an arid zone. Covering California's Mojave Desert and the Great Basin in Nevada, the region is home to some of the country's most extreme and inhospitable weather. Death Valley, California receives less than two inches of rain a year and boasts the second-highest temperature ever recorded on Earth, 134°F. Average July daytime highs top 115°F and nighttime lows sometimes provide little relief: in 1959, temperatures did not dip below 100°F for three consecutive nights. Despite the region's radical heat and lack of water, its population is among the fastest-growing in the United States. Phoenix, Arizona grew 2.1% from July 2007 to July 2008, and tourist and casino hotspot Las Vegas also ballooned during this time. Badwater, a basin in Death Valley, claims the lowest elevation in North America at 282 feet below sea level—interestingly, just 76 miles from Mount Whitney, the highest point in the contiguous U.S.


Death Valley

Just west of this region, California is among only a few places worldwide with a Mediterranean climate zone. The climate throughout most of the state is warm and moderate, with healthy rainfall and little seasonal temperature variation. The Pacific Ocean is responsible for much of this, and the Sierra Nevada Mountains prevent rain from traveling too far from the coast. The climate zone stretches to northern California and is broken through high mountain peaks and the San Andreas Valley, whose lush fields maintain a semi-arid climate. This region produces about 40% of America's fruits and vegetables.

Through the bulk of Canada, the subarctic zone stretches from Newfoundland to northern Alaska and blankets the land with snow and harsh temperatures. Edmonton, home to North America's largest shopping mall, undergoes radical seasonal temperature extremes and high winds, as do cities much further north like Fairbanks, Alaska. The famous quest of heroic sled dog Balto took place between Nenana and Nome, Alaska during a diptheria crisis in 1925.

In the interior of Canada, Yellowknife sees average lows below 0°F five months of the year, and has a semi-arid climate, on par with other settlements at its longitude. Across the country, towns near the coast are noticeably more moderate, with winter highs near freezing. Wind chills in this region, however, can render travel extremely dangerous, especially in the country's central region. Settlement trends reflect this reality, as there are few cities in

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Eskimo Girl

the middle of Canada. In far northern Canada and Alaska, and across the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, a tundra climate dominates, with soil frozen most or all of the year and limited vegetation. Human inhabitation is even more limited: in the tundra, the towns of Barrow, Alaska and Inukjuak, Quebec, are home to small Eskimo populations, but few other settlements exist. This is because almost 90% of Canada's population lives within 100 miles of the U.S. border. Some large Arctic islands feature areas of ice cap, a feature shared by 81% of Greenland. Greenland's capital of Nuuk lies on the southwestern coast in a subarctic climate zone (see Map C).

Mexico varies in climate largely by longitude. In the north, semi-arid and arid regions compete, with the arid claiming a narrow strip south from west Texas to Monterrey and also the Baja California Peninsula. Through the continent's central portion, a highland climate takes over and includes Mexico City, and brings a combination of hot summers and heavy summer precipitation. Further south, a subtropical climate resumes, with portions of the Yucatán Peninsula tropical and wet. In the Caribbean, year-round sea winds and warm weather provide a tropical climate that grows warmer closer to the equator. These areas are subject to Atlantic hurricanes that pummel the region in the summer and fall each year.

Life Principle

Everything comes to him
who hustles while he waits.

-Thomas A. Edison

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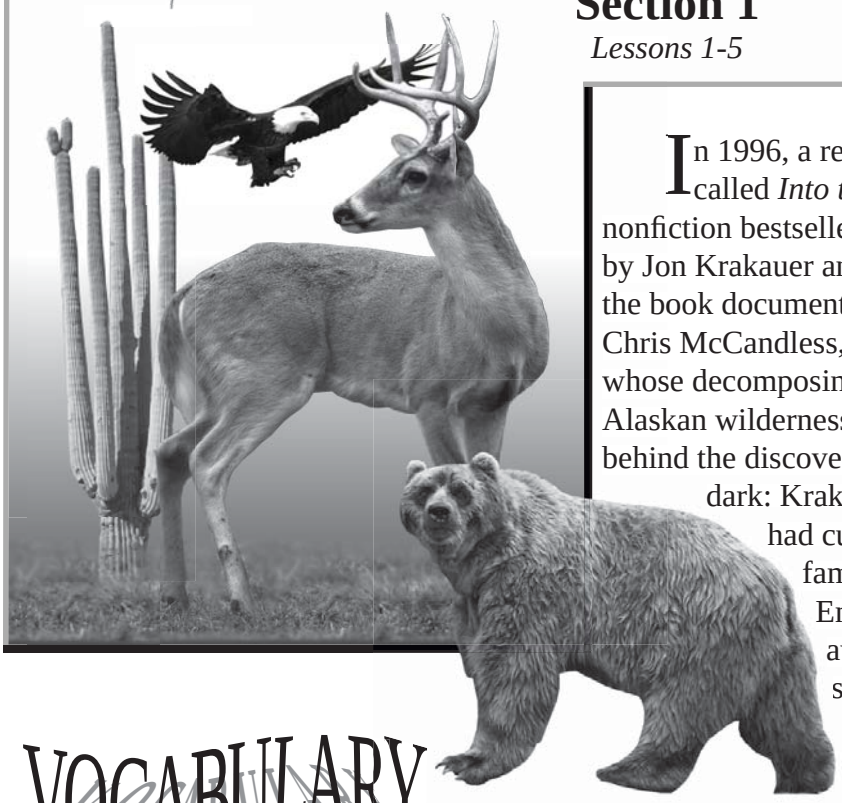
World Geography

Chapter 1

Lesson 5
Wildlife and Vegetation

Section 1
Lessons 1-5

Wildlife and Vegetation North America



In 1996, a relatively short, intense book called *Into the Wild* rose to the top of nonfiction bestseller lists across America. Written by Jon Krakauer and published with little fanfare, the book documented the journey and death of Chris McCandless, a 24-year-old college graduate whose decomposing body was found in the Alaskan wilderness four years earlier. The story behind the discovery was intriguing and often dark: Krakauer related how McCandless had cut off communication with family after graduating from Emory University, given away his savings, and spent several months in the Alaskan wilderness, foraging for berries and hunting game. The book explored the uncertainty behind the cause of his death: while some suggested he was poisoned by eating the toxic seeds of a native potato plant, autopsies did not reveal evidence of this, and many believe he simply died of starvation. The tragic story captured the attention of readers at the time, and it has recently birthed a film adaptation (2007) and a reality television show (2008). Interestingly, another famous book, *Call of the Wild*, created worldwide fascination with the Alaskan wilderness in 1903.

Central to both books is the theme of the wilderness, and, in particular, man's unsuccessful struggle against it. Perhaps the narratives are more poignant because of their setting in Alaska, whose nickname "The Last Frontier" suitably sums up countless Americans' thoughts toward it. The massive state, home to only 686,000 people and some of North America's most inhospitable weather and terrain,

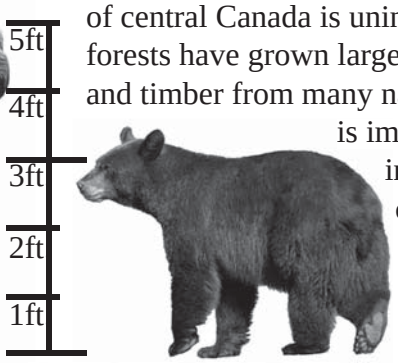
VOCABULARY

Alluvial soil: soil or sediment deposited by a river or other running water
Cash crop: crop raised for direct sale
Tree line: edge of habitat in which trees are capable of growing
Loess: fine-grained, unstratified accumulation of silt or clay deposited by the wind
Drought: prolonged period of little or no precipitation

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has long been equated with wilderness and a pioneer mentality. Those who travel to or reside in Alaska, especially in more remote areas, are sometimes perceived as modern-day explorers or pioneers, braving harsh elements and few links to civilization in their desire for an undisturbed life. The state's vegetation and wildlife are both intensely familiar and alien to North Americans elsewhere—coniferous trees such as pine, spruce, and fir color mountain slopes, while huge-antlered moose and caribou roam freely through the wilderness and even small towns. Despite the state's high latitude, most of it is not tundra, as warming sea breezes allow for widespread tree and plant growth. Giant Kodiak and polar bears call Alaska home and are the largest bears in the world. In 1942, brown bears were so menacing that workers on the ALCAN Highway were issued 45-caliber pistols for protection. About twelve workers were killed by grizzly bears. The Arctic fox can be found throughout the state, changing its fur color seasonally from white to brown as a means of camouflage. Moose, musk oxen, caribou, whales, and mountain goats survive in the cold climate here, as does the U.S.'s national bird, the bald eagle. Alaska claims larger quantities of this majestic bird than all other states combined. Salmon fishing is a major industry and sport in Alaska.


Kodiak Bear



American Black Bear


Bald Eagle

Just as the highest mountain peaks in North America have their own climate designation, the same is true for high mountains in Alaska and Canada. Most of Canada is subarctic in climate, with the exception of far northern regions that are tundra; likewise, most of Canada lies in the coniferous forest vegetation zone. From the western Yukon to Newfoundland, spruce and pine trees dominate the landscape, their needle leaves remaining green throughout the long Canadian winters. Because much of central Canada is uninhabited, forests have grown largely unchecked, and timber from many native trees is important in industries like construction and furniture manufacturing. The maple tree, whose leaf adorns the Canadian flag and which holds a status similar to the bald eagle in the U.S., is prevalent in the south.


Maple Tree

Many Alaskan animals also live here—brown and grizzly bears, foxes, smaller animals like rabbits—but Canada is also home to many unique species. The wolverine, a type of weasel that is often incorrectly thought to be related to the wolf or the bear, hunts rodents and birds across the country. Walruses are found in Arctic seas and oceans, particularly in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, and feed on krill and shrimp. Near summits of the Rockies, mountain lions, wolves, and goats

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dwell. Vehicle collisions with moose are common in these areas. Lynxes, porcupines, geese, and seals also thrive throughout Canada, while amphibians live near ***alluvial soils*** along rivers.

In places where coniferous forest gives way to more temperate deciduous vegetation, such as in New England and the Great Lakes region, trees are far more mixed. Seasonal species like birches, oaks, and hemlocks grow among pines and firs, and elevation exerts a strong influence over growth patterns. In lower regions far from the Appalachian Mountains, deciduous trees are abundant, and conversely coniferous varieties are more common in the mountains. Daffodils, roses, and sunflowers bloom annually in these regions, and near the Great Lakes sycamores and walnut trees are mainstays. Many animals in New England are also found throughout the continent—animals such as possums, raccoons, chipmunks, moles, herons, robins, snapping turtles, and catfish. Many states or regions have particular affinities for certain animals. In Maryland, the oriole, with its trademark orange belly, reigns as the state bird and mascot for Baltimore's Major League Baseball franchise. Near the Chesapeake Bay, blue crabs are important to the ecosystem and are harvested as a delicacy item for restaurants.


Popular Flowers


Snapping Turtle

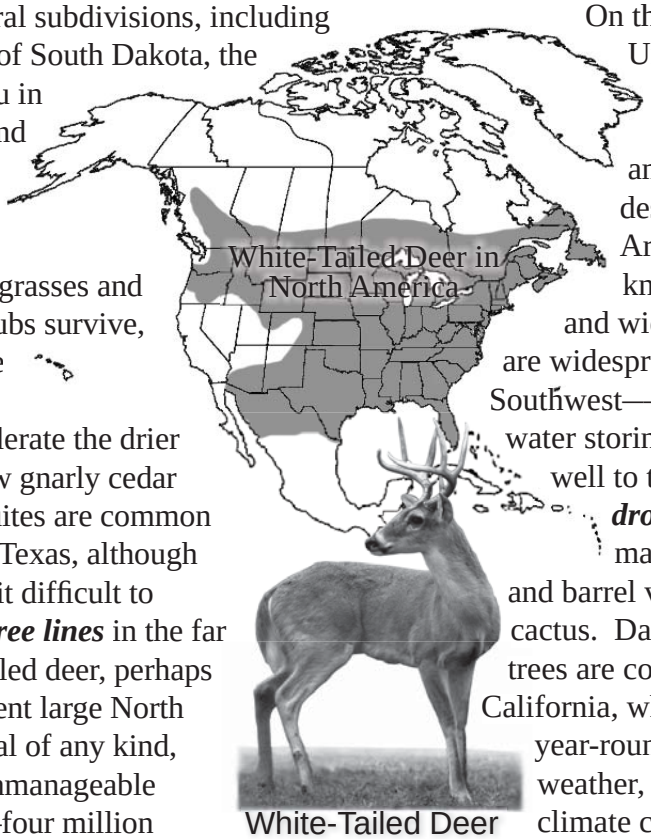
Most of the eastern United States lies in a deciduous forest zone, where the oaks and birch trees that dot the Canadian border take over unapologetically. Hemlocks and other cool-climate fixtures mingle with buckeyes, poplars, redbuds, and sassafras, especially in the lower Midwest and upper Southeast. Some of these varieties are so integral to their communities that they have been adopted as university and sports team mascots—students at America's largest university campus, Ohio State, are nicknamed Buckeyes. Apple trees grow in the Midwest, particularly in Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana, and have long been associated with Johnny Appleseed, a Christian missionary who planted them extensively in this region in the early 19th century. One of the most stunning flowers along the Atlantic coast is the cherry tree, originally a Japanese species that flowers in late March or early April. The tree has been planted prominently in downtown areas throughout many Eastern cities, perhaps most famously along Washington, D.C.'s Tidal Basin. The dense pink blooms each spring attract huge numbers of tourists. Deer, foxes, rabbits, cougars, and other animals are common in this region. In the Appalachian Mountains, black bears are plentiful. They have become a menace to communities in New Jersey during recent years. Other unique plants and animals are spread throughout the Eastern U.S.: in western Kentucky, bluegrass covers large areas and lends its name to the music genre that sprung from the region. Horse breeding is also a major industry throughout Kentucky and neighboring states, and tobacco has historically been an important ***cash crop*** in the Carolinas.


Apple

Farther west, seasonal trees thin considerably as rainfall lessens. The Great Plains are wetter in the east and drier in the west, and grasses take over for trees west of the Mississippi River. The zone actually

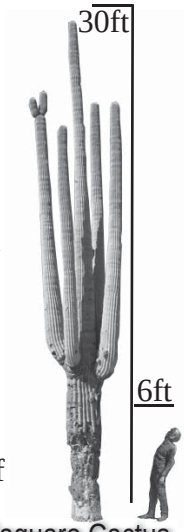
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comprises several subdivisions, including the Black Hills of South Dakota, the Edwards Plateau in central Texas, and the Piedmont in eastern Colorado. On this prairie, tall grasses and low, woody shrubs survive, but these are the most significant of plants that tolerate the drier conditions. Low gnarly cedar trees and mesquites are common through central Texas, although even these find it difficult to survive across ***tree lines*** in the far west. White-tailed deer, perhaps the most prevalent large North American animal of any kind, live in nearly unmanageable numbers here—four million in Texas alone. The deer, whose U.S. population dwindled to near 300,000 in 1930 due to overhunting and deforestation, now number more than 30 million spread across 46 states and into Canada and Mexico. Bison are also slowly regaining a once vast kingdom across the plains. These large mammals, 30 to 60 million of which once roamed the Great Plains, were driven nearly to extinction by unregulated commercial and recreational hunting in the 19th century. Other endangered and threatened species, such as prairie dogs and the exceptionally rare black-footed ferret, live across the Great Plains. In Iowa, unique grasses and plants grow around hills of ***loess*** in the central part of the state.



White-Tailed Deer

On the West Coast of the United States, varying plants and animals live. Saguaro cacti are among the most famous desert plants through Arizona and California, known for their height and width. Cacti in general are widespread through the U.S. Southwest—their deep roots and water storing abilities suit them well to the region's extreme ***droughts***—and come in many forms, from yucca and barrel varieties to organ pipe cactus. Date, palm, and avocado trees are common in southern California, where they enjoy the year-round sunlight, warm weather, and limited seasonal climate changes. Farther north and in the Sierra Madre and Cascade Mountains, coniferous trees flourish. In the Pacific Northwest, an extended rainy season promotes lush vegetation of all kinds, especially along the Washington coast. This is the region Lewis and Clark explored in the early 19th century in their journey across the Louisiana Purchase. Tall pine and spruce trees provide breathtaking scenery and blanket entire mountainsides with their greenery. Whales are common off the Pacific coast, and certain high-profile animals like the endangered California condor inhabit the region. The U.S. government's conservation program for the condor, which numbers only 322 living birds, has been the most expensive species conservation program ever undertaken.



Saguaro Cactus

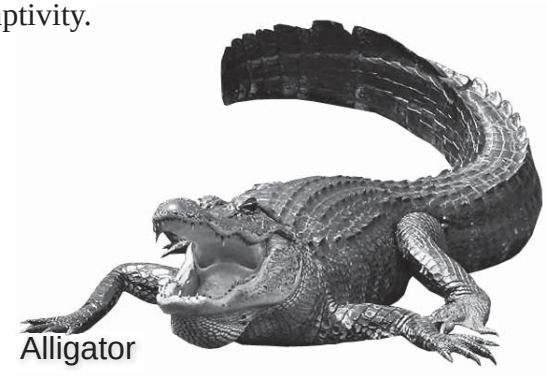
In Mexico, vegetation and wildlife includes many of the same animals found in the U.S. and Canada, with some that are

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unique. Coyotes are common in Mexico. Cacti, and desert animals like lizards, toads, and rattlesnakes survive in the arid regions of the northern Sierra Madre. Near the Yucatán Peninsula, tree frogs and crocodiles thrive in the more tropical southern Mexico environment and in the Caribbean islands. In southern regions, monkeys and gorillas live, and warm water whales and dolphins thrive both in the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. Flamingoes, parrots, quetzals, and other birds enjoy Mexico's warm climate, as does the golden eagle, which adorns the Mexican flag. Tropical flowers like hibiscus, orchids, and begonias are found throughout the Caribbean. Some Caribbean animals, like the parrot, are also found in the southern U.S, particularly in the Florida Everglades. The alligator, though widespread through the Everglades, is not found in the Caribbean.


Golden Eagle

The U.S. alligator population has expanded dramatically since 1990, occasionally even posing danger to local residents and tourists. Since the late 1990s, pythons and walking catfish have increased in population in Florida, Louisiana, and Texas coastal regions—apparently the result of pet owners who released the reptiles/fish when they grew too big for captivity.


Alligator

life principle

Far better is it to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure...than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much, because they live in a gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat.

-Theodore Roosevelt

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World Geography

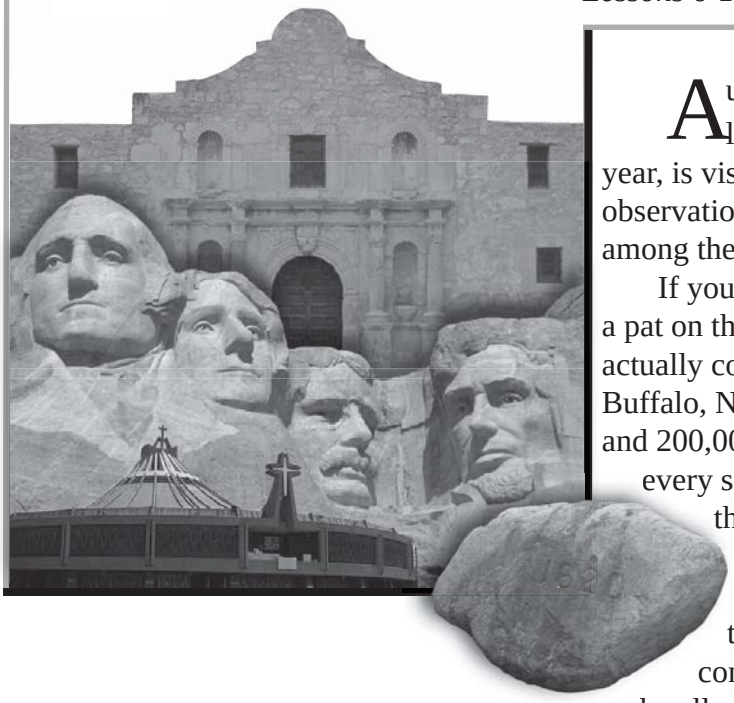
Chapter 1



Lesson 6
Famous Events And Sites

Section 2
Lessons 6-10

Famous Events and Sites of North America



A unique question: What North American location draws 24 million visitors each year, is visible by boat, car, plane, and nearby observation towers, straddles two countries, and is among the top ten tourist attractions in both?

If you guessed "Niagara Falls," give yourself a pat on the back. The thundering waterfall, actually comprised of two independent falls near Buffalo, New York, carries between 100,000 and 200,000 cubic feet of water over the cliffs every second. The falls measure 173 feet at their highest point. The river on which they lie is fed by nearby Lake Erie, whose elevation chiefly determines the waterfall's flow. The falls are a considerable source of hydroelectric power locally and regionally. The dazzling site is the most visited place in Canada and the eighth most visited attraction in the U.S., and is an enormous boon to local entrepreneurs.

Niagara Falls is a major tourist attraction because of its recreational and natural value, an attribute shared by places like the Grand Canyon or Walt Disney World. Although these are popular throughout North America, many famous sites are tied to history in some sense. In what many consider the "New World," the reality is that half of the U.S.'s top ten visited places, and even more of Canada and Mexico's, are significant primarily for their political, social, or cultural history. Mention civil war battlefields such as Gettysburg or Antietam, and you'll be as likely referring to a historical event as to a place, as the conflicts there have become synonymous with their place names. Many cities' local fortunes are tied perilously to the history they possess:

VOCABULARY

Speakeasy: place where alcoholic beverages were illegally sold during the Prohibition era
Conquistador: 16th-century Spanish explorer in the Americas

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dry up the steady stream of visitors and history buffs to Philadelphia or Boston, for instance, and you would cripple a valuable economic sector.

Topping the list of most visited sites in North America is Times Square in New York City. This Manhattan intersection, whose real estate is also among the most expensive in the world, is nicknamed the "Crossroads of the World" and takes its name from the Times Building, from which the famous ball is dropped each New Year's. Nearly 38 million people per year flock to the glittering intersection, decorated by animated digital advertisements and news tickers. Since its naming in 1904, Times Square has blossomed into a cultural hub of sorts, with Broadway theaters and advertisements lining its streets and major corporations, such as ABC, Bank of America, Morgan Stanley, and the New York Times, occupying office space. Just blocks away, the Empire State Building towers 1,472 feet over the city's skyline and its fame landed a starring role in the movie *King Kong*. In addition, the Statue of Liberty on Liberty Island has served as an emotional attraction for millions of visitors and a beacon of hope to the world.


Empire State Building

South of the New York commercial district is a historic one. The National Mall in Washington, D.C., composed of the Capitol, Washington Monument, numerous memorials and monuments, and nineteen Smithsonian Museums, attracts 25 million visitors each year. The city itself dates back to its formal government establishment in 1790, and the plan for the National Mall was adopted in the early 20th century. Nearby, other important sites not technically on the Mall draw even more visitors: the 55,000-square foot White House is the presidential residence, and the National Archives house the U.S. Constitution and Declaration of Independence. Washington, D.C. is known for its memorials to patriots such as Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Lincoln.

Other sites in the Eastern U.S. are packed with history. In Philadelphia, Independence Hall and Declaration House receive millions of visitors each year and house history related to the nation's founding documents. The First and Second Banks of the United States are in the city, and the famous Liberty Bell, which hung above Independence Hall in the late 1700s, can be seen in the Liberty Bell Center. In Boston, Faneuil Hall Marketplace dates to the mid-18th century and served as a commercial district and city plaza for generations. The city, which before the American Revolution served as the center of American commerce and politics, is home of memorials to Revolutionary events, including Old North Church, which was instrumental in Paul Revere's midnight ride as lanterns were hung from the steeple to indicate the route of the British invasion. The city is not far from Plymouth Rock, the site of the first British colonists who came to America on the Mayflower

Plymouth Rock: The date was inscribed in 1880. Originally this rock was 20,000 lbs, yet only a fraction remains today.



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in 1620 to practice their Christian faith.

North of the border, most of Canada's famous historical destinations are also in the East. In Montreal, the Quays of the Old Port of Montreal (also called simply Vieux Port or Old Port) is home to the Montreal Clock Tower and a wealth of information chronicling the city's past as a fur trading post. Toronto's Harbourfront Centre attracts 12 million visitors annually and is among the country's premier shopping and recreation destinations. Ships dating back to the 18th century dock in the harbor, including the 1812 War Privateer of the North Atlantic. Canada's largest city also boasts Exhibition Place, a well-known commercial district and fairgrounds, and the 1,815-foot CN Tower, the tallest freestanding structure in the Western Hemisphere. In Quebec City, the Old City historic area is the only walled city on the continent and hearkens back to British and French rule in past centuries.



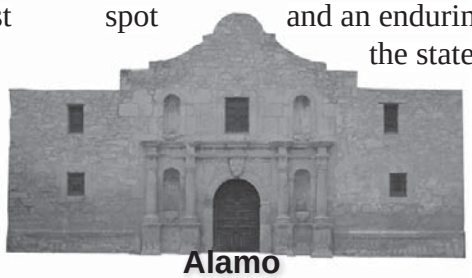
Montreal Clock Tower

Off the East Coast, many important sites date to slightly more recent eras. Gettysburg Battlefield in southern Pennsylvania was the site of the U.S. Civil War's bloodiest battle and is today a national park. Great Smoky Mountains National Park on the Tennessee–North Carolina border is the most visited national park in the country, particularly when the mountain landscape is ablaze with the numerous colors of fall. Chicago is the transportation, financial, and commercial center of the Midwest and is home to early 20th century history, when gangsters such as Al Capone ruled the city and Prohibition laws were famously flaunted in ***speakeasies***. The Willis (formerly Sears) Tower, the highlight of the city's skyline, was the world's tallest building for 24 years until 1998. Wrigley Field is the home of the Chicago Cubs baseball team and among America's most cherished ballparks.



CN Tower

Because the United States is so vast, certain regions and sections have developed and retained a history of their own. In the southwest, much of the local history is tied up with Mexico, which once owned parts of many western states. In San Antonio, the Alamo is Texas's most visited spot and an enduring symbol of the state's fight for independence, which freed it from Mexican authority. Local folk legends such as Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie, inventor of the famous bowie knife, fought in the 1835 battle at the Catholic mission, which was a defeat for Texas but ultimately galvanized Texans to win independence. The adjacent Riverwalk attracts five million people each year to experience Mexican food, Hispanic culture, and live mariachi bands. Five hours up the freeway in Dallas, a museum at Dealey Plaza stands on the spot where Lee Harvey Oswald shot and killed President John F. Kennedy in 1963. In Tombstone, Arizona, stories of the Wild West still live, fueled largely by the history of the gunfight at the O.K. Corral



Alamo

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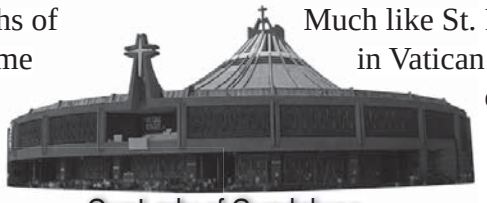
in 1881, featuring the famous Wyatt Earp, his brothers, and Doc Holiday against the Clanton and McLaury brothers. This true story has been immortalized in several movies and is among the old west's more intriguing tales.

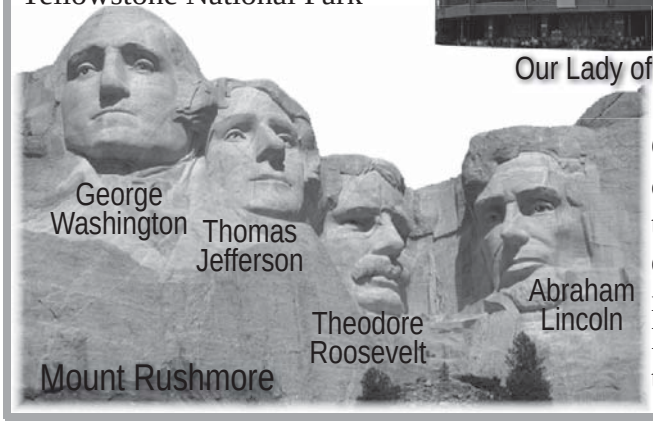
In the Rocky Mountains, many places have emerged as popular vacation destinations or significant sites because of their natural beauty. Alberta's Banff National Park is among these: ski resorts, museums, and other cultural offerings sit against a breathtaking mountain backdrop. The park is Canada's oldest and most visited, and together with American counterparts, such as Rocky Mountain National Park and Glacier National Park, it is important for its beauty and undisturbed nature. Further north, The Forks in Winnipeg has links to Native American settlement and later to fur and railroad influence. In Whistler, British Columbia, world-class skiing and biking offers outdoor enthusiasts months of excitement, and is the site of some 2010 Winter Olympic events. Yellowstone National Park in the United States is the location of Old Faithful Geyser and is one of the nation's best-loved parks. South Dakota's Mt. Rushmore features the carved faces of four important U.S. presidents.


Banff National Park

On the Pacific coast, numerous places with historical connections exist. In Vancouver, Granville Island is still much of a throwback to the 1970s theater district that sprang up, and today is a cultural haven with large shopping and art areas. Across town, Stanley Park draws 8 million visitors per year, a bubble of peace in the busy city, much like New York City's Central Park. In Seattle, the Space Needle cuts 605 feet into the sky, overlooking popular Pike Place Market on Elliott Bay. San Francisco's Fisherman's Wharf, adjacent to the Golden Gate Bridge and overlooking the historic Alcatraz Island, is among California's favorite destinations and chronicles the local maritime culture. Further south, the Queen Mary ocean liner calls Long Beach's harbor home, while the San Diego Zoo is among the worlds largest.

In Mexico and the Caribbean islands, many of the famous sites center on Native America or Roman Catholicism. Much like St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City is perhaps the world's most significant Catholic Church. The original building was constructed from 1531 to 1709 and is the focus of millions of pilgrimages each year; a new building constructed in the 1970s can host 40,000 people for Mass. Metropolitan Cathedral, site of the Mexican Archdiocese, is the oldest

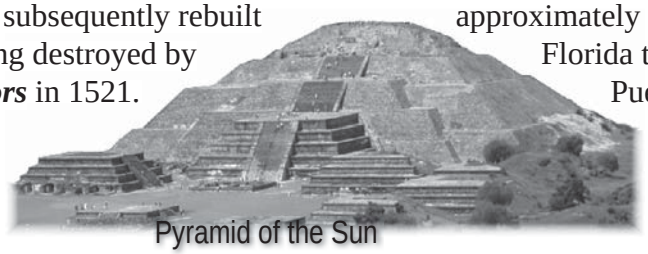

Our Lady of Guadalupe



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and largest cathedral in the Americas, dating to 1573. It depicts European architectural styles.

Native American ruins also dot Mexico City, which is built upon the ancient Aztec city of Tenochtitlan. Templo Mayor, one of the Aztecs' main temples, was built in the 14th century and subsequently rebuilt six times, finally being destroyed by Spanish ***conquistadors*** in 1521. The Pyramid of the Sun in Teotihuacán is the third-largest pyramid in the world and dates back much farther, to the 1st century AD. The Zócalo, Mexico City's central plaza, and the world's second-largest city plaza behind Moscow's Red Square, is enclosed by the Metropolitan Cathedral, the National Palace, and several other governmental edifices. Other Native American ruins include that of the Mayans who inhabited the Yucatan Peninsula. In Cuba, the Cathedral of Havana is perhaps the Caribbean's best-known piece of Catholic architecture. The Bermuda Triangle, a region that stretches approximately from Miami, Florida to Bermuda to Puerto Rico, is a zone in which numerous planes and shipping vessels have mysteriously disappeared. Comprising mostly open ocean, with several inhabited islands inside the triangle, the region is a bastion of supernatural and paranormal rumors and speculation.



Pyramid of the Sun

Top Ten Most Visited Tourist Sites in the United States

Tourist Sites	number of visits each year in millions (5 10 15 20 25 30 35)
1. Times Square *NewYork City, NewYork*	35 Million
2. The Las Vegas Strip *LasVegas, Nevada*	31 Million
3. National Mall & Memorial Parks *Washington, D.C.*	24 Million
4. Faneuil Hall Marketplace *Boston, Massachusetts*	20 Million
5. Disney World's Magic Kingdom *Lake BuenaVista, Florida*	17.1 Million
6. Disneyland Park *Anaheim, California*	14.9 Million
7. Fisherman's Wharf / Golden Gate National Park Area *San Francisco, California*	14 Million
8. Niagara Falls *NewYork, U.S. and Ontario, Canada*	12 Million
9. Great Smoky Mountains National Park *Tennessee and North Carolina*	9.4 Million
10. Navy Pier *Chicago, Illinois*	8.6 Million

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Famous Sites Map



Cities
Famous Sites
Countries

Life Principle

All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them.

- Walt Disney

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World Geography

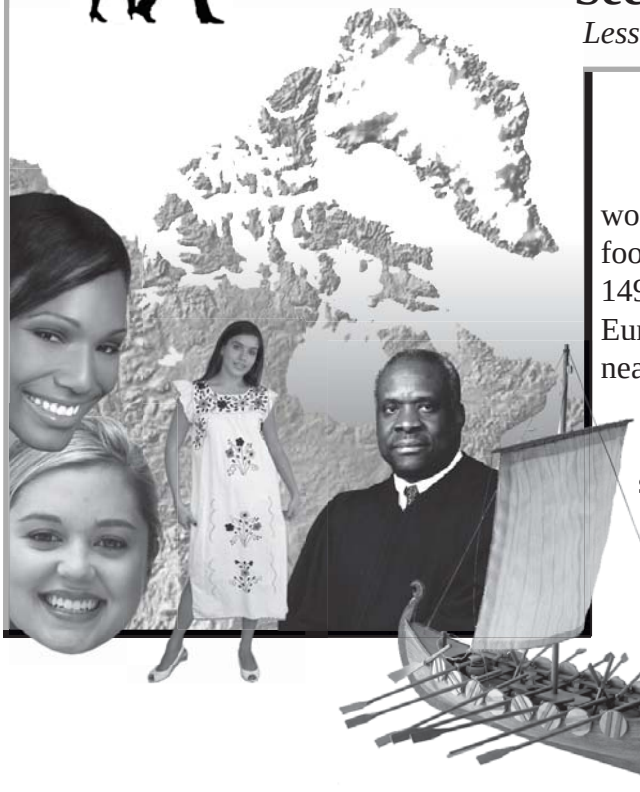
Chapter 1



Lesson 7
Races and Ethnicities

Section 2
Lessons 6-10





Despite Christopher Columbus's significance in establishing the new world, he was not the first European to set foot on American soil. While his voyage in 1492 paved the way for regular and increasing European interest in the continent, he arrived nearly five hundred years following Norseman Leif Erickson's discovery of Newfoundland. Erickson, an Icelandic explorer who founded settlements in Greenland and elsewhere, led Viking units across the Atlantic around 1000 and landed in Newfoundland in 1003. Recognized throughout North America as a critical figure on the continent's timeline, Erickson was probably the first European to see North America and has earned a somewhat legendary status as a Viking chief and adventurer. After his voyage, no Atlantic crossings are known to have occurred until Columbus' journey centuries later.

While European settlement stems from Columbus and ensuing 16th century voyages, Europe was actually a late arrival to the continent. Most historians today believe North America was populated by nomadic Asian peoples several thousand years before Christ. Some postulate the existence of a land bridge across the Bering Strait that carried northwest Asians into modern Alaska and south through Canada, although confirming proof of this is still elusive. America's first settlers were loosely organized into bands, or tribes, and soon spread across the continent; by the time European explorers arrived, they were well established from the Pacific to the Atlantic. The Pilgrims of 1620 survived

VOCABULARY

Mestizo: of mixed European and Native American ancestry
Pluralistic: ethnically, racially, or religiously diverse
Multiculturalism: idea of the peaceful coexistence of multiple cultures
Ethnographer: person who studies human societies

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the harsh New England winters due to the assistance of two Native Americans: Squanto and Samoset. Following European colonization in the 15th and 16th centuries, Native American populations declined rapidly as contact with Europeans reduced their numbers due to alcoholism and diseases against which natives had no immunity. As European numbers grew, and explorers claimed and settled new lands, native peoples were often forcibly displaced. Many Native Americans assimilated into Anglo-Saxon culture. However, thousands who tried to maintain lives by hunting and gathering became desperate. Anglo-Indian battles at Little Bighorn, Montana, and Wounded Knee, South Dakota, entered into the annals of American history, sometimes resulting in Native American victories but more often in defeats. In 1841, the U.S. government ordered the relocation of numerous southeastern tribes to Oklahoma in what would be called the Trail of Tears. Many natives died along the journey; those who survived spread throughout Oklahoma and today comprise over 11% of the state's population, more than any other state except Alaska.



Native Americans in Canada and Mexico have similar histories in that primitive tribal customs are struggling to survive among influences such as electricity, automobiles, computers, and textiles. Today, North America is unique among continents in its rather uniform ethnic makeup as compared to other continents. While the specific ancestry of most North Americans is somewhat diverse, most citizens identify with European lineages. In the United States, 74% of people claim to be white, a term that encompasses various (mostly Western) European ethnicities. In Canada, 21% claim English and 19% claim French background. Another 32% identify as simply Canadian. In Mexico, 60% of the population is ***Mestizo*** in background, while 30% is chiefly Native American; the remaining 10% is largely of unmixed European, or white, descent. Despite years of open citizenship and immigration policies, ethnic minorities are still somewhat limited (though increasing) in North America, and language usage is relatively uniform within countries: English in Canada and the U.S., and Spanish in Mexico.

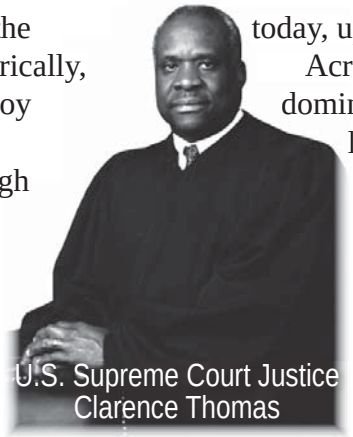
Despite the uniformity, ethnic diversity does exist and in recent years has become a point of pride among cities, regions, corporations, universities, and other entities, which often proclaim themselves as ***pluralistic*** societies. It is perhaps most marked in the United States, whose freedom and affluence have beckoned immigrants for generations. Most of these newcomers in recent years have been from Mexico and Latin America, where poverty, poor economic conditions, and corruption limit work opportunities. Hispanics in 2006 constituted 15% of the population, or 45

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million people, and high immigration rates from Mexico—both legal and illegal—coupled with higher Hispanic birthrates are rapidly augmenting that figure. While states and counties closest to the Mexican border naturally have the largest concentrations, the entire western United States is home to large Hispanic numbers. Major population centers like New York and Chicago have considerable Hispanic minorities. Indeed, the influx of Hispanic immigrants is stunning in its scope and rate: recent projections suggest that by 2050, the group will account for 30% of the U.S. population. In the U.S. southwest, the "browning of communities" is evident, and whites are actually a minority in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona.


Hispanic Girl

The swift rise of Hispanics in the United States has surged them past African-American populations, which have traditionally been the leading minority in the U.S. Most African-Americans, or blacks, are descendants of slaves from the 18th and 19th centuries, and the majority of their African ties are very old. Their concentrations are highest in southern U.S. states, the region where slavery was legal and thrived, although they are widespread near major Northeastern and Midwestern metropolises as well. Despite the problems they have faced historically, however, blacks in the U.S. enjoy unprecedented educational and economic opportunities, and high school test scores and college enrollment levels are at record highs. Unfortunately, between 33 and 54% of Hispanics and blacks do not graduate from high school.


U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas

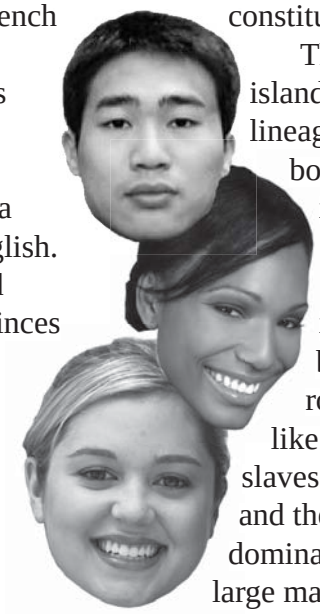
Other ethnic groups constitute important pockets locally and regionally. Over 13 million Asian-Americans of varying descents live in the United States, particularly on the West Coast and in large cities throughout the country. Native Americans, officially referred to as American Indians, number 2 million, many of whom are Eskimo or Inuit people living in Alaska. Nearly 20 million people do not claim to belong to any major racial category, and half a million are of Hawaiian or Pacific Islander heritage.

In Canada, the ethnic breakdown is much simpler. Around 85% of residents identify a Western European heritage, mostly from England, France, Scotland, or Ireland. The largest non-European ethnic origin is Chinese, which claims around 4% of the population; Native American groups and Ukrainian people comprise similar numbers. Most residents claim a merely Canadian heritage, an assertion that undergirds strong patriotic or nationalistic commitments. Nevertheless, minority populations have increased during the past several decades. Asian ethnicities, particularly South Asians and Koreans, nearly doubled in Canada from 1996 to 2006, and visible minorities as a whole constitute over 16% of the population today, up from 11% in 1996.

Across Canada, an examination of dominant races and ethnicities reflects logical trends. Eastern provinces such as Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, and Quebec see the greatest identification with a purely Canadian ancestry, rather than specific European countries, and many residents of eastern

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Ontario do, as well. This reality may reflect the provinces' age: the eastern provinces were the first ones colonized by Europe, and many residents trace their ancestry back to the earliest Canadian settlers. French heritage is more pronounced in the east and actually makes up a large majority in some cities. Nearly 80% of Quebec is French-speaking, and places like Montreal, which is the second-largest native French-speaking city in the world, mirror the province's overwhelmingly French makeup. Farther west, French gradually cedes majority status back to English. The majority of Canadians living near the southern border from Manitoba to British Columbia speak English. In the more sparsely populated northern regions of these provinces and in the territories, the few towns and settlements are mainly Native American. In southern Saskatchewan, many Canadians claim German ancestry, and pockets of Ukrainians live here and in western Manitoba. Nunavut, parts of the Northwest Territories, and the far northern reaches of Quebec have mainly Inuit populations.



Charting the ethnic distribution in Mexico is slightly more difficult because Mexico does not officially gather ethnic data in its census. The Mexican Constitution officially endorses ***multiculturalism*** and recognizes the three main people groups—Mestizos, indigenous peoples, and Europeans—but numerical data regarding actual percentages is difficult to find. A government-commissioned study in 2009 found that up to 80% of the population is Mestizo, and that among Mestizos, Native American influence was greater in the south, while European background was stronger in the north. The latter finding has been confirmed by multiple surveys, but the 80% figure is disputable—many ***ethnographers*** cite numbers closer to 60%. Of the remaining population, most identify with indigenous people groups, while around 10% are purely European, mostly Spanish. In certain places, Irish, German, and Italian immigrants constitute significant minorities.

The ethnic makeup of the Caribbean islands is a mixed bag, a hodgepodge of lineages, influences, and races that have both mixed and remained relatively isolated over time. In Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and several smaller islands, Spanish influence is strong, and most residents have both European and indigenous roots. In Jamaica, Haiti, and islands like St. Kitts & Nevis and Martinique, slaves imported during the colonial era and their descendants gradually exerted dominance, and today Africans comprise large majorities. Many Caribbean Islanders are descended from both African and indigenous peoples, and modern culture reflects aspects of both. Puerto Rico, a U.S. territory, is perhaps the only major Caribbean island with a white majority: over 80% of the population was white during the 2000 census, capping steady growth through the 19th and 20th centuries.

Life Principle

You can't hold a man down without staying down with him.



- Booker T. Washington

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World Geography

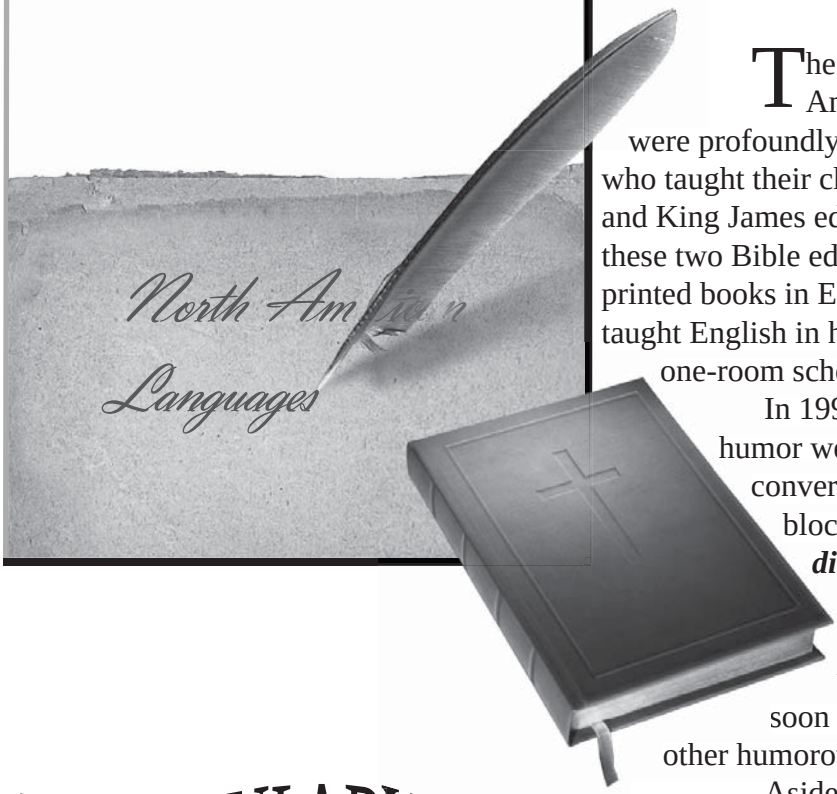
Chapter 1



Lesson 8
Languages

Section 2
Lessons 6-10





The early colonists who settled America (called New England) were profoundly English-speaking Christians who taught their children to read from the Geneva and King James editions of the Bible. Because these two Bible editions were the more popular printed books in Europe, the colonists naturally taught English in homes, churches, colleges, and one-room schools.

In 1998, an entertainment and humor website launched a feature that converts any website or user-entered block of text to eight different ***dialects***, ranging from humorous "redneck" to "Swedish chef." The novelty and success of the feature was quickly copied, and soon other websites began offering other humorous translations.

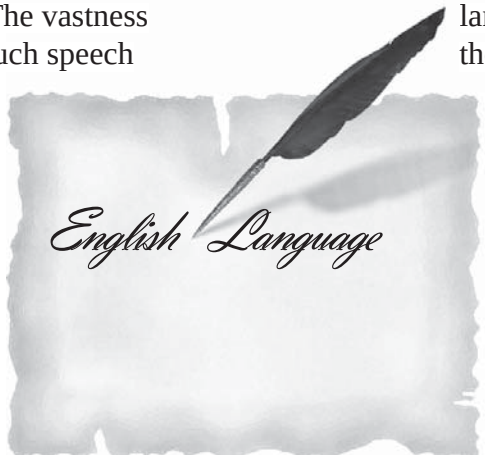
Aside from its humor and innovation in offering tongue-in-cheek critiques of regional speech patterns, the feature worked because of the widespread use of English throughout North America. Birthed in Europe from its Latin roots and imported to America during colonization, the English language pervades North America, but local dialects exist with distinctive speech patterns. While North Americans in Alabama, Minnesota, Quebec, and the Yukon may all technically speak English, a foreigner visiting America may have a difficult time understanding them because regions have developed distinct pronunciations and even vocabularies. It is why Americans often speak of Texans as having a "drawl," New Yorkers having a Yankee accent, and Canadians frequently

VOCABULARY

Dialect: localized or regional speech variant characterized by vocabulary or pronunciation
Francophone: French-speaking, usually natively
Manifest destiny: early American belief that the United States was destined to expand from the Atlantic to the Pacific
Aboriginal: native; indigenous

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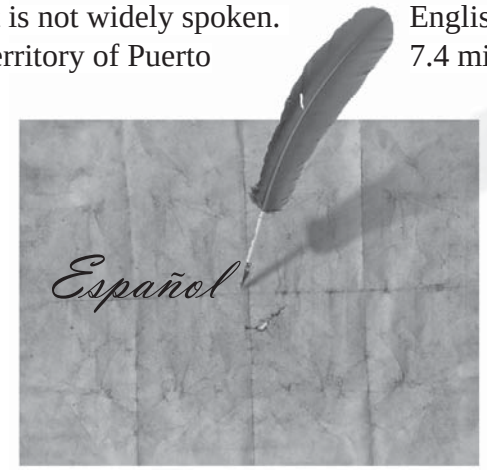
ending sentences with "eh." The vastness of the continent has allowed such speech distinctions.



Throughout North America, English is spoken fluently by approximately 315 million people, or nearly two-thirds of the continent's population. Prevalent primarily in the United States and Canada, the former which is the continent's most populous country, English's dominance owes to European colonization. Recent studies have indicated that in the U.S., 98% of the population speak English well, with 82% speaking it natively. In Canada, slightly different survey questions reveal that 20.6 million people, or 67% of the country, speak English at home predominantly, while a small percentage speak it secondarily or non-natively. Further south, English rates are considerably lower, a trend that reflects the Spanish settlement towards and in Latin America. In Mexico, only about 5%, or 5 million people, speak English. The Caribbean islands have widely disparate prevalences of English. In Barbados, it is spoken by 99% of the nation's 279,000 people, and in Jamaica nearly 98% speak it, while in Cuba it is not widely spoken. Even in the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico, only about 48% of the population is English-speaking, nearly all as a second language.

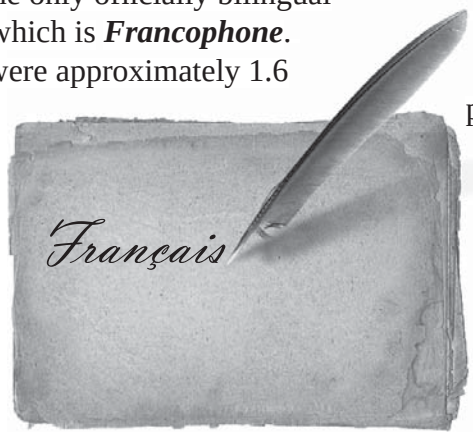
Next to English, Spanish is the most widely spoken language, and together the two languages account for nearly the entire continental population. About 200 million people speak Spanish natively and secondarily, 108 million of whom live in Mexico. The United States adds another 49 million to this figure, most of whom are Latin American immigrants who speak it natively. In Cuba, 99.4% of the country's 11.1 million people speak Spanish, and 99% of Puerto Rico speaks Spanish. Other countries with significant Spanish-speaking populations include the Dominican Republic, with 10 million; Haiti, with 7 million; and Canada, with 1 million.

Other languages exist locally throughout North America, although none in extremely significant numbers. In Canada, the vast majority of the population is English-speaking, with some provinces like Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador registering native English percentages in the high 90s. Quebec, however, is an island on the continent, a French enclave in an English-speaking sea. Of the province's 7.4 million people, 82% primarily speak French in the home, while only about 11% speak English. Quebec is Canada's second most populous province and is home to major metropolitan centers Montreal and Quebec City, both within close proximity to the United States. Next to Quebec, the largest French-speaking province in Canada is



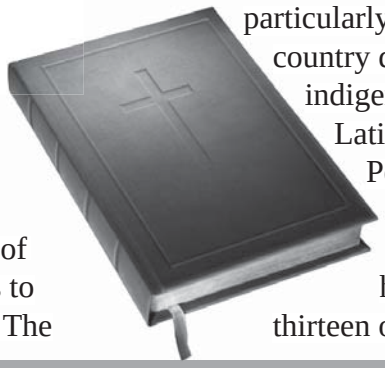
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New Brunswick, the only officially bilingual province, 30% of which is ***Francophone***. In the U.S., there were approximately 1.6 million French speakers as of the 2000 census, many of whom live in Louisiana and far northern New England.



Chinese is a small but growing language throughout North America, constituting over 2 million native speakers in the U.S. and 2.6 million in Canada. The language is most pronounced on the Pacific coast, especially in major cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Vancouver. Vietnamese and the Filipino Tagalog language have small percentages in the U.S. German boasts a few million speakers, mostly in the U.S. and Mexico. Behind these, a small but varied assortment of languages exists throughout the continent, such as Italian, Russian, Arabic, Portuguese, and Japanese.

Some of the diminished languages on the North American linguistic landscape since the era of European colonization have been Native American tongues. The era of European colonization saw the rapid spread of European languages—English in the north and Spanish in the south—across the continent, and, with the spread, tribal languages were consequently contained and lost. Particularly after the U.S. Revolutionary War, Western expansion and pioneering furthered this decline, and some historians estimate that of the 176 languages indigenous to the U.S., 52 are now extinct. The trend was echoed in Canada and Mexico: researchers estimate that in Mexico in 1820, 60% of the population spoke an indigenous language. By 1889, the figure had dropped to 38%, and by 2000, it had fallen to just 6%. Through European colonization and the idea of ***manifest destiny***, the knowledge of the English language became a necessary tool of survival among the indigenous American population.



Today, however, some native languages are finding new life. Some tribes, such as the Comanche and Arapaho in the western United States, have established schools to educate the next generations in their native tongues. Interestingly, the first book published in a native American language was *Upbiblum*, a collection of Psalms and Bible passages published in 1663. Although many of these Native American languages have been dying out, the Navajo tongue found an earlier rebirth, as well as a place in U.S. history, due to its use in World War II. The 2002 movie *Windtalkers* depicts how the U.S. Marines used the Navajo language as code to communicate throughout World War II so as not to inform their enemies of their plans and locations.

Nevertheless, some native tongues still flourish throughout North America, particularly in Mexico. Although the country does not display the level of indigenous diversity exhibited by Latin American countries like Peru or Guatemala, languages such as Nahuatl and Yucatec Maya boast numbers in the hundreds of thousands, as do thirteen other Mexican tongues. Some

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native languages, however, are in danger of extinction: the ***aboriginal*** Kiliwa people in Baja California, for instance, number around 1,000 individuals, and, officially, only 55 of these speak the indigenous Kiliwa language.

Language Distribution in Canada

Province/Territory	English %	French %	Other Lang. %	Official Language
Ontario	81.4%	2.5%	16.1%	French
Quebec	10.6%	81.8%	7.6%	French
British Columbia	83.0%	0.5%	16.6%	none
Alberta	89.5%	0.7%	9.8%	none
Manitoba	88.0%	1.8%	10.1%	French
Saskatchewan	94.4%	0.5%	5.2%	none
Nova Scotia	96.2%	1.9%	1.9%	none
New Brunswick	69.0%	29.7%	1.2%	English, French
Newfoundland and Labrador	98.9%	0.1%	1.0%	none
Prince Edward Island	97.1%	2.1%	0.9%	none
Northwest Territories	89.9%	1.1%	9.0%	English, French, Other
Yukon	94.8%	1.9%	3.3%	English, French
Nunavut	44.7%	0.8%	54.5%	Inuktituk, English, French, Inuinnaqtun

Life Principle

Things don't turn up in this world until somebody turns them up.

- James A. Garfield

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World Geography

Chapter 1



Lesson 9
Religions

Section 2
Lessons 6-10





"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

Opening the second paragraph of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, this revolutionary statement laid the foundation for the American nation and turned prevailing notions of human rights on their heads. Called by some researchers "one of the best-known sentences in the English language" and "the most potent and consequential words in American history," the declaration influenced the U.S. Constitution and undergirded major social movements throughout American history, including the civil rights pushes in the 20th century. Just as significantly, it wrote a religious paradigm into one of the nation's founding documents, acknowledging a Creator and asserting that man's rights come from Him. Together with text from the first paragraph, which references "Nature's God," the words assume a divine basis for human rights over a humanistic one, a conviction that would shape public policy, promote education, and build hospitals throughout the United States.


IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.
A DECLARATION
BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.
JOHN HANCOCK, PRESIDENT.

U.S. Declaration of Independence

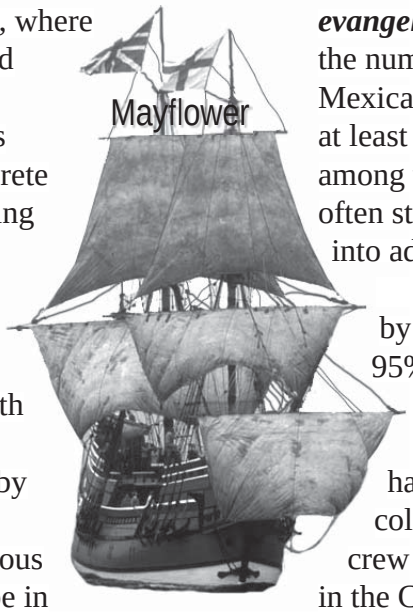
As audacious as they may be, the words were not foreign to colonial Americans, whose government and

VOCABULARY

Separatist: person who breaks away from a group
Evangelical: Protestant Christian who believes in the centrality of Jesus Christ and the Gospels
Bible Belt: swath of U.S. Southeast where conservative Protestantism is dominant
Voodoo: religion involving witchcraft and animistic deities
Animist: characterized by the belief that all natural objects have souls

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society was built largely around God and worship of and reverence for Him. Indeed, the earliest settlers in North America crossed the Atlantic from Europe primarily in search of religious freedom, something they were hard-pressed to find at home. The Puritan ***separatists*** who boarded the Mayflower in 1620 were religiously oppressed in England, where the Church of England dominated religious life. Church practices had experienced concrete but limited restructuring during the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. However, many Puritans disagreed with the Catholic ties and practices maintained by the church.


Mayflower

One of the curious trends across the globe in recent decades has been the decline of religious affiliation and involvement in public affairs. Generally, as nations and continents develop politically and economically, religion's place in daily life begins to fall. It is perhaps an odd trend, particularly because some world powers have historically maintained far-reaching and sweeping religious movements and changes. Islam, for instance, remains entrenched in Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, and Indonesia. The Protestant Reformation originated in Europe, the globe's dominant economic and military force from the Middle Ages to the 1800s. Nearly 400 years after the Mayflower's arrival, however, North America still retains an extremely high percentage of Christian affiliation. Compared with other developed continents, religion's importance in American daily life remains startlingly high. Recent U.S. polls have indicated that nearly 90% of the U.S. population believe in God, and 62% identify with specific churches. 42% attend religious services or activities weekly or more often, and large numbers identify as Christian ***evangelicals***. In less developed Mexico, the numbers are even higher: some 47% of Mexicans attend mostly Catholic churches at least weekly, although rates are higher among women and children than men, who often stop attending Mass after they pass into adolescence.

Across the continent, Christianity is by far the dominant religion, claiming 95% of Mexico, 78% of the United States, and 75% of Canada. The religion's history in North America has been diverse. During the European colonial period, Columbus and his crew were the first Christian settlers in the Caribbean, and in 1660 the Dutch Reformed community of New Netherland was among the first Protestant settlements in the Americas. Most of the continent's earliest explorers were Spanish and therefore Catholic, and notable settlements exist in Jacksonville and St. Augustine, Florida, where French Huguenots and Spanish Catholics populated in the early 1500s.

In the English colonies, Protestantism dominated the religious landscape, particularly in the north. Mennonites, Quakers, Lutherans, Episcopalians, and Congregationalists spread throughout the colonies. Anabaptists, the predecessors to modern Baptists, settled Rhode Island and Connecticut. Some of these early Protestant ministers were quite influential:

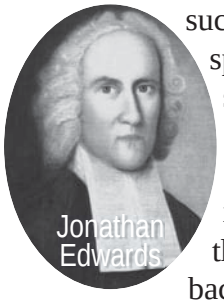

Roger Williams

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Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island Colony, advanced trademark Baptist ideas like the separation of church and state and the priesthood of the believer. Maryland, along with certain areas of Pennsylvania, quickly gained a reputation as a bastion of Catholicism, while some groups that advocated resistance to secular culture, such as the Amish and the Mennonites, flourished in Pennsylvania and Ohio. In Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Hampshire, state government and the church became entangled, with a religious tax collected to support various denominations financially. In Canada, Protestantism spread throughout Ontario and Quebec, as Presbyterians and Anglicans settled there.



During the Great Awakening in the late 18th century, fiery preachers, such as Jonathan Edwards, spearheaded a general spiritual revival across the American continent, while during the Enlightenment in the mid-19th century, the pendulum swung back towards a more secular society. Fluctuations continued through the 1800s and 1900s. Since World War II, society has grown increasingly secular, particularly during social upheavals in the 1960s and 1970s.



Currently, Christianity is generally most widespread in the U.S. south. However, the September 11, 2001 Islamic attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C. spurred Americans nationwide to greater interest in Christianity.

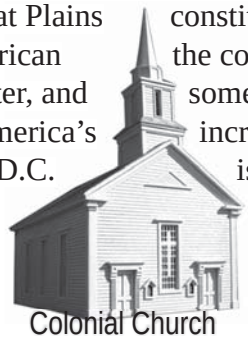
Canada is a considerably more secular society than the United States, which is, in turn, more secular than the developing nation of Mexico. The most prevalent denominations in Canada are Anglicanism, Presbyterianism, and Methodism. In the United States, approximately a quarter of the population is Roman Catholic, while just over half is Protestant. Christianity as a whole enjoys more acceptance in the ***Bible Belt***; Baptists are more prevalent in the southeast, while many Catholics live along the Mexican border. Non-denominational evangelical churches have increased in number since the 1980s.

Some fringe denominations also exist—Amish and Mennonites still live throughout portions of Pennsylvania and Ohio, shunning technology and modern conveniences. Throughout Pennsylvania, horses and buggies are still used by bearded Amish men whose appearance identifies with earlier American settlers. These separated societies cultivate the land as farmers and ranchers without the use of modern mechanized tools, and some do not even use electricity. In some places, Amish men have recently begun using cell phones for business transactions, but these are few and far between. In


Amish Buggy

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Utah, Mormonism reigns. The Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City is among the continent's most impressive church buildings. Lutherans and Methodists are most prominent in the upper Great Plains and Minnesota. Traditional American holidays, such as Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving are all based on America's Christian heritage. Washington, D.C. monuments and buildings are inscribed with Judeo-Christian symbols and quotations, such as the Ten Commandments and Psalms.


Colonial Church

Christianity's influence continues across North America. However, Islam has gained support in some urban areas despite its ties to dangerous and terroristic radicals. Jews constitute less than 2% of the population but have been an important force in society for centuries. In certain communities in the U.S. Northeast, public schools observe Jewish holidays. Hinduism, Buddhism, and other Eastern religions constitute small local minorities throughout the continent. In the Pacific Northwest, some American communities are increasingly atheistic or agnostic. Mexico is home to 25,000 Muslims, 45,000 Jews, and almost 110,000 Buddhists, most of whom live near Mexico City. In 2000, fewer than 3% of Mexicans reported no religious affiliation. In Caribbean islands like Haiti and Jamaica, and in southeastern U.S. cities like New Orleans, a small but vocal population practices ***voodoo***, which mixes ***animist*** religions with other traditions, especially during certain festivals.

Life Principle

Only those who want everything done for them are bored.

- Billy Graham

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World Geography

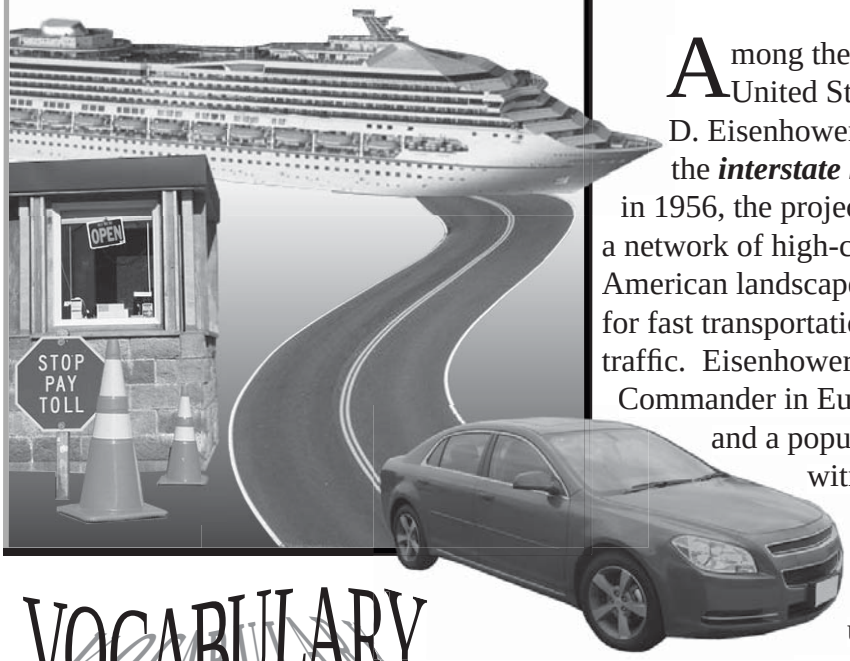
Chapter 1



Lesson 10
Transportation

Section 2
Lessons 6-10





Among the most lasting contributions the United States' 34th president, Dwight D. Eisenhower, made during his tenure was the ***interstate highway system***. Authorized in 1956, the project undertook the building of a network of high-capacity highways across the American landscape and among cities, designed for fast transportation and personal vehicle traffic. Eisenhower, the Allied forces' Supreme Commander in Europe during World War II and a popular figure at war's end, had witnessed the quality of European roads during the war and lamented America's lack of a similar network. The massive undertaking, whose initial completion took 35 years and $425 billion in 2006 U.S. dollars, linked major metropolises and rural towns alike, provided high-volume transportation routes through dense urban areas, and revolutionized both local and long-distance travel in America. More than fifty years after its authorization, the 47,000-mile system facilitates rapid shipping of goods and services, enables quick and easy travel over long distances, and in recent years has claimed about one-third of all vehicle miles traveled in the U.S.

The U.S.'s current interstate highway system is unique in both its high quality and logical design. Few other countries or continents have road networks equivalent to America's, whose upkeep is a major federal government expense each year. With the exception of certain tolled stretches that were preexisting or under construction at the time the interstates were built and were subsequently designated interstates, highways are funded mostly with

VOCABULARY

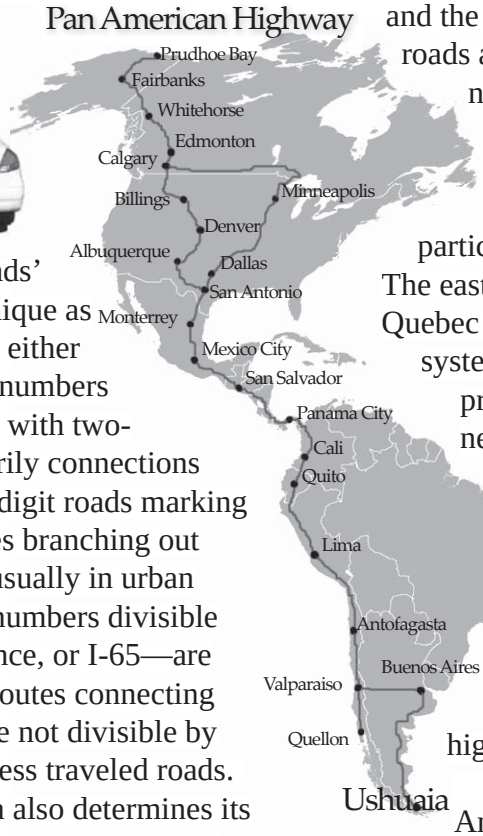
Interstate highway system: national network of freeways in the United States
Expressway: broad highway designed for high-speed traffic, usually without stoplights
Mass transit: public transportation
Light rail: mass transit option with speeds and capacities higher than streetcars but lower than subways or heavy rail
Urbanite: typically young, socially-conscious urban professional

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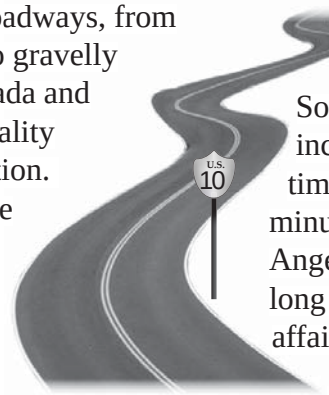
federal dollars. The roads' numbering system is unique as well: interstates receive either two-digit or three-digit numbers based on their function, with two-digit roads being primarily connections among cities and three-digit roads marking loops, spurs, or bypasses branching out from a two-digit road, usually in urban areas. Highways with numbers divisible by five—I-10, for instance, or I-65—are mostly higher-volume routes connecting major cities, while those not divisible by five are intended to be less traveled roads. A highway's orientation also determines its number, as east-west routes receive even numbers and north-south routes receive odd numbers. As urban sprawl has shaped cities and suburban areas have grown farther-flung, interstates have become increasingly traveled and complex, and in larger cities congestion is a major issue.

Important as interstates may be, they are only one building block in the framework of North American transportation. The United States boasts over 2 million miles of roadways, from high-capacity freeways to gravelly back roads, while in Canada and Mexico, road network quality and extent varies by location. Canada's equivalent to the U.S. interstate system is a collection of three highways: the Trans Canada, the Yellowhead, and the Crowsnest. Although these roads are the most traveled in the nation, their quality is slightly lower than U.S. freeways, and they function more as highways than ***expressways***, particularly in cities and towns. The eastern provinces of Ontario and Quebec have high-capacity freeway systems that have been chiefly province-funded, perhaps necessarily, given their higher and denser populations. In Mexico, a much smaller road system connects urban areas with rural villages and towns, spanning 200,000 miles of mostly unpaved roads and highway.



Connecting North and South America is the Pan-American Highway, a string of highways stretching from northern Alaska to the southern tip of Chile in South America. With the exception of a short gap in Panama, travelers can traverse the entire Americas from north to south by car through Canada, the U.S., Mexico, Central America, and the west coast of South America.

As traffic volumes in certain urban areas outstrip roads' carrying capacities, North Americans have begun looking for means of transportation other than personal automobiles. Some major metropolitan areas have increasingly long employment commute times—Washington, D.C.'s average is 46 minutes. Cities like Toronto, Montreal, Los Angeles, and Mexico City have similarly long commute times—and despite a love affair with personal vehicles, ***mass transit*** alternatives such as subway systems

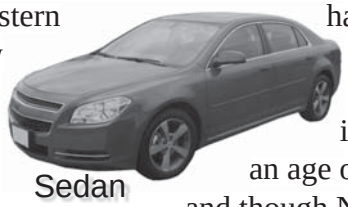


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and ***light rail*** are increasingly popular. North Americans use automobiles more exclusively than any region in the world, with recent studies indicating that 89% of U.S. and 76% of Canadian trips are made by personal vehicle. Public transit use in the United States accounts for just over 2% of trips, while walking takes another 6%; in Canada, public transit and walking each account for 10%. (The Netherlands, in contrast, sees only 45% of trips originate by automobile, with bicycle and walking accounting for 28% and 18%, respectively.) In spite of these realities, however, extensive and clean subway systems exist, particularly in Northeastern cities like Washington, D.C. and New York City. In the latter, and in various inner-city areas throughout North America, many residents do not own cars: in Manhattan, 78% of households lack a vehicle, and vehicle ownership in Brooklyn and the Bronx is below 50%. Residents in these places will cite many reasons for their rejection of automobile dependency: high maintenance costs, traffic congestion, quicker trips using mass transit, and high real estate prices that prohibit the construction of practical parking space.



Further west, cities like Dallas, San Francisco, and Vancouver have adopted light rail alternatives. This transportation form, which consists of mainly aboveground trains with lower human capacities than subway systems, requires separate tracks along with ridership levels heavy enough to offset its costs. Speeds are generally lower than those of subways or higher-capacity, intercity trains, but in busy downtown areas they can save time over driving. Dozens of cities in the U.S. and a handful in Canada and Mexico have implemented these systems, and dozens more are exploring them as transportation alternatives for the future. Even Caribbean nations, such as Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, are beginning to implement light rail systems. In a few cities, streetcar networks mix residents with tourists on whimsical, vintage cars and tracks. These networks often intersect or run side-by-side with roads, and some date to the late 19th century. San Francisco's streetcar system, which has operated continuously since 1873, is among the longest and busiest in the world.

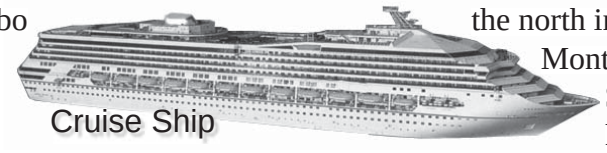


Lake, river, and sea transportation have historically served two purposes in North America. First, shipping is still a major industry in an age of international air travel, and though North America does not lay claim to the world's busiest ports, several handle considerable shipping traffic nonetheless. Ports use many different measures to determine traffic levels, so it is difficult to establish a single ranking of the busiest in the world. The Port of South Louisiana, however, which extends from Baton Rouge down the Mississippi River to New Orleans, is the Western Hemisphere's largest by volume, and, by some measures, the third-busiest in the world. The Port of Houston, as well as the Ports of Los Angeles, Long Beach, and New York & New Jersey handle considerable cargo volumes, though less than South Louisiana's, and ports at Vancouver, Canada and Savannah, Georgia are important locally.

In addition to their importance to global trade and commerce, water

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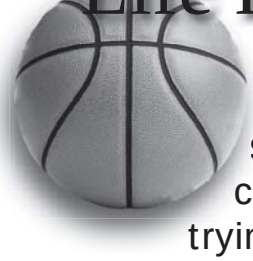
transportation is significant recreationally. River cruises and ferry rides are important facets of local tourism industries. In Puget Sound, Washington, ferries conduct visitors through breathtaking scenery between the U.S. and Canada, and in tropical vacation destinations like Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, bay tours service North American tourists from all across the continent. In the Caribbean, tourism constitutes huge percentages of national economies, and cruise lines bring tourists from various destinations on scenic island tours. In some cities, such as Chicago, Seattle, and Louisville, commuters use ferries and water taxis merely as a means of transportation rather than a recreational activity, but this is a limited trend.


Cruise Ship

As environmental concerns mount over the effect traffic congestion and carbon emissions are having on ecosystems and human health, many urban dwellers are forgoing powered transportation entirely for more traditional forms. Though conclusions over global warming are still fiercely debated, some residents of more progressive cities and ***urbanites*** have opted for bicycles and walking over cars and buses. Residents such as these often live in inner-city areas or in communities shaped by New Urbanism, an urban planning theory that advocates walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods. The movement is growing as gasoline prices continue to climb and cities expand. Many neighborhoods utilize environmentally friendly building patterns, and intentionally incorporate undeveloped land. The trend is most pronounced in the north in cities like Toronto, Montreal, Denver, and Seattle.

For long-distance and international travel, aircraft remain a popular option. Although air travel has dipped in recent years in the wake of a global recession and higher fuel prices, the United States still claims half of the world's ten busiest airports. Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport handled 90 million passengers in 2008, over 20 million more than second-place O'Hare International in Chicago. Los Angeles, Dallas, and Denver all have large international airports that serve as hubs for major airlines, and airports in Phoenix, New York City, and Houston rank in the twenty busiest worldwide. Since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, airport security has increased, and many Americans abandoned the skies for the highways for several years in the early 2000s. Air travel is extensive among tourists and business executives throughout Central and South America. Travelers can board a 747 in New York City and land nonstop in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Life Principle



I can accept failure; everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying. - **Michael Jordan**

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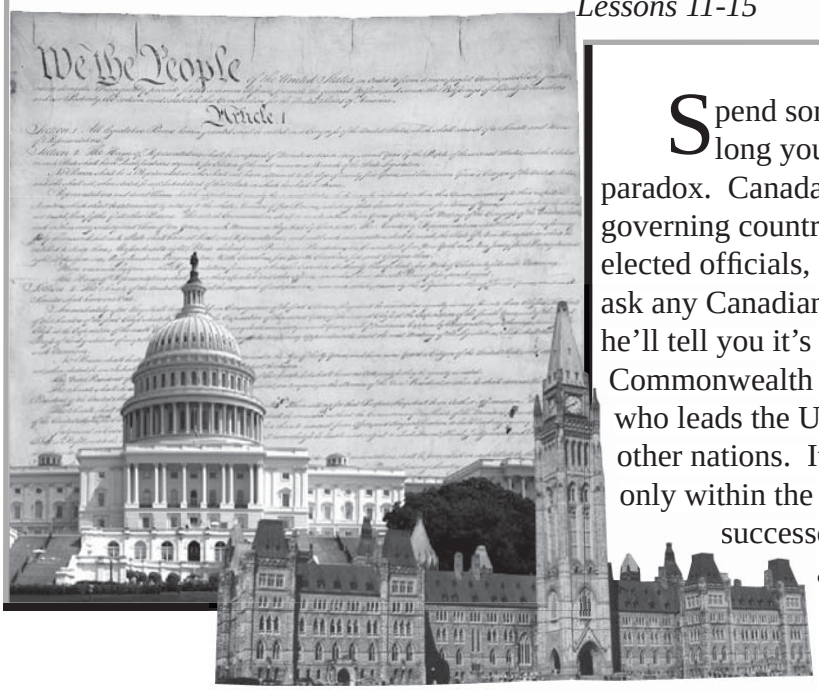
World Geography

Chapter 1

Lesson 11
Forms of Government

Section 3
Lessons 11-15

Forms of Government of North America



Spend some time in Canada, and before long you'll be hit with an interesting paradox. Canada is a sovereign nation, a self-governing country with its own constitution, elected officials, and governmental structure. Yet, ask any Canadian who the head of state is, and he'll tell you it's Queen Elizabeth II, ruler of the Commonwealth of Nations, the same monarch who leads the United Kingdom and fourteen other nations. It is a curious reality shared only within the Commonwealth of Nations, the successor to the British Commonwealth and the last surviving vestige of the British Empire, on which it was once said the sun never set. Although most know her as the Queen of the United Kingdom, in Canada, Elizabeth's official title is Queen of Canada, and despite her limited political power, she is a revered and cherished queen.

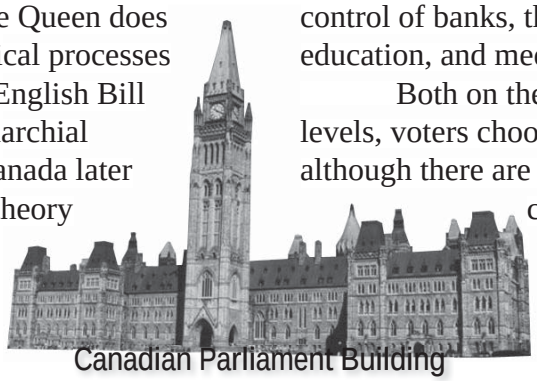
Political power in Canada is vested in a prime minister and a bicameral legislature, which together form a government called a constitutional monarchy. The system is similar to many European governments and indeed mirrors others within the British Commonwealth. In reality, the interplay between the head of state—the reigning monarch, currently Queen Elizabeth—and the head of government, or prime minister, is complex and intricate, and subtleties and nuances color the inner workings of Canada's highest levels. In practice, the prime minister is appointed by the Governor General, the Queen's representative while she is away, but requires approval of the House of Commons, the legislature's lower house. The prime minister may reign indefinitely, and can either resign or be removed by the Governor

VOCABULARY

Residual power: power not explicitly given to any level of government
Representative democracy: system of government in which citizens elect representatives to manage government
Direct democracy: system of government in which power is exercised directly by citizens
Suffrage: the right to vote
Dependency: nation governed by and subject to another nation

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General. Generally, the Queen does not interfere with political processes or work. In 1689, the English Bill of Rights checked monarchial authority, a measure Canada later adopted—although in theory she holds broad, sweeping power. Devices such as royal assent, in which the monarch essentially signs off on the prime minister's policies, are of considerable importance, and the sovereign retains status as commander-in-chief of the military. Internally, Canada acts as a federation, with power split between the national and provincial governments. ***Residual power***, in contrast to the United States and many other federations, rests with the federal government in theory. In practice more issues are delegated to the provinces than resolved on the national level. The Supreme Court acts similarly to supreme courts in other nations and hears only appeals cases. Political parties do exist.


Canadian Parliament Building

Like Canada, the United States is a federation, the world's oldest surviving one. As a constitutional republic, most U.S. political officials are chosen democratically, and the federal government shares power with state governments. According to the U.S. Constitution, residual power resides with the states, although in many arenas the national government's power is growing at the expense of state authority. The election of Barack Obama ushered in an unprecedented effort to expand the power and scope of the U.S. federal government. Within six months of his election, Obama exercised control of banks, the auto industry, education, and medical care.


U. S. Capitol Building

Both on the local and national levels, voters choose their elected officials, although there are several exceptions. U.S. citizens living in overseas territories do not vote (although military service members overseas may vote in their home state by absentee ballot). Washington, D.C. similarly has no representation in Congress, a condition that many Washingtonians feel is equivalent to taxation without representation. Until the passage of the twenty-third constitutional amendment in 1961, Washington, D.C. residents did not vote in presidential elections.

The U.S. federal government is comprised of three branches that exercise checks and balances over one another to keep any branch from growing too powerful. The executive branch is headed by the president; it also involves the vice president and the presidential cabinet, a group of appointed advisers and other heads of various government agencies and bureaus. The president proposes some legislation, enforces laws and statutes, authorizes military action (short of declarations of war), vetoes legislation, and nominates a handful of appointed officials and court justices (who must be confirmed by the Senate).

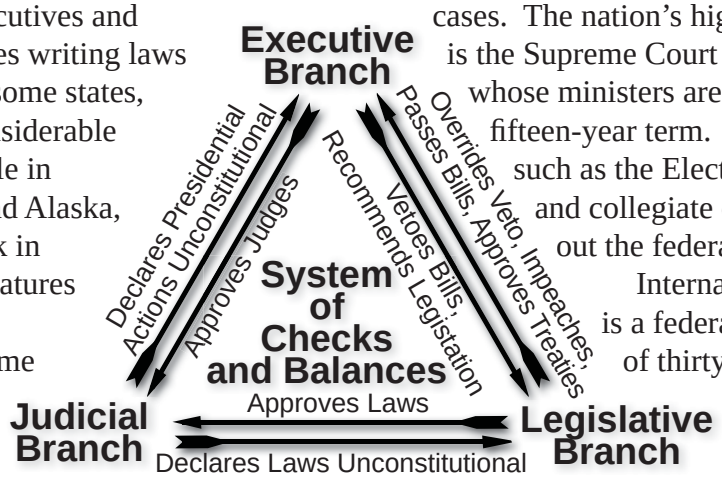
The legislative branch, or Congress, drafts and votes on legislation, ratifies treaties, declares war, and can impeach members of government. Congress is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

The judicial branch interprets laws, hears court cases to determine their constitutionality,

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and invalidates those laws it finds unconstitutional. The judicial branch includes the Supreme Court, the nation's highest, and a chain of federal circuit and appeals courts throughout the country. Many judges and justices are appointed by the president for life terms.

Locally, government within the United States varies. All states have governmental structures that mirror the national government's system of checks and balances to some extent, with governors serving as chief executives and bicameral legislatures writing laws on a state level. In some states, governors wield considerable political power, while in others, like Texas and Alaska, the governor is weak in comparison to legislatures and other executive branch officials. Some states provide for the executive appointment of judges and state supreme court justices, while in others they are popularly elected.



Although the vast majority of U.S. locales, including the federal government, act as ***representative democracies***, in some Midwestern and New England towns ***direct democracy*** is the rule. Within individual cities and towns, the chief official is typically the mayor, who is popularly elected and sets the city's agenda and direction along with other civic responsibilities.

In Mexico, the governmental framework is similar to that of its northern neighbors. Three branches identical to the United States' make up the national government, which heads a loosely structured federation. The president is both head of state and head of government and performs many of the same duties as does the U.S. president, including commanding the armed forces, vetoing legislation, and nominating a cabinet and other officials. Mexico has a bicameral Congress of the Union, whose upper house is the Senate and lower is the Chamber of Deputies. Together these two bodies levy taxes, declare war, ratify treaties, and draft legislation. Congress also approves presidential appointees to the judiciary, which interprets laws and hears court cases. The nation's highest court is the Supreme Court of Justice, whose ministers are elected to one fifteen-year term. Lower courts, such as the Electoral Tribunal and collegiate courts, round out the federal judiciary.

Internally, Mexico is a federation made up of thirty-one states. The states are required to have a congressional system and to elect a governor as chief executive, and several other stipulations are placed on state governments, including a requirement not to have a provision for gubernatorial reelection. Unlike many federal systems, however, Mexican states are sovereign and largely independent, and the national government remains wholly separated from internal state affairs. Although states cannot make treaties with foreign governments and, typically, cannot declare war, Mexican law provides for a state to declare war if the Congress of the Union does not act in time to a threat against the state.

Political parties exist in Mexico in greater numbers than in Canada or the

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United States. As of 2009, there were three main parties, although eight had representation in Congress. ***Suffrage*** is universal and officially compulsory, but this is not enforced. Although crime, political corruption, and trafficking in drugs and humans have emerged as major problems in recent years, Mexico has been stabilizing politically since the mid-1900s. Changes and overhauls in the 1980s and 1990s loosened the dominant party's grip on power, and now most nations view the Mexican political process as relatively free and open.

Elsewhere in North America, the political climate is not so sunny. In Cuba, President Raúl Castro heads the Western Hemisphere's only totalitarian regime, a repressive communist government that prohibits religious, economic, and political freedom. Officially, the Communist Party of Cuba is the sole political movement and retains full control of all governmental functions and offices, and the party controls many non-governmental industries as well. Cuban media is operated by an arm of the government, and widespread propaganda development and distribution occurs. Human rights abuses have also been cited as being widespread in Cuba, and the government is often portrayed as oppressive and totalitarian. Currently, Cuba has growing political ties with Iran, China, Russia, and several Latin American countries, but the U.S. and El Salvador have cut off trade due to Cuba's human rights violations and communistic policies.


Mexico City Capitol Building

The current political landscape owes to the dramatic restructuring of the Cuban government following the Cuban Revolution in the late 1950s, which overthrew the Batista government. Aspiring young communist Fidel Castro came to power, first as prime minister from 1959 to 1976, and subsequently as president until his retirement in 2008. In the 1960s, Castro led the conversion of Cuba into a communist republic, and Soviet entanglement during the Cold War led to several tense standoffs with the United States, including the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. Since the Soviet Union's collapse, Cuba's government has faced increased scrutiny, but the country gives no indication of adopting freer, more democratic attitudes in the near future.

Other North American nations have different forms of government. Between the late 1800s and 1950s, Mexico and most of Central America were disrupted by military coups that resulted in one dictator replacing another dictator. In the Danish ***dependency*** of Greenland, a high commissioner appointed by the Queen of Denmark holds executive authority, with a self-sufficient parliament serving as a legislature. In Haiti and many other Caribbean nations, a prime minister heads each government while a president serves as head of state. Queen Elizabeth reigns as monarch over parliamentary republic Jamaica, while Puerto Rico is one of several U.S. dependencies and exercises some self-governance.

Life Principle

The riskiest thing you can do is get greedy. **- Lance Armstrong**



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World Geography

Chapter 1

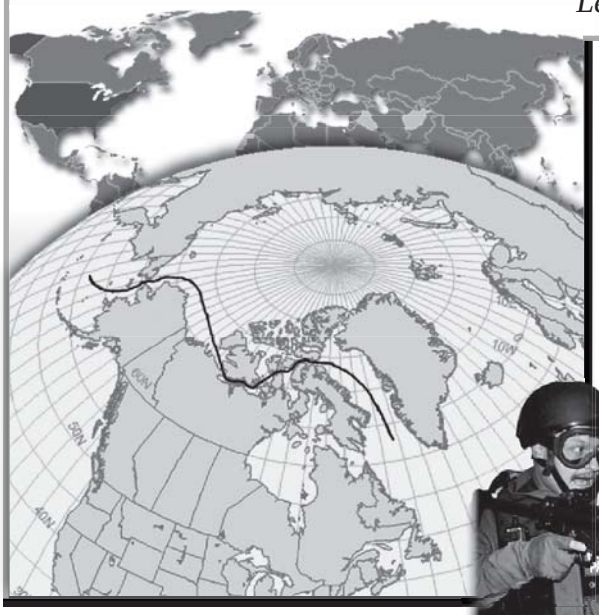


Lesson 12
Diplomatic Relations

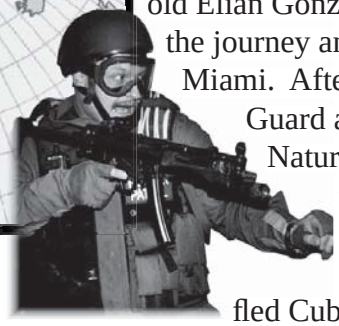
Section 3
Lessons 11-15



Diplomatic Relations of North America



In late 1999, two fishermen off the coast of Florida discovered three people floating in an inner tube in Atlantic waters just north of Miami. The individuals were alive, the last surviving members of an ill-fated escape attempt from Cuba that had begun with fourteen people. The youngest of the survivors was six-year-old Elián González, whose mother had died on the journey and who had relatives living in Miami. After being turned over to the Coast Guard and then to the Immigration and Naturalization Service, Elián was temporarily released to a great-uncle, who had been notified that Elián and his mother had fled Cuba for the United States. Soon afterwards, however, Elián's uncle claimed that the boy should remain in the U.S., despite his father's insistence Elián be returned to Cuba. The resulting debate quickly escalated to become a major news item in early 2000, and both Cuban and American governments joined an ever-growing chorus of public opinion.



In March and April, two federal court rulings essentially declared that Elián should be sent back to Cuba, and Attorney General Janet Reno set an April 13 deadline, but Elián's Cuban-American relatives defied the order. For several days, police surrounded the boy's house amidst widespread Miami protests, and finally Reno ordered Elián's forcible removal. In the early morning on April 22, eight Border Patrol agents equipped as SWAT members entered the house and seized Elián, fending off rocks and bottles thrown by protesters. In the heart of Miami's Cuban-American district, businesses closed, riots ensued,

VOCABULARY

Embargo: stoppage of trade or commerce between nations
Immigration: to come into a foreign country or region to live
Humanitarian: pertaining to human welfare or social reform
Ally: united or friendly nation

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and police were dispatched to quell the violence. Despite polls that indicated many Americans supported Elián's return to Cuba, tensions were slow to cool and a photograph taken at the seizure depicting a machine-gun-wielding Border Patrol agent next to a terrified Elián was plastered across news headlines for weeks.



The affair illustrated the sensitive relations between Cuba and the United States. Indeed, foreign relations between Cuba and the United States have been strained since the Cuban Revolution in 1959, which overthrew President Batista and installed communist Fidel Castro. Communism stands at odds with U.S., and most other, economic doctrines, and as Cuba is ruled by communists, the United States has placed ***embargoes*** on Cuban goods and dramatically reduced ties with the nation. Legislation passed in 1996 sought to place sanctions on companies with operations in Cuba. The U.S. position is shared by several other nations, including Costa Rica, and argues that Cuba must improve its record on freedom and human rights before diplomatic contact can resume.

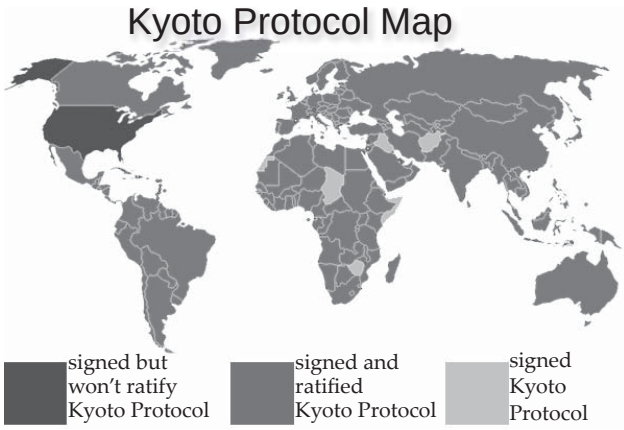
Despite the chinks in Cuba's diplomatic relations, however, the Caribbean's largest island enjoys warm relations with partners throughout North America and worldwide. Canada officially recognizes Cuba and conducts trade, and many Canadians frequent the island as a popular vacation destination. Throughout Latin America, Cuba enjoys a boisterous economic and political relationship, particularly in Venezuela where controversial Marxist Hugo Chávez is president. Despite less than favorable opinions of Chávez in many western nations, Venezuela is among Cuba's main suppliers of oil, and the two nations have signed pacts promoting cooperation all across the economic spectrum. Elsewhere, Cuban relations are mixed. China, Russia, and Iran have emerged among Cuba's most significant supporters, while the European Union has only reluctantly agreed to repeal trade sanctions against Cuba.

Cuba is perhaps North America's most troubled nation on the foreign policy front. Throughout most of the continent, diplomacy is spirited and cordial, and North American nations have some of the world's best foreign relations. In Mexico, an increasingly stable government has led to positive relations nearly worldwide. In the Americas, Mexico is an integral partner of many nations, including Brazil, Argentina, and Colombia. Recent meetings among heads of government have resulted in agreements regarding trade, education, drug trafficking, and political cooperation. Friendship is budding in other nations, as well. Canada and the United States remain close partners of Mexico, the latter among its closest, particularly since the adoption of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994 eliminated tariffs and other barriers to trade. The United States has been one of Mexico's most active allies and supporters, although issues of unchecked illegal ***immigration*** and the trafficking of Mexican drugs across U.S. borders have hampered relations in recent years. Mexican drug cartels continue to

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commit kidnapping, smuggling, and murder in both Mexico and the U.S.

In the United States, foreign relations and policy remains a hot-button issue in the wake of a Bush administration that went to war against Islamic terrorists in Afghanistan and Iraq, and an Obama administration seemingly unsure of what to do militarily. Although pundits from both the political left and right argue the merits of the U.S.'s foreign policy, the U.S. has historically exercised a strong presence abroad, utilizing its military technology and commerce as diplomacy. America's historic support of free enterprise and opposition to totalitarian rulers while supporting Israel has strained international relations with Arab and socialistic nations. Some question America's attempts to curtail nuclear proliferation while it possesses the world's largest nuclear defense arsenal. Others criticize the U.S.'s rejection of overwhelmingly popular international environmental agreements, such as the Kyoto Protocol (although defenders rightly point out that ratifying them would cede U.S. sovereignty to the United Nations). Defenders, conversely, point to the enormous sums of ***humanitarian*** aid the U.S. provides liberally around the world, along with data suggesting that in areas in which the U.S. imports democracy, such as Iraq, its actions are usually popular among the citizenries. Supporters often cite the U.S.'s history of defending democracy against efforts by totalitarian regimes to enslave or destroy people.



U.S. diplomatic relations are largely positive, however, and as of 2009 lacked formal ties with only five countries: Cuba, Iran, Bhutan, North Korea, and Taiwan. (Taiwan is a breakaway section of China, but is still claimed by China, so the U.S. does not recognize Taiwan as a country.) More than three-quarters of Canada's trade is with the U.S., and the U.S. invests heavily in its northern neighbor as well. In Europe, the U.S. and the U.K. both refer to their relationship as the "special relationship," an affectionate term that underlies more than half a trillion dollars of investment each year. Both nations cooperate in matters of military planning, intelligence, economics, and human rights. The relationship is perhaps the closest of any two free nations in the world. Relations with Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, and other nations have been particularly enhanced since the Soviet Union's collapse in 1989, when the Berlin Wall was broken down due to political pressure from U.S. President Ronald Reagan and public resistance to communism throughout Eastern Europe.

Today, Eastern European nations like Ukraine and Romania are among America's closest partners on the continent. Turkey is an important U.S. ***ally*** on the edge of the Middle East. Following the deposition of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, Iraq has become a key ally in the war against Islamic jihadists associated

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with terrorists Osama bin Laden and Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. In Africa and Latin America, relations are positive and upbeat. The biggest current diplomatic snags are perhaps Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's Marxist politics and hostile rhetoric, and Islam's hostility to Jews and Christians worldwide. The September 11, 2001 Islamic attacks on New York City escalated worldwide conflict between radical Islam and nations founded on Judeo-Christian principles. The Obama administration has involved the U.S. heavily in China by borrowing billions of dollars from the communist Chinese government to fund U.S. economic programs. China, thus, has unprecedented influence over U.S. foreign and economic policy.



In Canada, relations center around the U.S. and the U.K., the nation's most important trading partners. Canada and the U.S. share the world's longest border with a single country, 5,525 miles including the Alaskan border. The border is the longest demilitarized border in the world and symbolizes the importance the two nations have with each other. Although the nations occasionally have minor disputes—several pieces of land on the Canadian–American border are claimed by both nations, and the status of the Northwest Passage as territorial waters of Canada is a recurring issue for the nation—this is not the norm. Canada is well liked in Europe and throughout Latin America, where it has marginal, but cordial, political relationships, and in recent years it has emerged as a leader in international organizations like the United Nations. Canada has taken active roles in promoting global peacekeeping, and its support for banning landmines has garnered global attention and praise. Canada recognizes and has extensive dealings with communistic countries, such as China and Cuba.

Elsewhere in North America, diplomatic relations vary but are generally pleasant. Greenland's tiny population deals diplomatically through the lens of the Danish government, while Caribbean nations like Jamaica and the Dominican Republic have significant dealings with the United States. Jamaica enjoys close ties with the U.K. and much of Europe while maintaining friendly western relations as well. Haiti and Taiwan conduct commercial trade. The United States is another important trade partner of Haiti. Antigua and Barbuda attract recreational tourists from the United States and Canada. Many Caribbean nations enjoy closer ties with Central and South America than with, for instance, Canada and Mexico, largely due to their closer proximity.

Life Principle

A good End cannot sanctify evil Means; nor must we ever do Evil, that good may come of it.

- William Penn

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World Geography

Chapter 1



Lesson 13
Economic Systems

Section 3
Lessons 11-15

Economic Systems of North America



You have probably wondered how the U.S. stacks up in a global economic comparison. Here are a few statistics to consider. As of 2008, the U.S.:

- ranked 1st worldwide with a gross domestic product (GDP) of $14.4 trillion, nearly three times that of 2nd-place Japan and 724 times that of 100th-place Bahrain.
- ranked 1st in GDP by purchasing power parity (PPP), nearly twice that of 2nd-place China and 451 times that of 100th-place Jordan.
- had a GDP per capita of $47,422, 360% higher than the world average.
- spent $3,400 per person per year on food and beverages, nearly three times the annual income of half the world's population.
- spent more on defense annually than the GDPs of all but 17 other countries.
- had higher economic productivity in its least productive state, Vermont, than the GDPs of most nations.

VOCABULARY

Laissez-faire: policy of governmental non-interference in economic system; hands-off
Antitrust: pertaining to monopolies or anti-competitive practices
Excise tax: tax on certain luxury items or undesirable goods
Remittance: transfer of money from a foreign worker to his home country

The U.S. has historically been home to more of the world's richest people than any other nation; it has among the highest standards of living of any country; it ranks in the top ten in adults with post-secondary educational degrees. These figures owe to the country's Judeo-Christian foundation, work ethic, aggressive pursuance of economic prosperity and capitalistic principles that have guided the nation since its inception.



Most North American countries utilize mixed economies, but the degree of

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economic freedom, government influence through monetary policy and regulation, private sector contribution, and other elements varies considerably. The United States is like Canada and Mexico in its mixed economy, with strongly capitalistic foundations tempered by some degree of social programs and policies. The private sector runs most industries, handling everything from communications to automobile production, from agriculture to software. The United States government has historically adopted an economic policy called ***laissez-faire*** economics, letting market forces determine employment levels, goods production, wages and salaries, and other economic variables.


U.S. Bills

Major industries marginally or indirectly connected with national security, such as energy, telecommunications, and defense contracting, are left in private hands. In 2009, the federal government initiated control over industries such as banking, auto insurance, and medical care. Otherwise, citizens are largely free to own and operate any business of their choosing, distributing any goods or services and establishing their own wages.



Canadian Bills

Local, state, and federal government agencies regulate and oversee certain industries to maintain equity in the free market system. Monopolies are illegal, and the government enforces ***antitrust*** laws when companies engage in anti-competitive practices or when large firms attempt to merge in an effort to control prices. In some cases, government agencies can block certain firms' actions, and if a proposed merger or acquisition appears to threaten consumer choice, government can prohibit the action. In the financial sector, the federal government sets many interest rates and oversees business operations and transactions, perhaps to a greater extent than in any other industry. ***Excise taxes*** on certain goods, such as tobacco and gasoline, provide funding for the services used by those who buy the products—such as healthcare and highway construction—and in recent years taxes on some of these have increased, in many cases to deter purchase of goods deemed undesirable, like cigarettes and alcohol.

The U.S. federal government has also instituted minimum wage laws, ostensibly to protect unskilled and the least educated workers, although the effects of minimum wage laws are debated. Employers believe that when businesses are required to pay unskilled workers higher wages, production quality drops and unemployment rises. In some industries, the government sets or caps prices and profits, ostensibly to protect consumers or ensure competition. In recent years, the federal government has increased its presence in the economic market by assisting struggling companies. During the recession of 2009, the Obama administration initiated control over corporations involved with auto manufacturing, banking, real estate, health insurance, and healthcare. Democratic party leaders called for taxpayer-funded, universal health coverage. A nationwide debate resulted, as proponents of limited

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federal government opposed intrusion of the federal government into America's historically free market economic system.

In Canada, some levels of commercial freedom meet or exceed those in the U.S. Most of Canada's industries and economic realms are not regulated. Private companies produce and distribute Canada's energy, mostly in the form of oil or natural gas, and free and prosperous communications, service, banking, and manufacturing industries abound throughout the country. Capitalistic principles guide the nation's agricultural sector, which is one of the most productive in the world, as well as services, which employ 75% of the workforce and accounts for the majority of GDP. Financially, the government keeps a close watch on banks and lending institutions, a position that has benefitted Canada's banking industry immensely in recent years. Particularly in the eastern metropolises, such as Montreal, Toronto, and Ottawa, foreign investors have responded to greater stability and profits in Canadian banks; Canada is benefitting as a result.

Nonetheless, government regulation does exist in various forms. The government's intrusion into certain sectors has magnified some of Canada's biggest problems. The health care industry has been largely nationalized; thus, quality of services, as well as massive funding hurdles, beleaguers Canada's federal government annually. In many cases, patients endure long waits for minor or routine medical procedures or operations. In light of the U.S.'s recent consideration of nationalized healthcare, many critics have pointed to the Canadian system fearfully. Canada's education is regionally high in quality, but is controlled by national and provincial governments. Growing expenditures have caused problems for Canadian officials seeking to pay for a costly and sometimes intrusive educational system. To recuperate excessive operational costs, the government levies taxes and heavily promotes the nation's energy industry abroad. Canada exports more energy than it imports—a rarity among developed countries. Minimum wage laws also exist in Canada, and in most places are comparable to wage laws in the United States.



Mexican Pesos

Mexico has the world's 11th largest economy. A mixed economic landscape prevails, although the federal government is considerably more involved in the marketplace than in either the U.S. or Canada. Mexico benefits from NAFTA and free trade with more nations than any country in the world. Mexico's primary industries have grown in recent years, some almost reaching profit levels in developed nations. A crisis in 1994 and 1995 plunged Mexico into unprecedented economic turmoil. More than half the population fell below the poverty line. Since then, however, Mexico has reasserted itself as an upper-level developing country, on the cusp of reaching developed status. Tourism and services have emerged as major industries; ***remittances***, mostly from the United States, doubled between 1997 and 2005, when they accounted for $18 billion.

Despite gradual liberalization, certain activities still remain either controlled or monitored by government agencies. Mexico administers its own energy resources, exploring and distributing its large oil resources and exporting huge

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amounts of energy throughout the Americas and the world. Some private enterprise takes place among energy firms, but it is highly regulated and heavily taxed: government-controlled Pemex, the largest Latin American company of any sort, pays over 60% of its profits to the Mexican government in taxes. In the banking industry, Mexico closely oversees private sector dealings. Its national bank fulfills many of the same responsibilities as in other countries, such as setting interest rates to encourage national economic stability. However, Mexico's currency, the peso, crashed in 1994, resulting in the widespread economic panic the following year. The country's central bank works to prevent similar crises from occurring in the future. Illegal drug trafficking and related crime across the U.S. border remains a major challenge to Mexico, and has reduced U.S. tourism levels in the country during recent years.

Elsewhere, nations have adopted differing economic systems. Greenland receives half of its funding each year from Denmark, its parent government. In Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and Jamaica, tourism is important to the nations' mixed but mostly capitalistic systems. Cuba is the Western Hemisphere's lone communistic country. The Cuban government controls nearly all resources and tools of production. Many workers, consequently, live in poverty, with the richest Cubans controlling vastly disproportionate amounts of wealth. The rest of the Caribbean retains mostly capitalistic economies, with varying degrees of government interference.



Life Principle

Before anything else, preparation is the key to success.

- Alexander Graham Bell

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World Geography

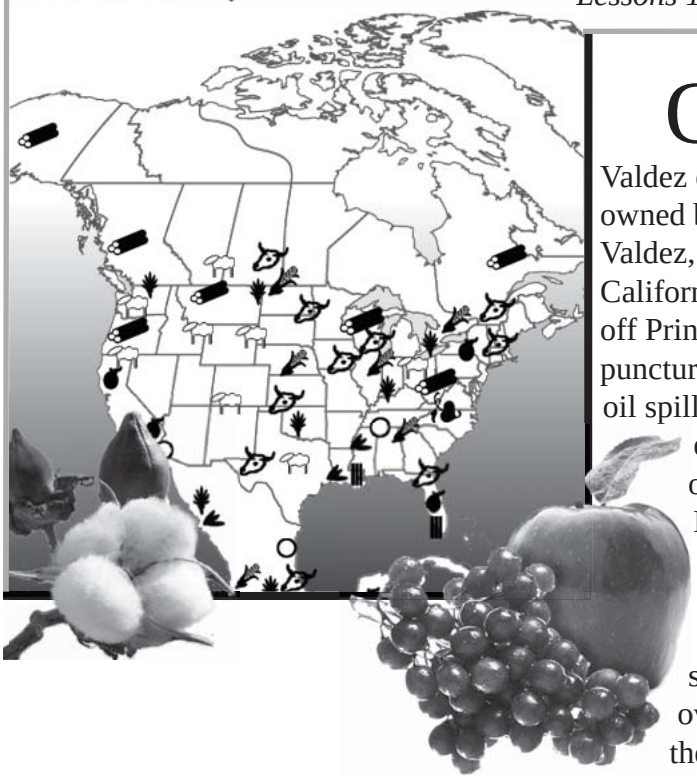
Chapter 1



Lesson 14
Natural Resources

Section 3
Lessons 11-15

Natural Resources of North America



One of the biggest environmental disasters in U.S. history was the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989. The massive oil tanker, owned by energy company Exxon and based in Valdez, Alaska, was en route to Long Beach, California in March, 1989 when it struck a reef off Prince William Sound. The ship's hull was punctured, and nearly 11 million gallons of crude oil spilled into the Pacific Ocean. The resulting environmental toll was enormous, as the oil spread over 1,300 square miles of ocean. Hundreds of thousands of animals died. Along the Alaskan coastline, both land and water habitats suffered devastating and long-term effects. Today, many scientists and ecologists still raise alarm over the impact of the oil spill, estimating the effects will not fade away completely until 2020. The result was implementation of strict environmental laws imposed on oil exploration and production around U.S. coastal areas. Those laws have caused the U.S. to depend heavily on oil imports from the Middle East, Mexico, and Venezuela. The economic ramifications were nearly as great as the environmental ones.

Often termed "black gold," petroleum is among North America's (and indeed the world's) most valuable ***natural resources*** because of its value as an energy source. Nations with large oil reserves have established prosperous and far-flung civilizations, while those without it spend enormous sums of money to acquire it. In a global ranking of all countries' oil reserves, the United States ranks 12th, and much of its national, and many of its local, economies depend heavily on the resource. However, half of the

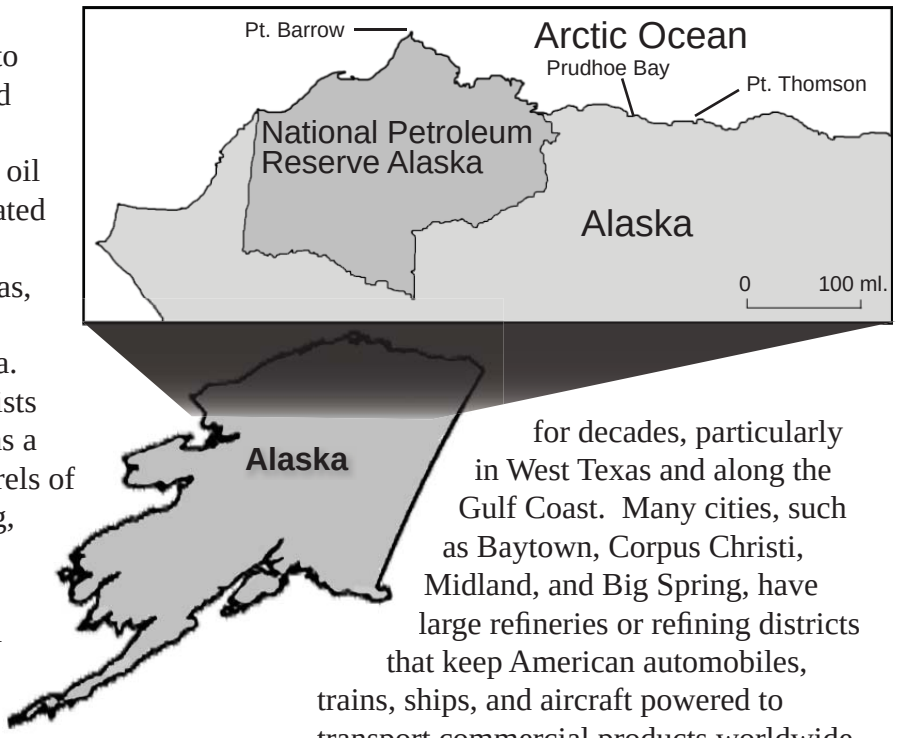
VOCABULARY

Natural resources: resources naturally occurring in the Earth or supplied by nature
Offshore drilling: extraction of underground resources in coastal waters
Bauxite: clay-like mineral that is the chief ore of aluminum

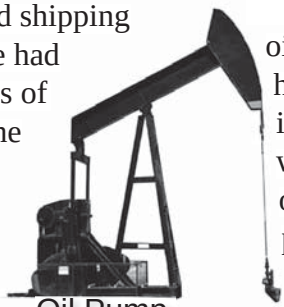
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nation's current trade deficit is attributable to oil imports and related products.

Currently, U.S. oil reserves are concentrated in several key areas: Utah, Oklahoma, Texas, Wyoming, coastal California, and Alaska. Scientists and geologists estimate the nation has a total of 21 billion barrels of oil reserves remaining, the majority of which are located in Alaska. The National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska covers 37,000 square miles—an area slightly larger than Indiana—in northern Alaska, including Barrow, the continent's northernmost inhabited place. The swath of land contains somewhere between 6 and 13 billion barrels, or possibly over half the nation's supply, and has been extracted and refined commercially most heavily since the late 1990s. Much of the drilling activity is unofficially headquartered at Prudhoe Bay, Alaska's northernmost town reachable by land. Here, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline conducts oil resources from Prudhoe Bay to Valdez alongside Dalton Highway, which serves mainly as a trucking and shipping route. As of 2009, the pipeline had carried nearly 25 billion barrels of oil down its 800-mile trek to the ice-free port of Valdez.



Elsewhere, other petroleum resources exist. Texas's economy has been famously dependent on oil for decades, particularly in West Texas and along the Gulf Coast. Many cities, such as Baytown, Corpus Christi, Midland, and Big Spring, have large refineries or refining districts that keep American automobiles, trains, ships, and aircraft powered to transport commercial products worldwide. In the upper Great Plains—states such as North and South Dakota—and in Utah, large reserves exist, and these are being extracted at differing rates. Small reserves exist throughout most states west of the Mississippi River, although many of them lack extensive recovery programs. Southern California has relatively sizeable oil reserves near Los Angeles and east of San Bernardino, locations that serve the state well because of the busy ports nearby. In Michigan and beneath the Great Lakes, nearly a billion barrels exist, and transportation here is relatively easy, as well.


Oil Pump

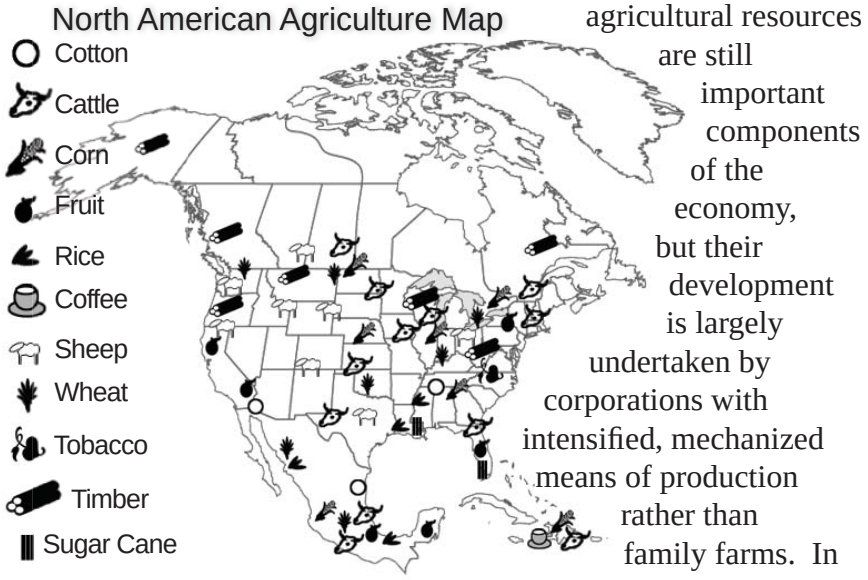
Canada and Mexico also enjoy large oil reserves. Mexico's current reserves hover around 12 billion barrels, and it is the sixth-largest producer in the world. While many believe Mexico's oil production may have reached its peak, and some question how long its resources will be sustainable at current production levels, Mexico's

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population is smaller than the United States' and less affluent, so the country is less oil-dependent. Currently, Mexico produces all the oil it needs and does not import oil. Canada, which may possess more oil than any country except Saudi Arabia, may also enjoy the longest-lived resources at current production levels. Oil supplies exist across the country, many of them offshore. In recent years, the United States has debated the merits of ***offshore drilling***, which is illegal in most places and which some environmentalists claim could cause irrevocable damage to ocean habitats. Canada and Mexico, however, have developed offshore oil exploration programs to their benefit, and much of the nations' reserves are beneath seas and oceans rather than land.

Other resources are significant throughout North America. In central Mexico, precious metals such as gold and silver exist. These are mined to make jewelry and some hardware products. In northern Mexico and the southwestern U.S., copper is an important resource, extracted for use in wire, currency, ammunition, and construction materials. Copper is commonly used as electrical wiring because it is a strong electrical conductor and is relatively abundant and economical. Iron and lead resources also exist. These have a plethora of uses in fields from construction to furniture, and from candles to organ pipes. Zinc, which is used in batteries and as a steel galvanizing agent, can be found throughout some sections of northern and central Mexico. Metals such as these are diverse in their uses and contribute heavily to local economies in Mexico.

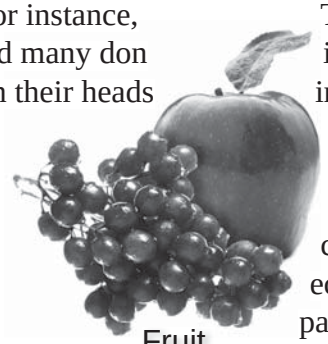
One of the most remarkable transformations in the United States and Canada over the past century has been the transition from primarily agricultural economies to economies built on manufacturing and services. In both countries, subsistence farming once dominated the landscape, and families ate or starved based on initiative to work, but also on seasonal weather patterns or the quality of soil in their region. Today, agricultural resources are still important components of the economy, but their development is largely undertaken by corporations with intensified, mechanized means of production rather than family farms. In regions with ample amounts of rainfall, rice grows, especially in the Great Lakes region and north of the Dakotas. Corn is an important staple food grown throughout the Great Plains and Texas, while tobacco is regionally harvested in the Mid-Atlantic states of Virginia and North Carolina. In the northern U.S. Rockies, potatoes thrive in the cool, dry climate; Idaho produces one-third of the nation's supply, and several Western states contribute strongly



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Cotton

to production of beets and potatoes. Cotton survives well in drier areas such as West Texas and Arizona, and it has historically been important throughout the wetter U.S. Southeast as well. In the Great Lakes region, Wisconsin is known for its cheese production, a reality that has produced intriguing local traditions. Fans of the NFL's Green Bay Packers, for instance, are called "cheeseheads," and many don large foam cheese wedges on their heads at football games. Among important agricultural endeavors is livestock raising. Huge areas of the West are dedicated to cattle ranching, while sheep are important for both their wool and their meat in Colorado, Montana, and California. Many places in California are home to wine vineyards, as the warm and temperate climate is perfect for grapes. Rich soil and a warm climate enable California farmers to produce thirty to forty percent of America's fruits and vegetables.


Fruit

In Canada, gold and silver exist in large supplies in the east, gold largely in Ontario and silver mostly in Quebec. Iron reserves lie in the northern parts of Quebec, but like the gold and silver mines, these have been explored only in limited amounts. In Cuba, ***bauxite*** is important in numerous applications, such as automobiles, cameras, windows, and cosmetic products. Haiti and the Dominican Republic also have large stores of this mineral, and in Haiti, gold and limestone are important minerals extracted commercially. Jamaica has significant gypsum resources that are used in construction materials, such as drywall and concrete, and also in glass manufacturing. Some nations extract marble and granite. These are used predominately in industries related to home and industrial construction.

North American nations have other significant resources in addition to these listed above. Near coastlines, fishing is an important economic activity. In the past, whaling was common, although strict limits on hunting and severe penalties have lessened its significance in recent years. Through the U.S. Great Plains, and particularly in central and western Texas, wind is an important power source, especially as entrepreneurs search for alternatives to oil and natural gas. Similarly, hydroelectric power is important in places like the Hoover Dam and Niagara Falls. In Hawaii, plentiful rainfall ensures large yields of tropical fruits, such as kiwis and bananas.


Wind Turbine

Life Principle

America's economic prosperity is the result of entrepreneurs who work hard to earn a profit with which to employ others who also work hard to obtain a prosperous life.

- Dr. Ronald E. Johnson

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World Geography

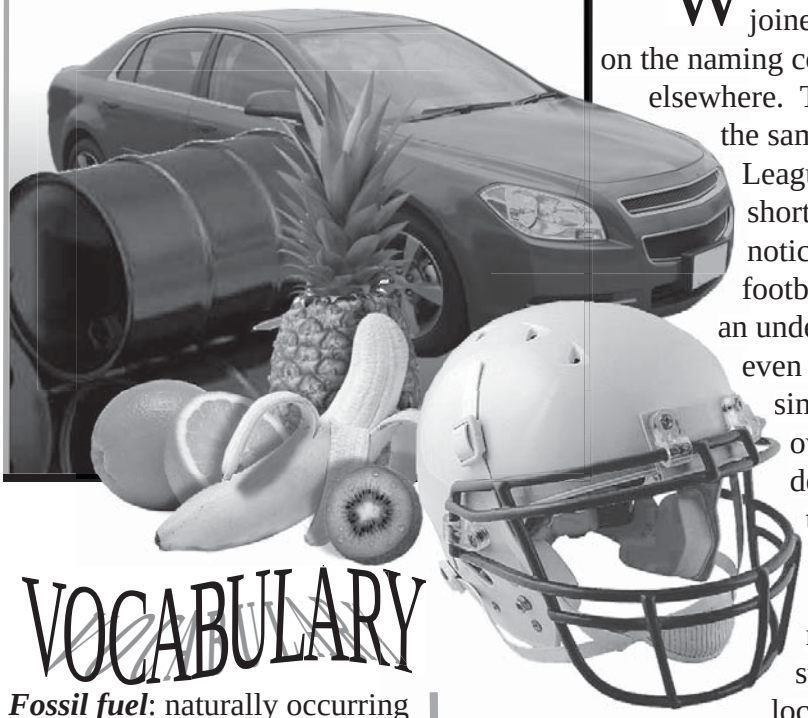
Chapter 1



Lesson 15
Imports, Exports and Major Industries

Section 3
Lessons 11-15

Imports, Exports and Major Industries of North America



When Pittsburgh's inaugural NFL team joined the league in 1933, somebody on the naming committee must have had his mind elsewhere. The club was named the Pirates—the same name as Pittsburgh's Major League Baseball squad. Within several short years, team officials began noticing that fans were confusing the football team with the baseball team—an understandable mistake, considering even the team colors were extremely similar. When Art Rooney took ownership in 1941, he wisely decided to change the name, and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette held a contest to find a new mascot. The winner: the Pittsburgh Steelers, named after the city's trademark steel industry, which was a huge local economic force just before World War II. For the team's insignia, Rooney chose the official steel logo, three touching four-pointed stars. Each of the stars represents one component of steel—iron ore, coal, and limestone. The metal's symbol quickly became associated with the football team. Seventy years after its adoption, the Steelers name and logo still thrive, and fans still turn out to support their hometown team, which won the Super Bowl in 2009.

The name owes its existence to the steel industry, one of the most important and profitable industries in western Pennsylvania and the Midwest. The business actually falls under the United States' broader manufacturing umbrella, which totaled $2.7 billion, the highest manufacturing

VOCABULARY

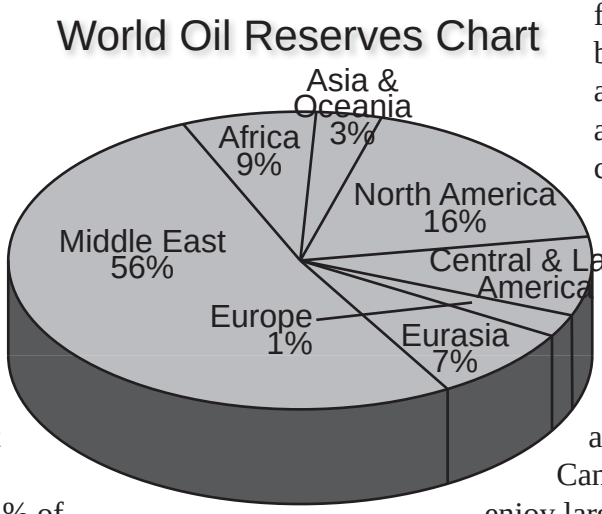
Fossil fuel: naturally occurring fuel derived from organic remains
Big box stores: large retail store, typically part of a chain
Bailout: in the United States, government assistance of private business in an economic crunch
Subsidy: financial assistance from the government
Net exporter: country whose value of exported goods is higher than the value of its imported goods

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total in the world, in 2007. Throughout Ohio, western New York, and western Pennsylvania, steel manufacturing has a long and storied history, and today it is perhaps the country's second or third most significant enterprise. Companies such as U.S. Steel, founded by entrepreneurs Andrew Carnegie, J.P. Morgan, and Charles Schwab, thrive in this region. Their products are used in wide-ranging and diverse applications, from construction, to automobiles, to appliances, to infrastructure-related projects.



Across North America, numerous industries flourish. In an era that is increasingly mechanized and has ever-growing demands for power, the energy sector is among the most important in Canada, the United States, and Mexico. The United States is by far the world's largest consumer of oil and oil products, accounting for nearly three times the amount consumed by second-place China. About 85% of the U.S.'s energy comes from ***fossil fuels***, with the remaining percentage derived from nuclear power and, to a smaller extent, renewable energy sources like hydroelectric dams and wind generators. While the demand for energy has permeated nearly every fiber of society's fabric, it is roughly balanced among residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation uses, with industry leading the demand. Activities such as petroleum refining, metal refining, and chemical production are among the biggest industrial applications of energy, and in the transportation sector most of the demand is for energy in the form of gasoline. In recent years, the United States' demands for energy have been staggering—by some accounts, the nation with less than 5% of the world population uses one-fourth of its energy—and with its own reserves only meeting a small fraction of that demand, energy importation has emerged as a major budget item. America's free enterprise system has created the highest standard of living in the world. Consequently, most Americans consume vast amounts of energy for automobiles, boats, trains, trucks, and airplanes that are used in personal, commercial, military, and recreational applications. In Canada and Mexico, energy also comprises major economic activities. Both Canada and Mexico enjoy large oil and natural gas reserves and thus produce all the energy they need. In Mexico's case, mineral resources are considered public property under the Constitution and are administered by a state-run producer, while in Canada, private industry has developed and produced the oil, and the country exports some of its excess energy resources. The dynamics between North America's big three nations have been significantly shaped by NAFTA in the energy sector in that it is often cheaper for oil and gas resources to be shipped across



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national borders than across large stretches of their home country; consequently, Western Canada sells large volumes of oil to the United States, while oil-poor Ontario relies heavily on nuclear power. In Mexico, large sums of money earned from oil exports in the 1980s have dried up, and while the country still sends much of its energy overseas, only around 7% of total exports today are oil resources.


Cellular Phone

One of the marks of a developed, industrialized country is an active and boisterous service sector, and many North American nations display this. In Canada, service jobs account for over two thirds of the nation's GDP and over three fourths of its workforce; in the U.S. and Mexico, over 75% and 70% of GDP are service-oriented, respectively. This economic industry encompasses activities like retailing, in the form of consumer goods from clothing to electronics to communication devices; real estate; education; health care; banking; and others. Canadian banks have rapidly emerged onto the world stage as its premier investment and lending institutions, particularly in large cities like Montreal and Toronto where they employ large chunks of the population. In the United States, ***big box stores*** such as Walmart and Target earn huge profits each year: in 2008, Arkansas giant Walmart earned $405 billion in revenue, employed hundreds of thousands of people, and completed large-scale store renovations, even during an economic recession. Among higher-tech offerings, Dallas-based communications firm AT&T has expanded from a steady stream of acquisitions. The company is currently the 29th largest company in the world by total revenues, which equaled $124 billion in 2008. Other electronics providers, such as Siemens and Hewlett-Packard, are among the largest U.S. companies in any industry. The success stories of Amway, Mary Kay cosmetics, Dell computers, Microsoft, and other companies started by risk-taking entrepreneurs reflect the economic opportunities available in the U.S.


Sedan

In recent years, Mexico has had a booming financial sector, although many foreign companies have acquired Mexican institutions and have asserted their presence in the country, such as in the case of U.S. firm Citigroup's purchase of Banamex in 2001. Mexico's financial sector is closely tied to the U.S.'s, and many Mexican corporations respond sensitively to U.S. economic trends. Bread maker Mrs. Baird's was recently purchased by a Mexican-based corporation.

Manufacturing constitutes a big industry in North America. U.S. auto manufacturing companies like General Motors (GM), Ford, and Chrysler are headquartered around Detroit, Michigan. While these have historically been extremely successful businesses, their management choices and union contracts contributed to an economic crisis in 2008-09. GM declared bankruptcy in early 2009, and accepted an enormous government ***bailout*** package that placed the company under government and union control. Nearby, central Canada actually boasts higher auto production numbers than the U.S. state of Michigan, which has traditionally been synonymous with the auto industry. Internationally significant

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domestic companies such as Bombardier, the manufacturer of the popular business jet series known as Learjet, reside in Canada, and other companies like Magna and Linamar work alongside U.S. and Japanese auto manufacturers, supplying parts for cars, trucks, and buses. In Cuba, world-class pharmaceutical companies create revenue for the healthcare industry. Chemicals made from bauxite are important economic sources for Jamaica.

While agriculture has dwindled as a major component of GDP across North America, crop raising and food manufacture are still important ingredients in local economies and in some Caribbean nations. Sugar cane has long been a staple agricultural product and export in the Caribbean, and today Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic count it as critical to their economies. In Mexico, corn and beans dominate, having been encouraged by the Mexican government until the 1990s, when tropical fruits and other warm-weather table crops like coffee and nuts became important products. Mexico, like the U.S. and Canada, offers large financial ***subsidies*** to farmers to develop certain crops. To guarantee adequate prices for farmers, the U.S. federal government pays many farmers *not* to grow certain crops that would be natural and affordable to cultivate in certain regions. Corn subsidies have diminished, but they are still significant in the country where many historians believe corn was first cultivated. Canada also devotes millions of acres across its vast, undeveloped plains to agricultural production, particularly grains. The U.S. produces beef and chicken throughout the country, dairy products particularly in the Great Lakes region, and corn, sugar beets, soybeans, wheat, and pecans in the west. Near the coasts, fish are important, and the United States is a ***net exporter*** of marine food products.



Fruit

Life Principle

If you're going to do a job, do it right.

- Roger Rigsby

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