

THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

Landforms and Resources

All questions require at least
THREE sentences on own paper.

PLACES & TERMS

Appalachian Mountains major mountain chain in the eastern United States and Canada

Great Plains largely treeless area in the interior lowlands

Canadian Shield rocky, flat area that surrounds Hudson Bay

Rocky Mountains mountain chain in the western United States and Canada

Continental Divide line of the highest points in the Rockies that marks the separation between rivers flowing to the east and to the west

Great Lakes five large lakes found in the central United States and Canada

Mississippi River North America's longest river

Mackenzie River Canada's longest river

Landscape Influenced Development

How vast are these countries?

The United States and Canada occupy the central and northern four-fifths of the continent of North America. Culturally, the region is known as Anglo-America. This is because both countries were colonies of Great Britain at one time and because most of the people speak English. In addition to their physical geography and cultural heritage, the two countries are also bound together by strong economic and political ties.

The United States and Canada stretch across North America. In total area, they are the second (Canada) and third (the United States) largest countries in the world, behind Russia.

The United States and Canada are rich in natural resources. They have much fertile soil and water and many forests and minerals. This geographic richness has attracted immigrants from around the world for centuries.

1. What binds Canada and the United States together?

Answer in at least **THREE SENTENCES** on own paper.

Many and Varied Landforms

What features do these countries share?

All the major types of landforms are found in the United States and Canada.

A flat, coastal plain runs along the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. One section is called the Atlantic Coastal Plain. It begins as a narrow lowland in the northeastern United States and widens as it extends into Florida. The broader section is called the Gulf Coastal Plain. It stretches from Florida to Texas along the Gulf of Mexico.

West of the coastal plain are the Appalachian Highlands. The Appalachian Mountains are part of

the region. They stretch some 1,600 miles from Newfoundland to Alabama.

A huge area of mainly level land covers the interior of North America. Huge glaciers flattened the land thousands of years ago. The area has some of the most *productive* soil in the world.

The interior lowlands are divided into three subregions—the Interior Plains, the Great Plains, and the Canadian Shield. The Interior Plains spread out from the Appalachians to about 300 miles west of the Mississippi River. To the west are the **Great Plains**. These plains are a largely treeless area that rise to about 4,000 feet. North of the plains is the **Canadian Shield**. It is a rocky, flat region that covers nearly two million square miles around Hudson Bay.

West of the plains are the *massive*, rugged **Rocky Mountains**, the other major mountain system of the United States and Canada. The Rockies are a series of ranges that extend about 3,000 miles from Alaska south to New Mexico. Many peaks are more than 12,000 feet high. The **Continental Divide** is the line of the highest points in the Rockies. It marks the division between rivers flowing eastward and westward.

Between the Rockies and the Pacific Ocean is an area of mixed landforms. A series of ranges, including the Sierra Nevada and the Cascade Range, run parallel to the Pacific coastline from California to Alaska. Major earthquakes occur in the vicinity of the Pacific ranges. Between these ranges and the Rockies are steep cliffs, deep canyons, and lowland desert areas called basins.

Canada's northernmost lands are islands near the Arctic Circle. Two chains of volcanic islands are part of the westernmost United States. The Aleutian Islands extend in an arc off the coast of Alaska. The Hawaiian Islands lie in the central Pacific, about 2,400 miles southwest of the mainland.

2. What is the Continental Divide?

Answer in at least THREE SENTENCES on own paper.

Resources Shape Ways of Life

Which minerals are abundant?

Canada and the United States are bordered by three oceans—Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic. The Gulf of Mexico is the southern boundary of the United States. As a result, both countries have important shipping and fishing industries.

Inland, there are large rivers and lakes that serve as sources of transportation, irrigation, hydroelectric power, fresh water, and fisheries. Eight of the world's fifteen largest lakes are found in the United States and Canada. Among these are the **Great Lakes**—Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior.

The **Mississippi River** runs almost the length of the United States. It is part of the continent's longest and busiest river system. Canada's largest river is the **Mackenzie River**.

The United States and Canada contain some of the most fertile soils in the world. Because of this fact, North America is the world's leading food exporter.

The United States and Canada also have huge forests. About one-half of Canada is covered by woodlands. About one-third of the United States is. Both countries are major producers of lumber and forest products.

Huge quantities of minerals and fossil fuels gave both countries the means to industrialize rapidly. Deposits of iron ore, nickel, copper, gold, and uranium are located in the Canadian Shield. Gold, silver, copper, and uranium are found in the western mountains.

Both countries have large deposits of coal, natural gas, and oil. Both countries also are leading mineral producers.

3. What do significant water resources provide?

Answer in at least THREE SENTENCES on own paper.