The United States & Canada

A Regional Study of Anglo America
Landform Regions of the United States & Canada
The United States & Canada

world leaders in agricultural and industrial production because of...

VAST LANDS

- stretch from the Atlantic Ocean on the EAST to the Pacific Ocean on the WEST
- in total land area, Canada ranks 2nd and the United States ranks 3rd
- together, they fill 1/8 of the total land surface of the earth

ABUNDANT RESOURCES

- fertile soil
- ample supplies of water
- vast forests
- large deposits of a variety of minerals
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LANDFORMS

The Eastern Lowlands

- flat coastal plain along the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf-Atlantic Coastal Plain)
- Atlantic Coastal Plain begins with narrow lowland in northeastern United States extending south to Florida and includes many excellent harbors
- Gulf Coastal Plain along Gulf from west Florida to Texas
- Mississippi River empties into Gulf in the region
- low plateau of rolling hills called the Piedmont between here and Appalachian Mountains
The Appalachian Highlands

- gently sloping Appalachian Mountains (many peaks only between 1,200 and 2,400 ft. above sea level)
- eastern mountain extending 1,600 miles from Newfoundland to Alabama
- include Green & Catskill Mts. in the north; Blue Ridge & Great Smoky Mts. in the south
- Appalachian Trail (2,160 miles) spans almost the entire length of the chain
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**LANDFORMS**

**Interior Lowlands**

- **Interior Plains**
  - from the Appalachians to about 300 miles west of the Mississippi River
  - gradually rise from a few hundred feet above sea level to about 2,000 ft.

- **Great Plains**
  - west of Interior Plains gradually rising to 4,000 ft.

- **Canadian Shield**
  - far northern plain averaging 1,500 ft. above sea level (5,000 ft. in Labrador)
  - mostly rock area covering nearly 2 million square miles around Hudson Bay
Western Mountains, Plateaus, and Basins

Rocky Mountains

- massive, rugged mountain system running 3,000 miles from Alaska south to New Mexico
- many snow-covered peaks rise above 12,000 feet
- Continental Divide is the line of the highest points in Rockies marking the separation of rivers flowing east and west
Western Mountains, Plateaus, and Basins (part 2)

Pacific Mountain Ranges
- run from Alaska to California
- include the Cascades (northwest) and the Sierra Nevada (southern CA)
- Mt. McKinley/Denali in AK rises 20,320 ft. (North America’s highest point)

Mixed Landforms between Rockies and Pacific Mountains
- steep cliffs, deep canyons, plateaus, and lowland desert areas (basins)
- Grand Canyon, Mojave Desert, Death Valley
The Islands

Canada’s northernmost lands include huge islands near the Arctic Circle--Ellesmere, Victoria, and Baffin.

Greenland is largest island in North America.

Various coastal islands on both the east and west coasts of North America.

Aleutian Islands in Alaska are an arch of volcanic islands.

Hawaiian islands are volcanic islands part of the United States but NOT geographically part of North America; lie in central Pacific some 2,400 miles southwest of the continental U. S.
Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic oceans as well as the Gulf of Mexico support important shipping and fishing industries.

Inland waterways provide sources of transportation, hydroelectric power, irrigation, fresh water, and fisheries.

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River

Mississippi-Missouri-Ohio River System

Mackenzie River
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NATURAL RESOURCES

Land and Forests

- most fertile soil in the world
- North America is the world’s leading food exporter
- 1/2 of Canada covered by woodlands
- 1/3 of U. S. covered by woodlands but with more varieties of trees
- both countries major producers of lumber and forest products
large quantities and varieties of minerals and fossil fuels allowed both countries to industrialize rapidly

- iron ore, nickel, copper, gold, uranium (Canadian Shield)
- gold, silver, copper, uranium (western mountains)
- large deposits of oil, natural gas, and coal as well as the means to distribute these fossil fuels
- coal (Appalachian Mts. and northern Great Plains)
- oil and natural gas (Great Plains, Alaska, Gulf of Mexico)