

North America and The Rockies



Fact Box
To the east of Central America, between the Caribbean Sea and Mexican Gulf, are the Caribbean Islands consisting of Cuba, Jamaica, Puerto Rica

Physical Features

The Arctic Circle



One of the two polar circles on Earth. This one is in the north and consists of the Arctic Ocean and extends to Canada, Greenland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, the U.S.A. (Alaska), Denmark, Iceland and Russia. Conditions are freezing cold creating large sheets of ice.

The Grand Canyon



An enormous carved canyon in the ground formed by the Colorado River, which began 5-6 million years ago. It runs 1800m deep and 18 miles wide and is in Arizona in western U.S.A.

The Rocky Mountains



The Rockies
There are some exciting land marks in the Rockies and one of these is the Columbia Icefield, which feeds 8 major glaciers in Jasper National Park, Canada. The ice field is huge and when seen from the air is a mass of white with some peaks of the Rocky Mountains poking out from around the sides. The Athabasca Glacier is one of the glaciers fed by the icefield. People can walk up the glacier and see the beginning of the ice field. It is the most visited glacier in North America. But the glacier is currently shrinking and the rate of retreat has increased since 1980. Overall it has shrunk more than 1.5 kilometres in the past 125 years and lost over half of its volume.

Climate The Arctic Circle is one of the coldest places on earth with winters reaching -30°C , although much of Canada is deciduous forest. Central U.S.A. consists of deciduous forest but also grassland, with very hot summers and cold winters whilst western Mexico and U.S.A. has a desert climate, reaching up to 45°C .

Human Features

The 50 States.



The United States of America has the largest economy in the world and, because of its enormous size, is divided into 50 different states. Each state has their own laws. This is why there are 50 stars on the national flag.

Sports and Recreation



Sports in the U.S.A. define much of its culture and many sports are played exclusively to the country including American Football, baseball, ice hockey and basketball. Many more countries have since developed these too.

Colonisation



When Christopher Columbus arrived in 1492, humans had been in North America for over 30,000 years. The Europeans settled on the land but disease and war meant most of the natives were killed. The U.S.A. declared its independence from Britain in 1776.

Longest Rivers



- Mississippi (U.S.A.) - 3778km
- Missouri (U.S.A.) - 3767km
- Yukon (Canada) 3190km

Largest Populations

U.S.A. (322 million people)



Mexico (127 million people)



Canada (36 million people)



Tallest Mountains

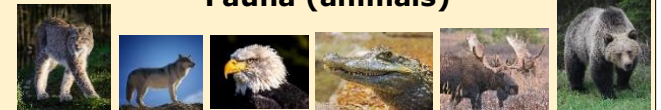


- Denali (Alaska) 6190m
- Mount Logan (Canada) 5959m
- Pico de Orizaba (Mexico) 5636m

Key Vocabulary

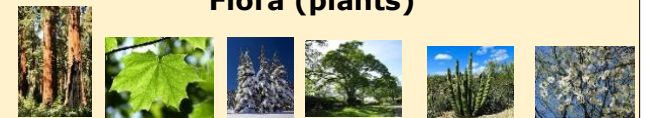
alpine	plants relating to high mountains
deciduous	trees which lose their leaves annually
Disney	Florida, U.S.A. is famous for its Disney parks
coniferous	trees which do not lose their leaves
countries	There are 38 countries and islands in North America
Everglades	tropical wetlands in southern Florida, U.S.A.
glacier	slow moving river of ice in the Arctic Circle
Great Plains	flat grasslands through central U.S.A. between the Rocky Mountains and the Mississippi River
Inuit	native settlers from Alaska (Eskimos)
Panama Canal	man-made waterway to allow ships to cut through Central America rather than sail around the whole of South America
rainforest	much of Central America is covered in rainforest
swap	Atchafalaya Swamp is the largest in the U.S.A. and is in Louisiana near the Gulf of Mexico
tornado alley	large area of land near the Great Plains where tornados are very common
totem pole	monumental carving on trees by natives
tundra	an Arctic flat plain of land without trees

Fauna (animals)



Examples: bobcats, wolves, bald eagles, alligators, moose and grizzly bears (Central America - monkeys, sloths, toucans and sea turtles).

Flora (plants)



Giant Sequoia Maple leaf Pine tree Oak tree Organ Pipe cactus Dogwood