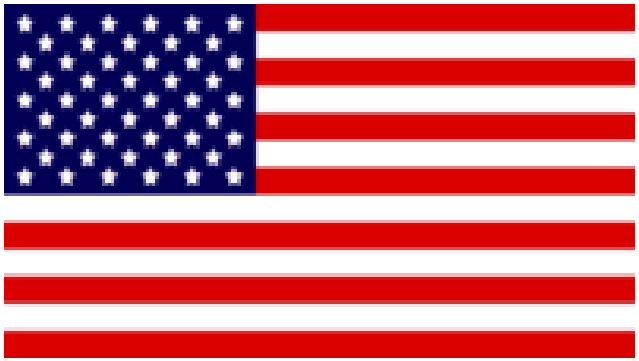
Physical Geography of The U.S. & Canada

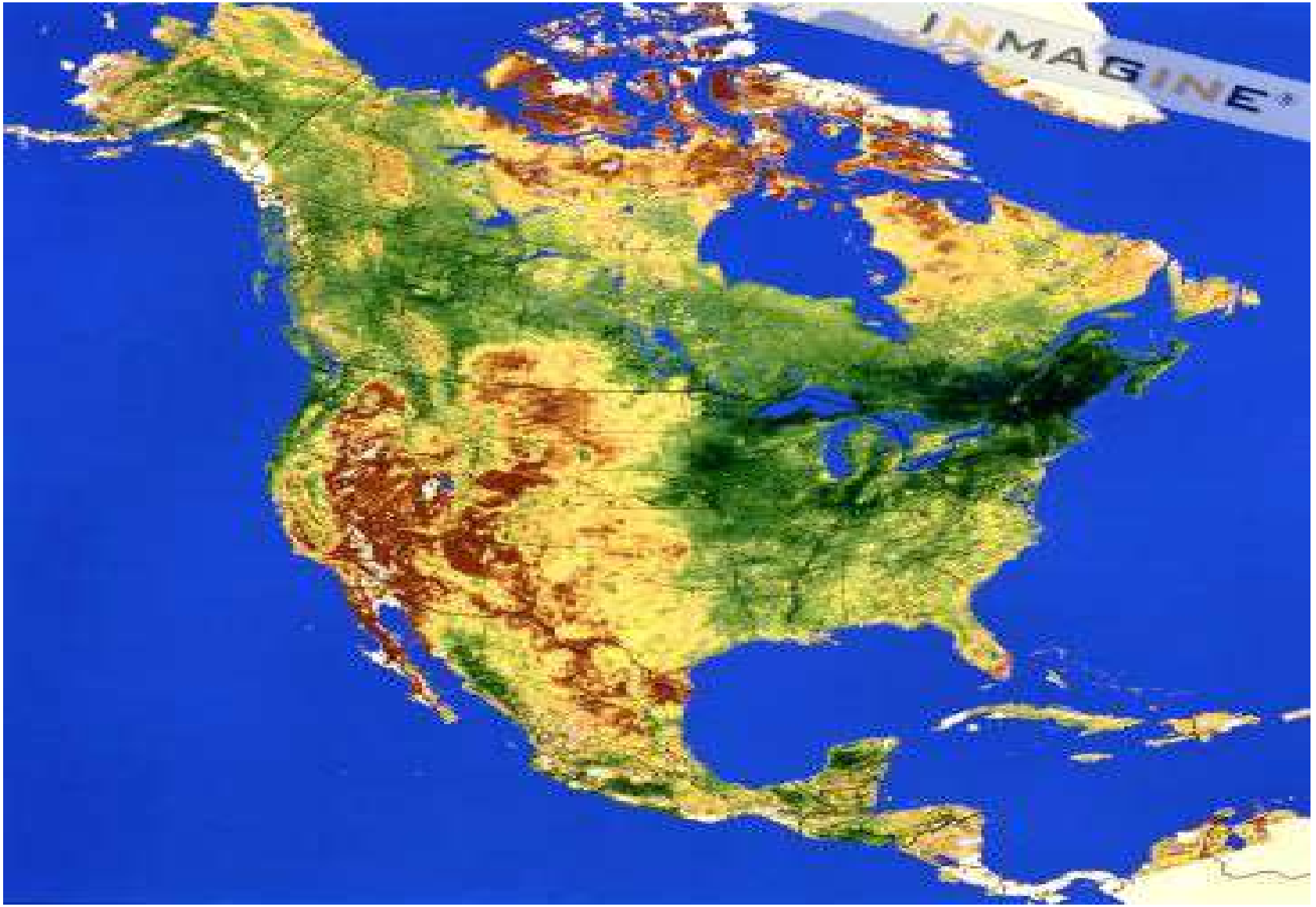
EQ: Discuss main geographic landforms of the U.S. & Canada and examine varied landforms in relation to their lifestyles.



Places & Terms for Discussion

- Appalachian Mountains
- Great Plains
- Canadian Shield
- Rocky Mountains
- Great Lakes
- Mackenzie River
- Prevailing Westerlies
- Everglades
- Lock
- St. Lawrence Seaway

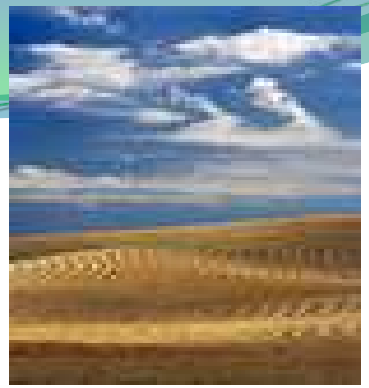
Physical Map Image of North America



Political U.S. Map

Political Look at Canada

Landforms & Resources



- Vast Lands: Canada ranks 2nd , behind Russia, and the United States 3rd in total land area. Together they fill 1/8 of the land surface of the earth.
- Both countries are rich in natural resources.
  - Fertile soils
  - Ample water supplies
  - Vast forests
  - Variety of minerals

All of these have attracted immigrants from around the world and allowed both countries to develop into global powers

Natural Resources

- Examine the map of the U.S. and Canada's resources on **pg. 120** and answer the following questions:

1) What resources seem to appear the most in the U.S.?

2) Which energy resource is more widespread in Canada than in the U.S.? Why is this?

3) What are some advantages Canada and the U.S. may have as a result of their abundant resources?


Natural Resources of the U.S. and Canada
ARCTIC OCEAN
PACIFIC OCEAN
Alberta has huge reserves of fossil fuels.
Hudson Bay
CANADA
UNITED STATES
Gulf of Mexico
Coal
Fish
Copper
Hydroelectric power
Iron ore
Lead
Natural gas
Nickel
Petroleum
Timber
Uranium
Zinc
HAWAII
PACIFIC OCEAN
The Pacific Northwest is a major supplier of timber in the United States.
The oldest coal mining areas in the United States are in the Appalachians.
SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps
1 REGION Where in the United States is petroleum
2 PLACE Which energy resource is more widespread than in the United States?

Landforms & Resources

- Many Varied Landforms
  - Eastern Lowlands: Flat coastal plain runs along the Atlantic Ocean & Gulf of Mexico.(Atlantic Coastal Plain)
  - Appalachian Highlands: Gently sloping Appalachian Mountains. Have been eroded over time. Considered to be over 400 million years old.
  - Interior Lowlands: Flattened by glaciers thousands of years ago. Terrain varies between lowlands, hills, lots of lakes & rivers.
    - 3 subregions: Interior Plains / Great Plains / Canadian Shield

Landforms & Resources

- Western Mountains, Plateaus, & Basins: Rocky Mountains range 3,000 miles from Alaska south to New Mexico. Thought to be around 80 million years old.
  - Continental Divide: marks the separation between rivers flowing eastward & westward
  - Mt. McKinley: North America's highest peak at 20,300ft is in Alaska.

Landforms & Resources

- Oceans & Waterways:
  - Great Lakes: Huron – Ontario – Michigan – Erie – Superior along with the St. Lawrence River form one of the worlds most important shipping routes.
  - Mississippi River: The continents longest and busiest river system.
  - Mackenzie River: Canada's longest river

Landforms

- The U.S. and Canada have many different types of landforms. Refer to the map on **pg. 118** and answer the following questions:

1) What are two U.S. states and two Canadian provinces found in the Great Plains region?

2) Which U.S. state and which Canadian province seem to have the most diverse physical landforms?

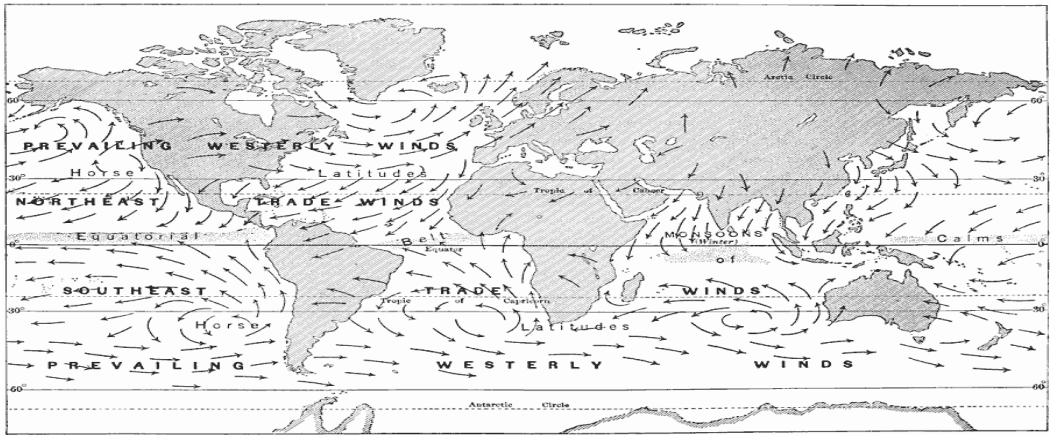

East Quoddy Head in New Ba
ARCTIC
Hudson Bay
ARCTIC COASTAL PLAIN
CANADIAN SHIELD
INTERIOR PLAINS
GREAT PLAINS
ROCKY MOUNTAINS
PACIFIC OCEAN
APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS
GULF-ATLANTIC COASTAL PLAIN
Gulf of Mexico
2
3

Features of Canadian and U.S. Landforms

Rocky Mountains	Great Plains	Canadian Shield	Appalachian Mountains
Western mountain chain	Mostly treeless area	Rocky and Flat	Eastern mountain chain
Extends 3,000 miles from New Mexico to Alaska	4,000 feet above sea-level	Lies in northeast Canada	1,600 miles from Alabama to Newfoundland
Its highest point is called the “Continental Divide”	Runs from southern Texas up through southern Canada	Covers about 1.8 million square miles	Includes the Green, Catskill, and Smoky Mountains
80 million years old	Its fertile soil allows crops to grow in abundance	Encircles the Hudson Bay	400 million years old

Climate & Vegetation

- Almost every climate type can be found in the U.S. because it extends over such a large area.
- Canada's cold climate is related to its location in the far northern latitudes. Some places there is permafrost, or permanently frozen ground.
- Prevailing Westerlies, winds that blow from west to east in the middle latitudes, keep the summers warm and the winters mild along the Pacific Coast and coastal mountains.

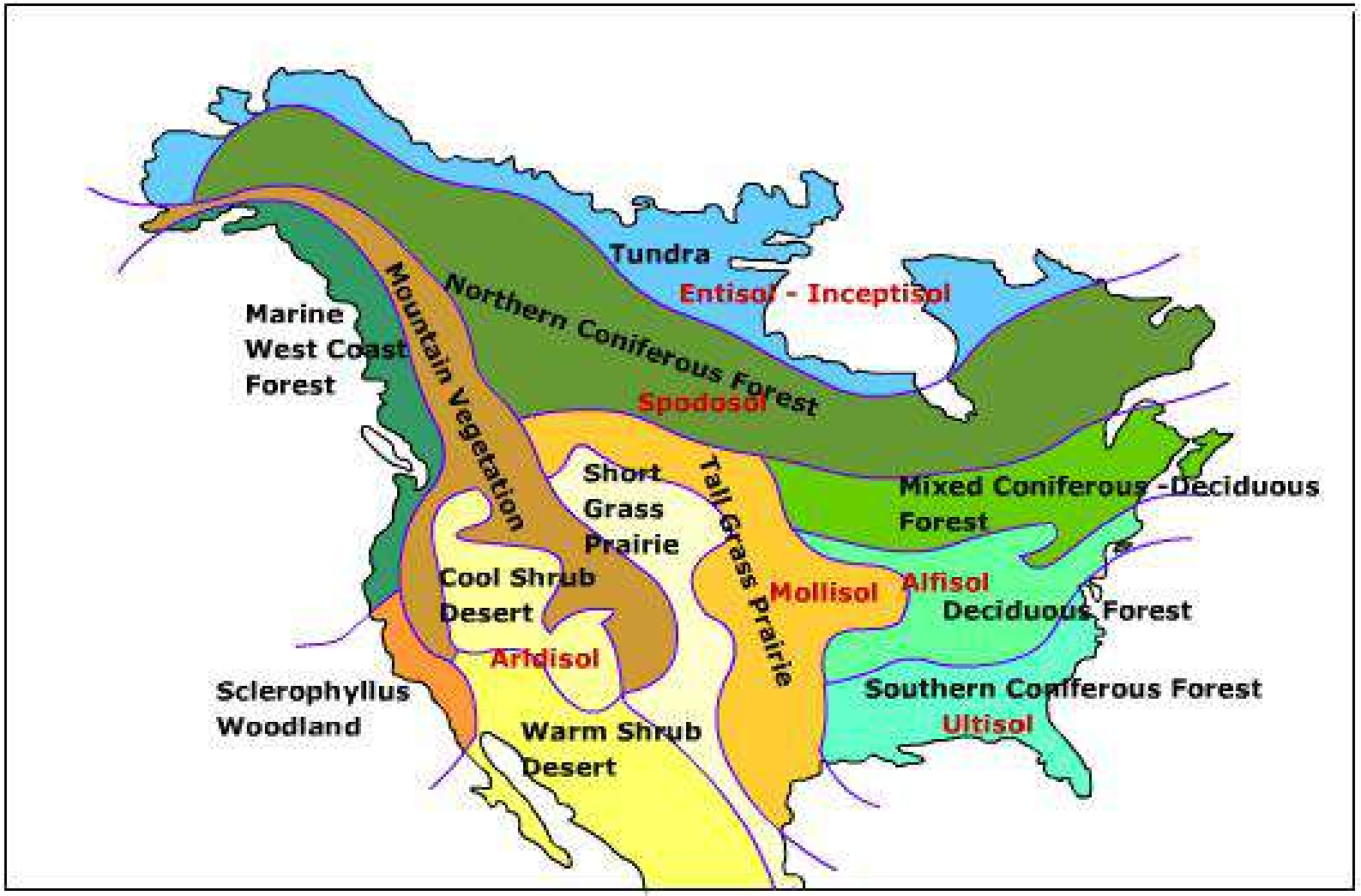


Climate & Vegetation

- The Everglades, found in southern Florida, has a tropical wet and dry climate is a huge swamplandthat covers some 4,000 square miles.

North America Climate Map

North America Vegetation Map



Human – Environment Interaction

- Settlement: First inhabitants were nomads who moved from place to place.
  - Archaeologists believe they migrated from Asia over the Beringia land bridge.
  - Hunting & Gathering was their

Primary method of food prod-uction before they began to cultivate crops.

Human – Environment Interaction

- Overcoming Distances
  - When the Europeans arrived and settled on the east coast they began to move inland. They carved out trails including the Oregon and Santa Fe trails. They built networks of canals and North America's most important deepwater ship route – the St. Lawrence Seaway. Ships were raised and lowered some 600 feet by a series of locks, (page 129)sections of waterway with closed gates where water levels are raised and lowered. The seaway enables huge, oceangoing vessels to sail into the heartland of North America.

Human – Environment Interaction

- The Transcontinental Railroad was completed across the U.S. in 1869. A trans-Canada railroad, from Montreal to British Columbia, was completed in 1885. These railroads help to carry goods and passengers cross-country promoting economic development and national unity. (much like technology has done for the world today)
- In the early 20th century with the development of the automobile brought about the extensive highway systems.
  - U.S. has about 4 million miles of roads.
  - Canada has about 560,000 miles of roads

Interstate Highway Map

Transcontinental Railroad Map

Review

- Mountain Ranges
  - Rocky Mountains
  - Appalachian Mountains
- Resources
  - Both U.S. and Canada have huge mineral and fossil fuel resources
  - Forest lands cover about 1/3 of the U.S. and ½ of Canada
- Climate & Vegetation
  - Canada's climates and vegetation are related to it's far northern location.
  - The U.S. includes regions that are in almost every climate and vegetation zone
- Major Water ways
  - Mississippi-Missouri-Ohio river system
  - Mackenzie River
  - Columbia River
  - Rio Grande River
  - Colorado River
  - St. Lawrence Seaway
- Human – Environment Interaction
  - Movement westward altered the land in both the U.S. and Canada
  - Transportation networks helped develop the land and economy of the region.

Physical Map Activity (Day 2)

- Divide Class into groups of 4.
  - Artist
  - Materials manager
  - Historian
  - Recorder
- Students are to construct a large physical map of the U.S. and Canada.
- Artist and Materials Manager are to draw and color the map
- Historian and Recorder are to answer the following questions at the bottom of the map.
  - Write question and answer to the following at bottom of map.
    - What landforms are shared by the U.S. and Canada?
    - What makes the St. Lawrence Seaway so important to the U.S. economy?
    - What are some of the major obstacles that had to be overcome in uniting the U.S. when building railroads and highways?