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# i Think: Geography

## NORTH AMERICA



**by Sharon Coletti  
and Kendra Corr**

\*\* It is the goal of InspirEd Educators to create instructional materials that are interesting, engaging, and challenging. Our student-centered approach incorporates both content and skills, placing particular emphasis on reading, writing, vocabulary development, and critical and creative thinking in the content areas.

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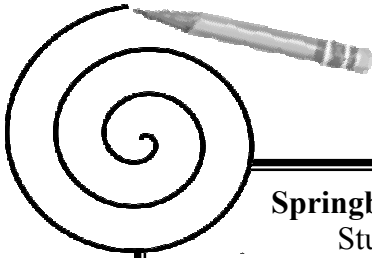
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## Drawing the Lines

### Springboard:

Students should read “NY, NY” and complete the analysis.  
(Answers may vary but should be logical.)

**Objective:** The student will be able to describe the “region” of North America, both in terms of other world regions and regions within the larger one.

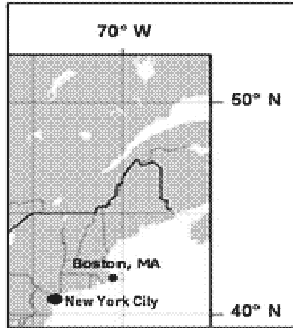
**Materials:** NY, NY (Springboard handout)  
Sorting by Similarities: Landforms, Culture, You Name It (3 handouts)  
North America Geography (handout, see note below)

**Terms to know:** **culture** - ways of life

### Procedure:

- After discussing the Springboard, explain that *the five themes allow for the geographic study of any place on earth*. Go on to explain that *the first five lessons in this unit provide an introduction to the five themes of geography; the first one the student(s) will examine is the region of North America*.
- Hand out the three “Sorting by Similarities” handouts. The student(s) should work individually, in pairs, or small groups to analyze and complete the different ways of looking at North America by region.
- Have them share their answers and explain. (Answers include:  
**Landforms:** *There are mountain ranges, central lowlands, coastal plains, etc.*  
**Culture:** *People in Canada and the U.S. speak English and have similar historical ties to England. Both are democratic nations, etc. The other countries speak Spanish, have historical ties to Spain, etc.*  
**You Name It:** *The top map shows earthquake activity and could be divided into earthquake zones. The bottom map shows climate regions. Note that these regions include Mexico, which is often considered part of North America.*)
- During the discussion, have the student(s) tell which regions would be most useful in looking at North America through the five themes. (Answers may vary, but explain that *the cultural approach will be used in this unit*.) Have the student(s) suggest why this is logical. (*The cultural regions allow for an easier examination of both North and South America based on the common characteristics of each.*)
- Distribute “North America Geography” for the student(s) to use as a unit organizer to record examples after each lesson that fit the five themes. In addition to the objectives sheet, this makes a wonderful review resource!

# NY ♥ NY



New York City is the largest city in the U.S. The nearly 10 million people who live in this northeastern city also make it the most densely populated in America. The sprawling city is divided into five areas called boroughs: Brooklyn, The Bronx, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island. Though Brooklyn is the largest, many people would say that Manhattan is where the action is. It is home to most of the city's skyscrapers, the famed Central Park, the famed Broadway theater district, Wall Street, the United Nations, as well as many universities, and other attractions.

The writer Tom Wolfe described the city as where “Culture just seems to be in the air, like part of the weather.” Known as “The City That Never Sleeps,” all parts of the city are busy and diverse. Nearly 170 languages are spoken and 30% of the people living in New York were born outside of the U.S. Since traffic clogs the streets, many people forego driving to take the subways and other types of mass transit from place to place.



**DIRECTIONS:** Read the descriptions of the five themes of geography and give at least one NYC example based on the information provided and your own ideas about the city.

Theme of Geography	New York City Example
<b>LOCATION:</b> <i>Where is it exactly or compared to other places?</i>	
<b>REGION:</b> <i>What are the natural or cultural divisions?</i>	
<b>PLACE:</b> <i>What are its physical and human characteristics?</i>	
<b>MOVEMENT:</b> <i>How do goods, people, and ideas get around?</i>	
<b>HUMAN INTERACTION with the ENVIRONMENT:</b> <i>How do they affect one another?</i>	

# Sorting by Similarities: LANDFORMS



Courtesy of the General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin

**DIRECTIONS:** Study the map, looking particularly for areas with similar elevation and/or landforms. Draw lines to show these physical regions and name and describe each region below.

Regions:	Descriptions:



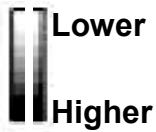


# Sorting by Similarities: YOU NAME IT



**DIRECTIONS:** Identify and describe regions for each map below.

**Likelihood and Intensity of Earthquake Activity:**



# North America Geography



**DIRECTIONS:** During your study of North America, record examples of each theme of geography on the organizer below:

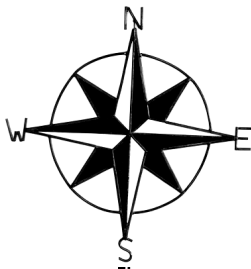
**REGION:**

**LOCATION:**

**HUMAN-ENVIRONMENT INTERACTION:**

**PLACE:**

**MOVEMENT:**



## Here, There, and Everywhere

### Springboard:

Students should study the map and answer the questions for “Which Province Is It? (1. Yukon; 2. Nunavut; 3. Quebec or New Brunswick; 4. British Columbia; 5. Ontario.)”

**Objective:** The student will be able to describe places in North America in terms of absolute and relative location.

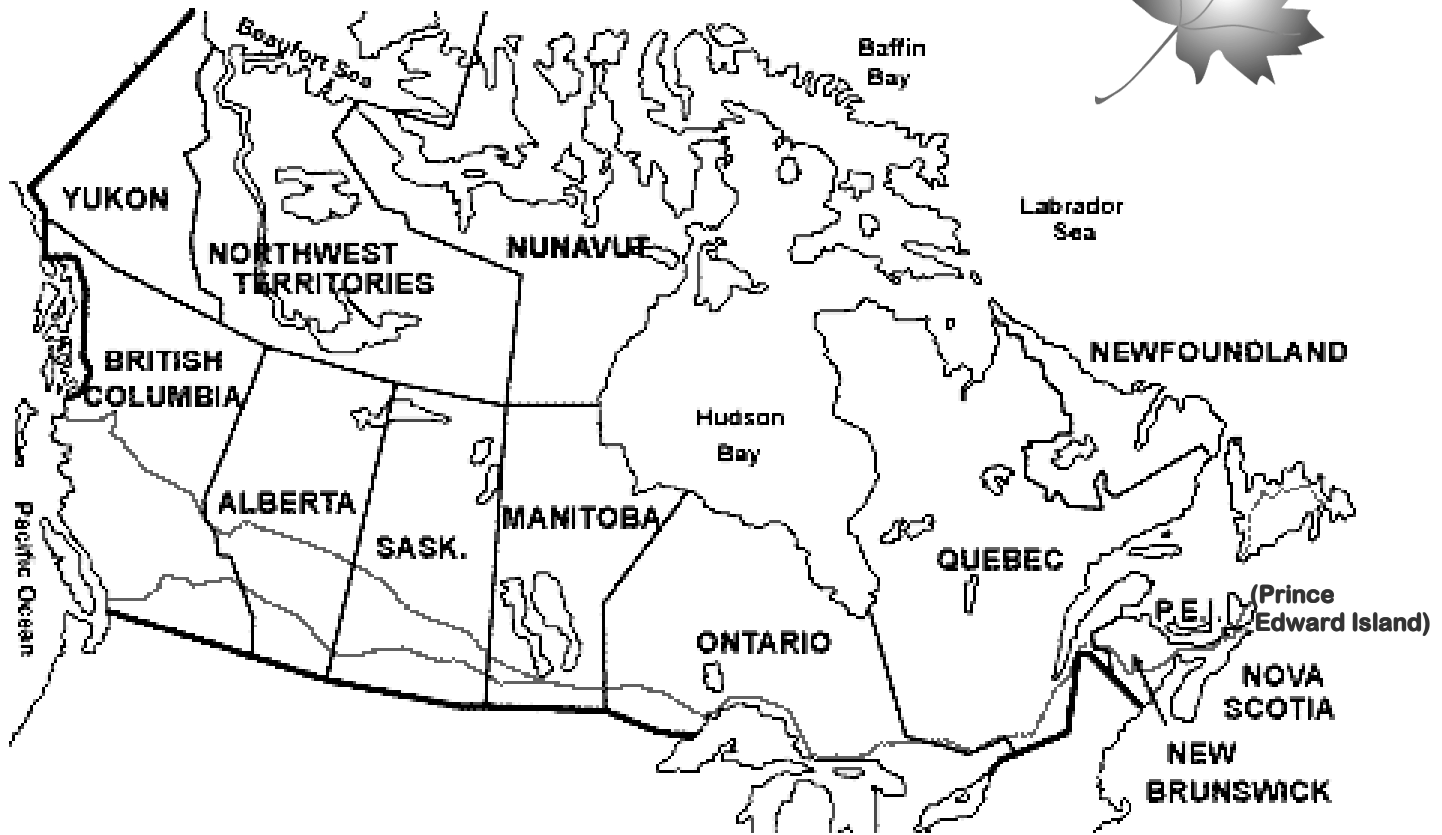
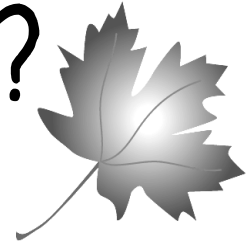
**Materials:** Which Province Is It? (Springboard handout)  
Location Map (handout)  
Location game board (½ handout per student)  
Colored paper or construction paper cut into small squares for markers

**Terms to know:** **relative location** - description in terms of other places or landmarks  
**absolute location** - coordinates or address of a place  
**coordinates** - degrees latitude and longitude that describe a place

### Procedure:

- After reviewing and giving the student(s) a chance to try to have others answer their questions, explain that the provinces were all described in terms of their relative location. Go on to explain that *in this lesson the student(s) will play a game to learn more about relative and absolute location.*
- Distribute the “Location Map,” “Location” game board, and a pile of markers to each student. Explain that *the student(s) should fill in the squares on the game board with places from the map* (ex: Washington, DC; New York City, Greenland; Mississippi River; North Atlantic Ocean, etc). *They should then write questions describing the places they labeled on the board in terms of absolute or relative location.* (These “clues” should be written on small squares of blank paper or note cards. They can write coordinates or describe places in terms of relative location, such as “a major river in the central U.S.”)
- Collect all of the questions and **for group instruction** act as the caller, picking a card and reading the description. Any students who have the place described should put a marker on the place. Play as Bingo; the first to fill a row across, down, or diagonally calls out “Location.” **For individualized instruction** play with the student, taking turns picking cards to ask.
- To debrief after playing the game, have the student(s) explain how the theme of location is useful to the study of geography (*It tells where places are, allowing geographers to pinpoint even small places on earth.*)
- For lesson closure or for homework have the student(s) add examples from this lesson to the “North America Geography” organizer.

# Which Province Is It?



**DIRECTIONS:** Answer the first 5 questions and then write three more of your own.

1. This province is in the northwest corner of the country. \_\_\_\_\_
2. This province is to the immediate west of the Hudson Bay. \_\_\_\_\_
3. This province shares a border with the northeastern U.S. \_\_\_\_\_
4. The Pacific Ocean borders this province. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The southernmost point of Canada is in this province. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

# LOCATION MAP

