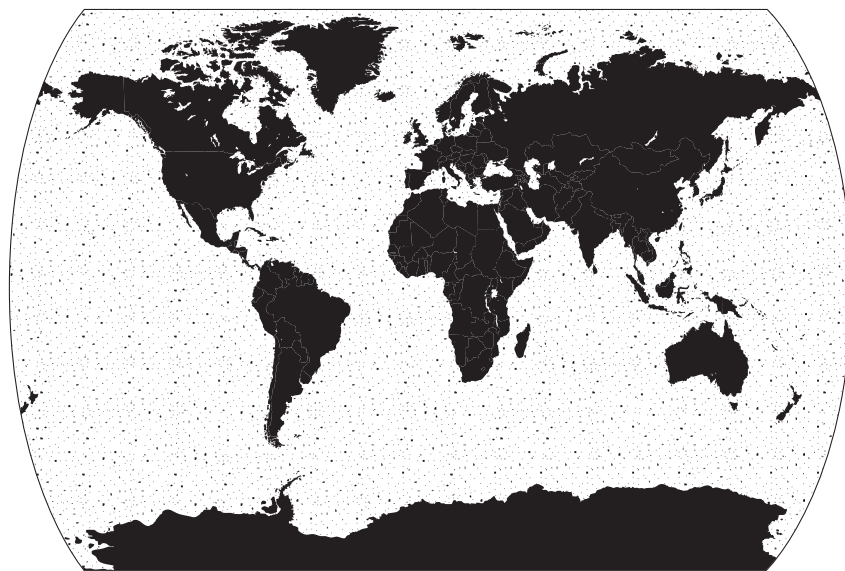


# Geographic Literacy

## Maps for Memorization

Fourth Edition



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# To the Teacher

## **Purpose**

In recent decades, the world has changed in many ways. Countries have changed governments, names, and economies. At the same time, the development of the internet has made connections between people in different areas easier than ever before. Every day, we are exposed to place-names in the news. To understand the references we hear and see, it is essential to know where these places are located.

This book is designed to enable students to memorize the names and locations of countries, capital cities, and major physical features in eleven regions. These regions have been chosen to coordinate with the standard organization of geography curricula.

An overall review section, *World Review*, is also included. You may wish to use this section as a pretest or a posttest before or after using the other sections.

## **Materials**

Each unit includes the following reproducible handouts:

- Brief overview of the region, addressing the five themes of geography: location, place, human interaction and the environment, movement and communication, and regions
- Alphabetized list of political and physical features
- Labeled political map
- Blank political map
- Labeled physical map
- Blank physical map
- Political and physical map tests
- Multiple-choice map test questions
- Answer key

To give you the greatest possible flexibility in using these materials, no student directions are given on the word-list pages. You may wish to supply directions orally or in writing.

## **Ways to Improve Memorization**

Research into how memory works indicates that we have two types of memory, short term and long term. The brain is naturally selective; it moves only essential items to long-term memory. To ensure that information will be stored in long-term memory, we need to give the brain a push. Techniques that help memorization include recitation, categorization, visualization, and mnemonic devices.

**Recitation** involves saying information over and over again. To help students include recitation in their map study, encourage them to recite the words in each category, either individually or in small groups.

**Categorization** involves sorting information into categories. For example, consider trying to memorize this list: Colorado, Huron, Columbia, Snake, Michigan, Mississippi, Superior, Missouri, Ontario, Erie, Grande, Ohio, Tennessee, Platte. As presented here, this list would probably be difficult to memorize. However, these names could be separated into two labeled lists and ordered alphabetically: Great Lakes of North America—Erie, Huron, Michigan, Ontario, Superior; Major U.S. Rivers—Colorado, Columbia, Grande, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Platte, Snake, Tennessee. Organizing the information makes it easier to memorize. To help students include categorization in their map study, have them recite the word lists category by category—e.g., by rivers, by bodies of water, and so on—touching each place on the map as it is named. Another approach to categorization would be to have

students prepare lists of terms for each country in a region, including country name, capital city, and physical features. Again, have students recite their lists, touching each place on the map as it is named.

**Visualization** involves making a visual connection between a term and its meaning. Once such a connection is made, the verbal memory can be supplemented by the visual one. In geography, the visual connection is, of course, the location of a place on the map. To reinforce this connection, whenever students are naming places, have them touch the location on the map. Also, as you begin the study of each region, draw students' attention to the regional locator map that appears on each student page. Encourage students to see how the region relates to the rest of the world.

**Mnemonic devices** are memory-enhancing techniques that can be used to learn information. A well-known geography mnemonic is the acronym HOMES, used to memorize the names of the Great Lakes. It is formed from the initial letter of each of the lakes. Mnemonic devices can also be rhymes, catchphrases, image associations, or peg words. An example of a catchphrase that uses image association would be "Italy kicked Sicily out into the Mediterranean." To encourage use of mnemonics in map memorization, offer students extra credit or a small prize for particularly helpful mnemonic devices for the region being studied. Have students create posters for their mnemonics to display while that region is being studied. (You may wish to keep these posters to use with future classes.)

## Map Tests

When all the terms in a unit have been introduced and students have had sufficient practice memorizing the terms and their locations, they are ready for the map test. Each test includes a

political and physical map test with a variety of places indicated by a number. The map test offers a choice of four place-names for each numbered location; students must choose the correct one. The answer key for each map test is reproducible; if you wish, you may distribute the answer key to students so that they can score their own, or a partner's, test.

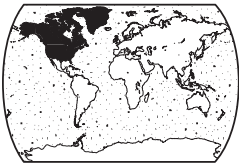
## Adapting the Material for Different Levels

Depending on the level of your students, you may wish to omit some items from memorization. To do this, simply delete these items from the word lists, maps, and tests. To make the map tests more challenging, do not distribute the map-test choices along with the map test; distribute the maps alone, or include a copy of the word list for that unit. Since the map tests do not include all the terms on the word lists, this raises the difficulty level considerably.

## A Note About Place-Names

Many of the place-names in this book have been transliterated from other writing systems. Whenever this happens, different transliteration systems can create different Western spellings. Also, some places have both indigenous names and names used by colonial systems. Where two names or two spellings for one place exist, we have used the most commonly accepted version and have given the other version in parentheses on the word list.

No matter how you choose to use these materials with your particular class, *Geographic Literacy: Maps for Memorization* will give your students the fundamental geographic knowledge they need to understand the world in which we live.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## CANADA, THE UNITED STATES, AND GREENLAND

### Overview

Canada and the United States are both located on the North American continent, in the Western Hemisphere. As well as sharing the same landmass, the two countries share many of the same landforms. They have great sweeps of craggy mountains in the west. They have rolling plains in the center. They have rounded mountains in the east.

The two countries also share some cultural features. Both are **federal states**. That means they are made up of a number of states or territories. These areas share power with the central government. Both are **plural societies**, which means they include different ethnic groups. Both countries, compared to the rest of the world, are wealthy, **industrialized** countries. And both were originally colonized by Europeans. They retain many features of European culture.

It has been more than 500 years since Europeans first came to the region. In that time, the face of the land has changed dramatically. Once, about half of the land—some 900 million acres—was covered by forest. Today, forests cover about one-fifth of the land. Over time, both countries expanded from their bases on the east coast toward the west. Both created networks for transportation and communication that stretch some 2,500 miles (4,000 km). These networks are a monument to human invention and grit. The barriers they cross in their east–west path, like the great Rocky Mountain Range, run from north to south.

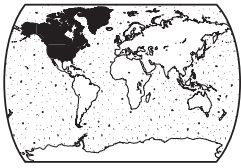
Another change to the landscape has been the growth of cities. Both the United States and Canada began as mostly rural economies. With the growth of industry came the growth of cities. Cities are still growing. As more people move to them from both rural areas and from other countries, the outer edges of the cities keep

expanding. In some places, the rural area between cities has shrunk so much that the cities almost merge with each other. They form an urban cluster. A cluster of cities like this is called a **megalopolis**—a “very large city.” In the United States, the largest megalopolis is the 600-mile-long (975-km-long) string of cities on the East Coast. It runs from southern Maine to southern Virginia. Major cities within this megalopolis include Boston, Massachusetts; New York, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Baltimore, Maryland; and Washington, D.C. Another megalopolis can be seen on the West Coast: San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego, California. Two others are developing around the Great Lakes, in both Canada and the United States. In Canada, this megalopolis may someday connect the cities of Québec City, Québec; Montréal, Québec; Toronto, Ontario; and Windsor, Ontario. On the United States side of the Lakes, the merging cities include Chicago, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; Cleveland, Ohio; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The huge island of Greenland is physically part of the same region as Canada and the United States. But it has a very different culture. Greenland is a self-governing territory of Denmark. Most of the island is covered by an ice sheet almost two miles (three km) thick. Because of the extreme cold, most people live on the southwest coast, where the climate is mildest.

### Think About It

Compared with the rest of the United States, Hawaii has a very different location, climate, culture, and history. However, it is included in this geographic region. Why do you think it is included here?



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CANADA, THE UNITED STATES, AND GREENLAND

## Word List

### Political Features

#### Countries

Canada  
Greenland (Kalaallit Nunaat)  
(Denmark)

United States

#### Capitals

Nuuk (Godthaab)  
Ottawa  
Washington, D.C.

#### United States

Alabama (AL)  
Alaska (AK)  
Arizona (AZ)  
Arkansas (AR)  
California (CA)  
Colorado (CO)  
Connecticut (CT)  
Delaware (DE)  
Florida (FL)  
Georgia (GA)  
Hawaii (HI)  
Idaho (ID)  
Illinois (IL)  
Indiana (IN)  
Iowa (IA)  
Kansas (KS)  
Kentucky (KY)  
Louisiana (LA)

Maine (ME)  
Maryland (MD)  
Massachusetts (MA)  
Michigan (MI)  
Minnesota (MN)  
Mississippi (MS)  
Missouri (MO)  
Montana (MT)  
Nebraska (NE)  
Nevada (NV)  
New Hampshire (NH)  
New Jersey (NJ)  
New Mexico (NM)  
New York (NY)  
North Carolina (NC)  
North Dakota (ND)  
Ohio (OH)  
Oklahoma (OK)  
Oregon (OR)  
Pennsylvania (PA)  
Rhode Island (RI)  
South Carolina (SC)  
South Dakota (SD)  
Tennessee (TN)  
Texas (TX)  
Utah (UT)  
Vermont (VT)  
Virginia (VA)  
Washington (WA)

West Virginia (WV)  
Wisconsin (WI)  
Wyoming (WY)

#### Canadian Provinces and Territories

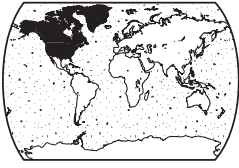
Alberta  
British Columbia  
Manitoba  
New Brunswick  
Newfoundland and Labrador  
Northwest Territories  
Nova Scotia  
Nunavut  
Ontario  
Prince Edward Island  
Québec  
Saskatchewan  
Yukon

### Physical Features

#### Mountains

Alaska Range  
Appalachian Mts.  
Cascade Mts.  
Coast Ranges  
Denali  
Mt. Logan  
Rocky Mts.  
Sierra Nevada

(continued)



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CANADA, THE UNITED STATES, AND GREENLAND

## Word List (*continued*)

### ***Deserts***

Death Valley

Great Basin Desert

Mojave Desert

Painted Desert

### ***Rivers***

Arkansas River

Colorado River

Mackenzie River

Mississippi River

Missouri River

Ohio River

Río Grande

St. Lawrence River

Yukon River

### ***Other Water Bodies***

Atlantic Ocean

Great Bear Lake

Great Salt Lake

Great Slave Lake

Hudson Bay

Lake Athabasca

Lake Erie

Lake Huron

Lake Michigan

Lake Ontario

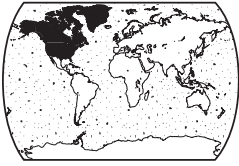
Lake Superior

Lake Winnipeg

Pacific Ocean







Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*CANADA, THE UNITED STATES, AND GREENLAND*

## Blank Political Map

