

# The United States and Canada

An Overview of the Region

## The Land

- ◆ The United States and Canada are the two largest countries in North America.
  - The Rio Grande is part of the southwest border of the United States and Mexico.
  - The St. Lawrence River (or Seaway) is part of the border between the United States and Canada.

## The Land

- ◆ The United States and Canada are divided into several types of landforms.
- ◆ Coastal Plain
  - Flat, rolling landscape in the east.
  - Along the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico.
- ◆ Appalachian Mountains
  - A strip of hills just to the west of the Coastal Plain.
  - Highest Point: Mount Mitchell, North Carolina, 6,684 feet



## Mt. Mitchell, North Carolina



## The Land

- ◆ Canadian Shield
  - Flat, high, rocky plateau.
- ◆ Great Plains/Interior Plains/Central Plains
  - Large, flat, generally fertile area in the central United States and Canada.



## The Land

- ◆ Rocky Mountains
  - Starts in Alaska and runs almost to Mexico.
  - There are many peaks over 10,000 feet tall.
    - ◆ Denali (Alaska), 20,310 feet – the highest point in North America (previous name, Mt. McKinley)
    - ◆ Mt. Logan (British Columbia), 19,550 feet – the highest point in Canada
    - ◆ Mt. Whitney, 14,494 feet – the highest point in California



## Denali

Photo Source: Peakware World Mountain Encyclopedia, <http://www.peakware.com/photos.html?pk=174>

## Mt. Logan



## Mt. Whitney



Photo Source: Jim Baumgardt, Image Counts, [www.ImageCounts.com](http://www.ImageCounts.com)

## The Land

- ◆ Pacific Coast Mountain Range
  - Stretches from Alaska to California and includes:
    - ◆ Alaska Range
    - ◆ Coastal Range (Coast Mountains)
    - ◆ Cascade Range
    - ◆ Sierra Nevada (Includes Mt. Whitney)
  - More than 2,500 miles long, most of this strip of hills and valleys are no more than 100 miles wide.



## The Land

- ◆ The Great Basin
  - Where the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Coast Mountain Ranges “split” into a “bowl-shaped” region.
  - Most of the water in the Great Basin does not flow into an ocean.

## The Great Basin



Photo Source: Niebrugge Images, [http://www.wildnatureimages.com/Great\\_Basin\\_Photos.htm](http://www.wildnatureimages.com/Great_Basin_Photos.htm)

## Climate

- ◆ There are many kinds of climates in the United States and Canada.
- ◆ Temperatures vary.
  - Hot in the south.
  - Cold in the north.
  - Mild along most of the west coast.
  - Rocky Mountains are very cold in the winter.
  - In the Central Plains, temperatures can vary as much as 150 degrees in a year.

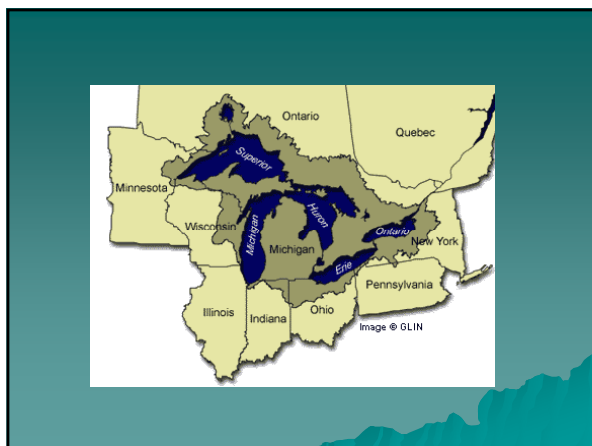
## Climate

- ◆ Most of the United States and Canada are moist.
  - The Pacific Northwest gets fog and drizzle more than half of the year.
  - The Atlantic and Gulf Coasts receive violent tropical storms called hurricanes.



## Climate

- ◆ Five of the world's largest lakes, the Great Lakes, are on the border of the United States and Canada.
  - Lake Superior
  - Lake Michigan
  - Lake Huron
  - Lake Erie
  - Lake Ontario



## Climate

- ◆ One of the longest rivers in the world, the Mississippi River, flows through the Great Plains.
  - It is about 2,350 miles in length.
    - ◆ If you include the Missouri River, which flows into the Mississippi River, the total length can be as long as 3,902 miles in length.



## Climate

- ◆ The southwestern United States is the driest region.

- ◆ Saguaro Cactus with Red Mountain in the Sonora Desert, Arizona.

## The People

- ◆ Almost everyone in the United States and Canada speak English.
  - There are exceptions.
    - ◆ Quebec – French is the primary language.
    - ◆ California – Numerous languages, with Spanish being the largest non-English language.
- ◆ Most children go to a public school.

## The People

- ◆ Private citizens or companies run most businesses.
- ◆ People are free to practice many faiths **OR** choose not to practice any faith.

## The People

- ◆ The cultural variety is because almost everyone in the United States and Canada are immigrants.
  - Immigrant – a person who moves from another country to settle.
  - About 80% have roots in Europe, about 20% have roots in other parts of the world.
  - Native Americans migrated from Asia many centuries ago.



## The People

- ◆ Canada and the United States have democracy as their form of government.
  - democracy – a form of government where the people choose their own leader.

## The People

- ◆ The United States consists of 50 states, with Alaska and Hawaii being “disconnected” from the other 48 states.
  - The United States also has several territories such as Puerto Rico.
- ◆ Canada has 10 provinces and 3 territories.

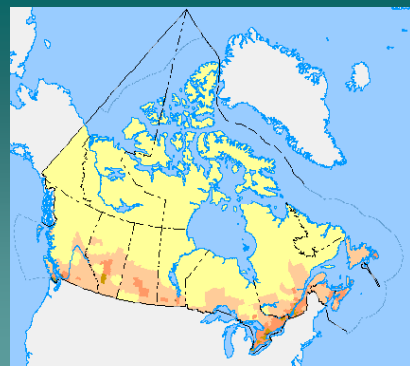


## The People

- ◆ The population of the United States is about 329 million people (Source: US Census Bureau, September 18, 2018 estimate).
- ◆ The population of Canada is about 37 million (source: Statistics Canada, September 2018 estimate).

## The People

- ◆ 75% of the population lives in or near cities.
- ◆ Most Canadians live within 120 miles of the United States border.



## The People

- ◆ The United States has the world's most powerful economy, but Canada has a similar economy.
  - People in both countries work in many kinds of jobs and lifestyles.
    - ◆ Electric lights, computers, more than one television, telephones, etc.

## Farming, Ranching, and Fishing

- ◆ Most of the farm land in the United States and Canada is owned by companies.
  - Almost all farmers use machines to work their land.
  - Canada and the United States grow more food than their citizens eat.

## Farming, Ranching, and Fishing

- ◆ Both countries export wheat, which is grown in the Central Plains.
  - export – to sell goods or resources to other countries
- ◆ Corn and other grains are also grown on the Central Plains.



## Farming, Ranching, and Fishing

- ◆ Farmers in the southern and southeastern United States earn billions of dollars growing cotton, rice, and tobacco.
- ◆ California alone grows enough vegetables to feed all of North America.
- ◆ The Pacific Northwest produces fruits and potatoes.



◆ Map Source: Go Northwest! <http://www.gonorthwest.com/Visitor/about/map.htm>

## Farming, Ranching, and Fishing

- ◆ Both Canada and the United States have dairy farms.
  - They raise hogs, chickens, and cattle.
- ◆ Fishing is big business along the long coastlines of each country.