United States Geography

Physical & Man-Made Features
How can I locate important physical and man-made features in the United States?
What are physical features?

Physical Features of a place include things like:

- lakes
- rivers
- Oceans
- Flat Lands
- mountains
- deserts
We will learn about the following physical features:

- Atlantic Coastal Plain
- Continental Divide
- The Great Basin
- Death Valley
- Great Lakes
- St. Lawrence River
- Gulf of Mexico
- Great Plains
Important Land Features

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Atlantic Coastal Plain

- Located along the East Coast
- Borders the Atlantic Ocean
- Lowland area
- Great for agriculture or farming
- Contains many rivers, swamps, and marshes
Great Plains

- Located in the Central United States, east of the Rocky Mountains
- Grassy flatlands
- No trees
- Easy to see for miles
Continental Divide

- Imaginary line located in the peaks of the Rocky Mountains
- Rivers on the eastern side of the Continental Divide flow to the Atlantic Ocean or Gulf of Mexico
- Rivers on the western side flow toward the Pacific Ocean
The Great Basin

• Located west of the Rocky Mountains
• Has many different elevations: mountains, valleys, & low lying areas.
• Water does not drain out of this region. It holds rainwater and precipitation like a basin or bowl, because water is unable to drain to the sea.
Death Valley

- Located within The Great Basin Region
- Home of the lowest point in North America
- 282 feet below sea level
- Temperatures up to 120 degrees are common here

Click here to watch a short video about Death Valley.
Important Bodies of Water
Great Lakes

- Located in the northern United States, between the U.S. and Canada
- Largest fresh water lakes in the world
- Includes 5 lakes: Superior, Michigan, Huron, Erie, and Ontario

Click here to watch a short video about the Great Lakes.
St. Lawrence River

- Located above the northern border of the United States in Canada
- Very important shipping route for bringing goods to and from the U.S.

Click here to watch a short video about the St. Lawrence Seaway.
Gulf of Mexico

- Located between the eastern coast of Mexico and the coast of Florida.
- Contains water that is clearer and warmer than the Atlantic ocean.
Important Man-Made Features

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What are man-made features?
Man-made features are things that are built by people!

- bridges
- monuments
- canals
- cities
- memorials
- towers
New York City

- Located in the southeast corner of New York
- Has access to a large harbor that helped it grow as a trade center
- One of the largest cities in the United States
- Known as the world’s center for business and trade
Erie Canal

- Located in central New York
- Man-made waterway
- Links Lake Erie to the Hudson River
- Allows goods to be shipped along the Great Lakes and further west
- Helped make New York City a major trade center
Boston, Massachusetts
• Located at the mouth of the St. Charles River on a harbor
• Largest city in Massachusetts
• Capital of Massachusetts
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

• Located in the southeast corner of Pennsylvania
• Largest city in Pennsylvania
• Known as the birthplace of our nation
• The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were written here
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