

Year 8 Geography Knowledge Booklet

Term 3

The United States of America

Name:

Class:

 **Geography**



Enquiry Question:

Geography – The United States of America

Big questions that will help you answer this enquiry question:

Big Q 1 and 2: What link is there between the UK and the USA?

Big Q 3: What are the differences between the major Native American tribes?

Big Q 4 and 5: What does the USA look like today?

Big Q 6: What biomes can be found within the USA?.

Big Q 7 and 8: What do we know about the course of a river and how can we link that to the Mississippi?.

Big Q 9: What are the key aims of the National Park Service in the USA?.

Big Q 10 and 11: Where is Alaska and why is it so important?

Big Q 12: What issues does Alaska face due to extraction of resources?

Big Q 13: What are the great lakes and why are they important?.

Big Q 14 and 15: Where do people live in the USA today?

Big Q 16: What is Route 66?.

Big Q 17: Why do people try to cross the border illegally?.

Big Q 18: Should Donald Trump build his wall?

Big Q 19: Is the USA a leading world superpower?

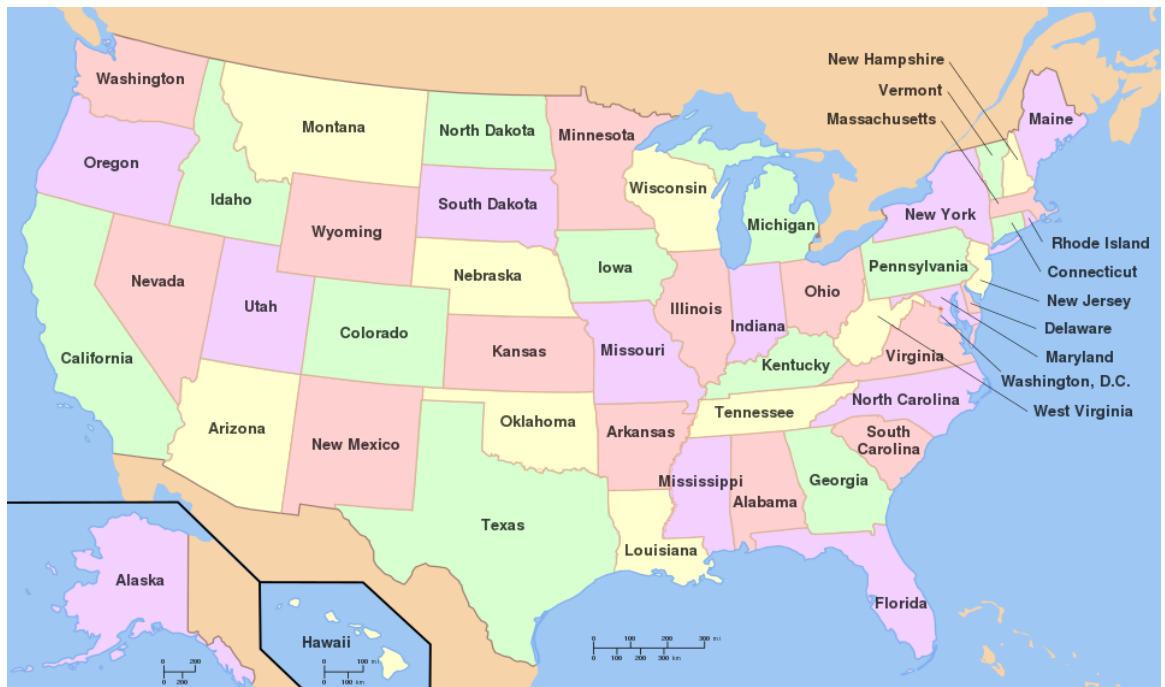
Big Q 20: How did 9/11 affect the USA?.

Big Q 21-23: What other disasters does the USA face and what impact do they have on local communities?

Big Q 24-26: What is a super volcano and what impacts could an eruption of this size have?.

Key term	Definition
Altitude	height above sea level
Biodiversity	the number and types of plants and animals that exist in a particular area or in the world generally, or the problem of protecting this
Biomes	a region of the earth's surface and the particular combination of climate (general type of weather), plants, and animals that are found in it
Climate	the general weather conditions usually found in a particular place
Coniferous	(of a tree) producing cones, and having leaves that do not fall off in the winter
Continent	one of the seven large land masses on the earth's surface, surrounded, or mainly surrounded, by sea and usually consisting of various countries
Deciduous	A deciduous tree loses its leaves in autumn and grows new ones in the spring.
Delta	an area of low, flat land, sometimes shaped like a triangle, where a river divides into several smaller rivers before flowing into the sea:
Drainage Basin	an area of land from which the rain flows into a particular river or lake, etc.
Flood Plain	an area of flat land near a river that is often flooded when the river becomes too full
Globalisation	the increase of trade around the world, especially by large companies producing and trading goods in many different countries
Hurricane	a violent wind that has a circular movement.
Independence	freedom from being governed or ruled by another country
Industry	the companies and activities involved in the process of producing goods for sale, especially in a factory or special area
Latitude	the position north or south of the equator measured from 0° to 90°
Longitude	the distance of a place east or west of an imaginary line between the North Pole and the South Pole, measured in degrees
Magma	hot liquid rock found just below the surface of the earth
Meander	a curve of a river or stream
Metropolis	a very large city, often the most important city in a large area or country
Migration	the process of people travelling to a new place to live, usually in large numbers
Natural Hazard	a natural event such as a flood, earthquake, or tsunami that kills or injures a lot of people
Pull Factor	something that attracts people to a place or an activity
Push Factor	something that makes people want to leave a place or escape from a particular situation
Refugee	a person who has escaped from their own country for political, religious, or economic reasons or because of a war
Revolution	a change in the way a country is governed, usually to a different political system and often using violence or war
Sediment	sand, stones, etc. that slowly form a layer of rock
Settlement	a place where people come to live or the process of settling in such a place
Social	relating to society and living together in an organized way
Source	The start of a river.
Stakeholders	a person or group of people who have a vested interest in something
Superpower	a country that has very great political and military power
Terrorism	(threats of) violent action for political purposes
Topography	the physical appearance of the natural features of an area of land, especially the shape of its surface
Tornado	a strong, dangerous wind that forms itself into an upside-down spinning cone and is able to destroy buildings as it moves across the ground
Tributary	a river or stream that flows into a larger river or a lake
Watershed	an area of high ground from which water flows down to a river
Weather	the conditions in the air above the earth such as wind, rain, or temperature, especially at a particular time

Maps of the USA



A map of the states of the USA



A physical map of the USA

What is a colony?

What is a colony?

A colony is a region of land that is under the political control of another country. Usually the controlling country is physically far away from the colony, as was the case with England and the American colonies. Colonies are typically founded and settled by people from the home country, however, there may also be settlers from other countries. This was especially true of the American colonies which had settlers from all over Europe.



What are the biomes of the USA?

Mediterranean

Hot, dry summers, mild, wet winters

Grasslands

2-35 inches of rainfall p/y

Summer temperatures 100°F

Winter temperatures 0°F

Deciduous woodland

They are found 0 - 50° degrees north latitude

Former glaciers from New England to Indiana

Moderate climate, 4 seasons and they get 2 - 4 feet of rain per year

Trees are oaks, maples, beeches, hickories and ashes

Desert

There are three specific regions

Sonoran Desert found in California, Arizona and Mexico. Low elevation which makes it HOT

Mojave Desert – the smallest, but where Death Valley can reach 134°

Great Basin – Nevada with Mountain ranges over 10,000 feet, 4- 11 inches of snow a year

Coniferous woodlands

Upper area of North America

Pines, fir and spruce trees, produce cones which contains the seeds

Tall mountains have supported tree growth

Cold and stormy in the winter

Tundra

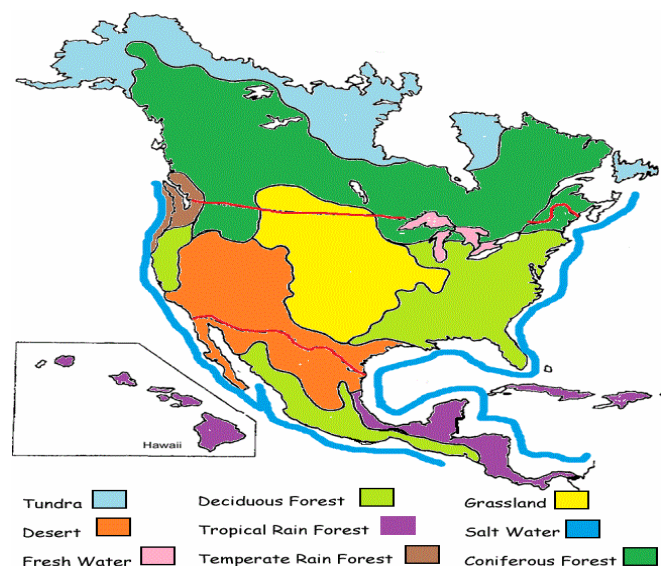
55° to 70° North

Tundra means barren land

Ground is permanently frozen 10" to 3 ft.

Average temperature -18°F

Summer the sun never sets



Alaska— “The World’s Last Great Wilderness”

Alaska Fact file

Population: 738,432 (2015 Est)

Capital: Juneau

Bordering Areas: Yukon Territory and British Columbia Canada

Area: 663,268 square miles (1,717,854 sq. km)

Highest Point: Denali or Mt. McKinley at 20,320 feet (6,193 m)

Location

Alaska is a state in the United States that is located in the far northwest of North America. It is bordered by Canada to the east, the Arctic Ocean to the north and the Pacific Ocean to the south and west. Alaska is the largest state in the U.S. and it was the 49th state to be admitted into the Union. Alaska joined the U.S. on January 3, 1959. Alaska is known for its largely undeveloped land, mountains, glaciers, harsh climate and biodiversity.



Factors Influencing Climate:

Latitude - Locations that are further North/South receive less heat energy from the Sun. The equator lies directly underneath the Sun and so countries that fall on the equator receive more solar (heat) energy. Alaska is in the NW of the USA.

Altitude - Temperatures decrease with altitude. There is a 1°C drop in temperature for every increase of 100m in height. This is because the air is less dense in higher altitudes, so it isn't as good at holding heat.

Distance from the sea - Coastal areas are most affected by the sea. The sea takes longer to heat up and cool down than land. So in the winter the sea keeps coastal areas warm and in summer, it cools them down.

Ocean Currents - The effect that ocean currents have on the temperature depends on whether the ocean current is hot or cold.

THE FIGHT TO PROTECT THE TONGASS FROM OLD-GROWTH CLEARCUTS

DIVERSE WILDLIFE

The Tongass is home to humpback and orca whales, otters, beavers, Alexander Archipelago wolves and some of the largest, densest concentrations of brown bears and bald eagles found on the planet.

TONGASS WATERS

The many Tongass glaciers that can be seen today are remnants of the last ice age during the Pleistocene Epoch. The Tongass is also home to five species of salmon: king, red, silver, chum and pink.

GATEWAY TO ALASKA

The Tongass is the place to visit! Often referred to as the “Inside Passage” or the gateway to Alaska, commercial fishing, tourism and recreation are the fastest growing job sectors in Southeast Alaska.

PUBLIC LAND

At approximately 17 million acres, the Tongass National Forest is America’s largest national forest. There are 19 designated wilderness areas within the Tongass, more than in any other national forest.

CARBON STORE

The Tongass is a buffer against climate change, absorbing around eight percent of the nation’s annual global warming pollution and storing an estimated 10-12 percent of all carbon in our national forests.

The Tongass National Forest, America's largest national forest, continues to be threatened by new congressional attempts to clear-cut rare and valuable old-growth trees. In addition, the U.S. Forest Service has started a planning process to kick-start the largest old-growth logging project in the U.S. in recent history, and has begun a process that could exempt the Tongass from the federal Roadless Rule.

The USA owned 99 %of the land within the Territory of Alaska. The statehood act provided for deeding to the state, within 25 years, up to 103,350,000 acres —more than a quarter of Alaska’s total area. (Alaska selected the lands for takeover.) Lands taken over by the state could be sold to individuals or corporations for farms, home sites, or factory sites. Ownership did not include mineral rights, which could be leased by the state. Producing oil wells were required to pay royalties to the state.

SOME ADVANTAGES OF DRILLING FOR OIL:

38% of all wages come from the oil industry
The oil industry pays for some services
Drilling for oil here means the USA will not need to but it from abroad

The state constitution provides that replenish able resources belonging to the state—fish, wildlife, forests, and grasslands—be utilized on the “sustained yield” principle. According to this principle of conservation, only the annual surplus or increase of the resources should ever be used so as not to decrease the basic stock of animals or the supply of trees and grasslands.



The finest big-game hunting and fishing in the USA are found. Among the many types of brown bears found in the state is the famous Kodiak. Other native species are the black and polar bears. Alaskan wildlife also includes caribou (reindeer), moose, elk, bison, Sitka black-tailed deer, the Dall sheep, and the mountain goat. Reindeer, or domesticated caribou, are herded in parts of western Alaska. The state’s waterpower resources are enormous, but they have not yet been fully exploited. Still, hydroelectric plants are Alaska’s leading source of renewable energy. near Anchorage, and Bradley Lake on the Kenai Peninsula, are the largest.

SOME DISADVANTAGES OF DRILLING FOR OI L IN ALASKA ARE:

Buildings and roads are damaging the permafrost
Wildlife is damaged by oil spills
Native people may lose their culture

The Mississippi River

A RIVER DRAINAGE BASIN

Source—the start of a river, usually found in mountainous areas or from natural springs.

Tributary—a smaller river that flows into and adds its water to another.

Confluence—the meeting point of two joining rivers.

Mouth—where a river empties into an ocean or lake

Watershed—the boundary (edge) of the drainage basin. Any precipitation that falls within the watershed will flow into it's drainage basin. The watershed is usually found in mountains/hills.



- The Mississippi River is about 2,340 miles (3,766 kilometres) long and flows through ten different states - that means that the Mississippi River flows through 20% of the continental United States!
- The Mississippi River combines with the Missouri River to form the longest river system in North America, and the fourth longest in the entire world.
- The river flows from Lake Itasca in Minnesota and into the Gulf of Mexico.
- The Mississippi River is known for the large, paddle wheel-propelled steam boats that sail on it.
- At its widest point, the Mississippi River is over seven miles (eleven kilometres) wide.

Mexican immigration into the USA

IGCSE POPULATION CASE STUDY



MIGRATION: MEXICO TO USA



PUSH FACTORS

Poor medical facilities 1800 per doctor
low paid jobs
adult literacy rates 55% - poor education prospects
Life expectancy 72 yrs
40% unemployed



PULL FACTORS

Excellent medical facilities 400 per doctor
Well paid jobs GNP \$24,750
Adult literacy rates 99% - good education prospects
Life expectancy 76 yrs
Many job opportunities



IMPACTS ON MEXICO

Mexican countryside has a shortage of economically active people
Many men leaving a majority of women who have trouble finding marriage partners
Young people tend to migrate leaving the old and the very young
Legal and illegal immigrant together send roughly \$6 billion back to Mexico
Certain villages such as Santa Ines have lost 2/3 of its inhabitants.



IMPACTS ON USA

Illegal migration cost the USA millions \$ for border patrols and prisons.
Mexicans are seen as a drain on the economy
Migrant workers keep wages low
Can create problems in cities with cultural and racial tension.
Benefit the economy by working for low wages.



The USA as a Superpower

ECONOMIC POWER

The United States of America is the world's foremost economic and military power. It has the **third largest population** in the world (325 million) and its economy produces around one quarter of the world's wealth – **\$17.97 trillion** in 2015. Income in 2015 was **\$56,300 per capita**, one of the highest in the developed world.

NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE



MILITARY POWER

Militarily, the US remains the world's only superpower. Although the US does not spend the most in the world on defence as a proportion of GDP (3.8%), in absolute terms it spends vastly more than any other country – **\$640 billion** from a world total of \$1747 billion in 2013. Over one third (36%) of the total world's defence spending is by the US alone.

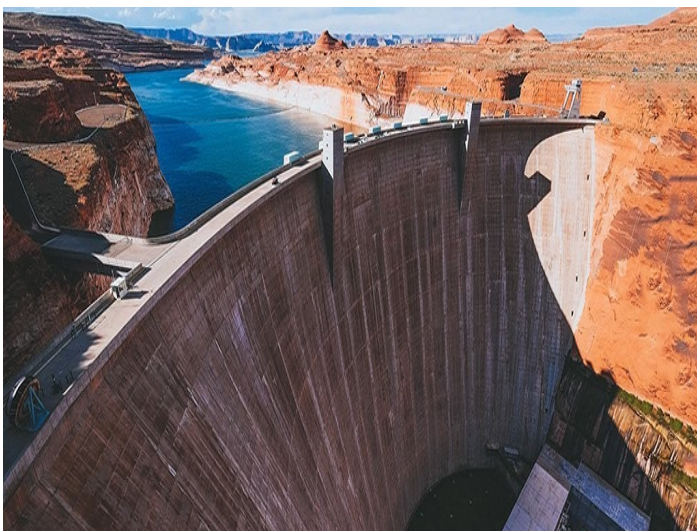
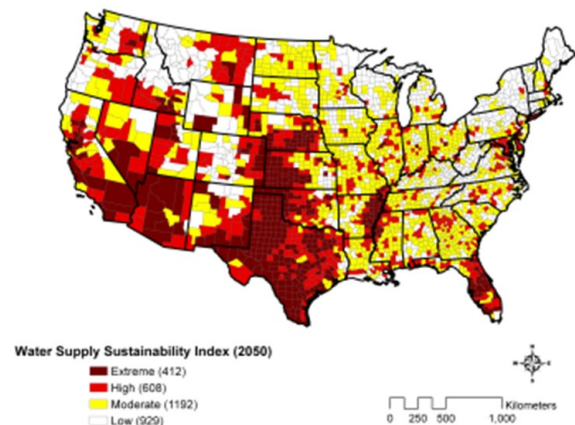
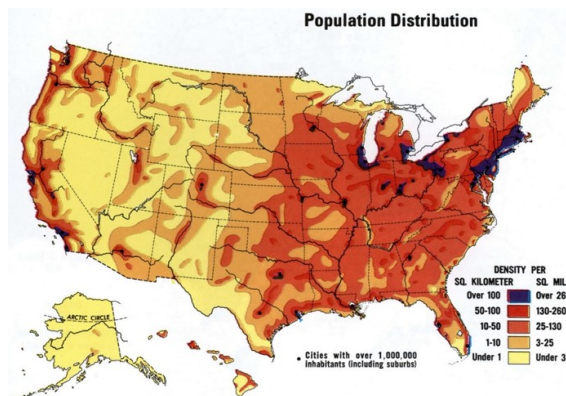


CULTURAL INFLUENCE

The USA's cultural influence extends across the world, for example over two billion people speak some English in the world today with the majority speaking an Americanised version of the language. US TV programmes, films, video games and music have a large domestic market of more than 300 million customers, in addition to their influence on the rest of the world.



Population and Water Scarcity in the USA



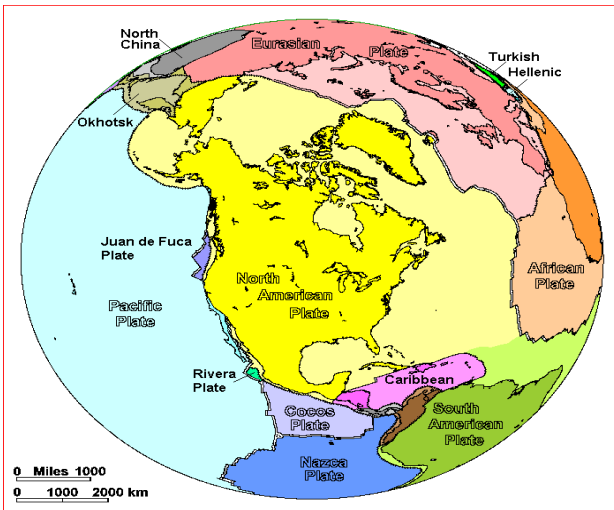
The US Is Only Decades Away From Widespread Water Shortages, Scientists Warn

Much of the United States could be gripped by significant water shortages in just five decades' time, according to predictions made in a new study.

From the year 2071 on, scientists say the combined effects of climate change and population increases are projected to present "[serious challenges](#)" in close to half of the 204 watersheds covering the contiguous US.

Natural Hazards in the USA

PLATE BOUNDARIES IN NORTH AMERICA



Earthquake



Flood



Drought



Volcanic Eruption



Tsunami



Cyclone

WHAT CAUSES EARTHQUAKES?

An **earthquake** is the shaking and vibration of the Earth's crust due to movement of the Earth's plates (plate tectonics). Earthquakes can happen along any type of plate boundary.

Earthquakes occur when tension is released from inside the crust. Plates do not always move smoothly alongside each other and sometimes get stuck. When this happens pressure builds up. When this pressure is eventually released, an earthquake tends to occur.

Six Steps to Stay Safe

Take these steps to prepare for, survive and recover from an earthquake



Make a plan

Gathering your family will be top on your list. Choose a meeting place and an out-of-area contact person to relay messages.



Drop, cover and hold on

When a quake starts, drop down where you are, and cover your head. If you're near heavy furniture, take cover underneath and hold on tight.



Secure your home

Make sure your house is as shakeproof as possible by retrofitting weak spots, strapping down heavy furniture and securing loose objects.



Check for hazards

When the shaking stops, check for injuries and for damage to home electrical wires, gas lines, walls, floors and water pipes.



Get a kit

Store supplies to get your family through at least the first three days after a quake.



Stay connected

Surviving a quake is a community effort. Get to know your neighbors now, and work together with local organizations to prepare.

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A Conservative Plate Margin



How can we classify the impacts of Natural hazards?

SOCIAL: How people are effected **ECONOMIC:** Effects on jobs and money **ENVIRONMENTAL:** damage to surroundings
IMMEDIATE: During or straight after **SHORT TERM:** The days/weeks afterwards **LONG TERM:** Months/years later

Homework 1: Spelling Test

Instructions: You will be given a list of 10 key terms that will be used with this topic.

1. Write the definition for each term .
2. Write the word within a sentence.
3. Practice spelling the word.

You will be tested on these spellings and your understanding of what the words mean.

Due date:

Spellings

Colony
Biome
Deciduous
Coniferous
Altitude
Migration
Mississippi
Immigration
Superpower
Scarcity

Homework 2: Knowledge

You will be sitting a knowledge quick quiz on the following points:

- The Colonisation of the USA
- Biomes of the USA
- The issues facing Alaska

There are questions in your homework booklet to focus your revision on this.

Due date:

Homework 3—Revision for Mid Unit test

Instructions: Revise for a mid unit test.

You will be tested on the following aspects about the USA— Key terms, states of the USA, the biomes of the USA and Alaska

Please use this knowledge organiser as a clear focus for your upcoming mid unit test

Due date:

Homework 4: Geographical Literacy



Instructions: Using the map on the homework 3 in your homework booklet you need to learn the spelling and location of 10 countries in North and South America.

You should practice on the three blank maps for a quick quiz in lesson where you will be given a blank map and 10 minutes.

One marks for location, one marks for spelling. There will be house points rewarded for high scorers!

Due date:

Homework 5—Geographical Skills Practice

The following cities are the 10 largest cities in the USA and the population in millions for each one:

1. NEW YORK 8.4 2. LOS ANGELES 4.0 3. CHICAGO 2.7 4. PHOENIX 1.7 5. HOUSTON 2.3
6. PHILADELPHIA 1.5 7. SAN ANTONIA 1.5 8. SAN DIEGO 1.4 9. DALLAS 1.4 10. SAN JOSE 1.0

- 1) Draw a bar graph for using the data above. Ensure that your graph is accurately labelled, completed on graph paper and drawn in pencil.

Due date:

- 2) Calculate the following:

- A) Mean population
- B) Median population
- C) Modal population

3. What state is each one in? Which state has the most top ten cities?

Homework 6—Revision for End of Year test

Instructions: Revise for a end of topic test

You will be tested on all aspects of the USA topic.

Please use this knowledge organiser and your homework booklet as a clear focus for your upcoming test.

Due date:

The United States of America

Wider Reading List

Videos

- Amazon with Bruce Parry—a series of documentaries covering a journey down the Amazon River whilst stopping and living with different tribes to experience their culture.
- Stacey Dooley Border Wars—Stacey follows a group of Mexican illegal immigrants
- Planet Earth—David Attenborough documentary series, some of which focus on plant and animal adaptations to the USA biomes.

Revision Websites

- CIA website—contains key facts and figures for all countries.
- BBC Bitesize—contains revision material aimed at GCSE students. There is no 'USA' topic but individual topic components such as plate tectonics, weather & climate can be searched for.

