

Features Across America

Read location clues for major United States physical features.

SS4G1.a "Locate major physical features of the United States: the Atlantic Coastal Plain, the Great Plains, the Continental Divide, the Gulf of Mexico, the Mississippi River, and the Great Lakes."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each of the six named physical features. Circle a nearby word or phrase that tells where each feature is located.

A Trip Across the United States

- ① Imagine planning a trip across the United States. Start at the Atlantic Ocean on the east. The Atlantic Coastal Plain is a low, flat area along much of this coast. Farther north and inland, the Great Lakes are five large freshwater lakes near the United States border with Canada. South of the country, the Gulf of Mexico meets the coast.
- ② Travel west from the Atlantic Coastal Plain toward the middle of the country. The Mississippi River flows south from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. It drains water from a large part of the nation. West of the Mississippi River, the Great Plains stretch across the central United States. This broad region has wide grasslands and reaches toward the Rocky Mountains in the west.
- ③ In the western United States, the Continental Divide runs mainly along high Rocky Mountain ridges. It separates water that flows toward the Pacific Ocean from water that flows toward the Atlantic Ocean or the Gulf of Mexico. A raindrop falling on one side may travel west to the Pacific. On the other side, it can travel east through rivers and streams.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

- 1** Which land region is along much of the Atlantic coast, and which water body meets the coast south of the country?

- 2** Where are the Great Lakes located?

- 3** What region is west of the Mississippi River? Tell the direction the Mississippi River flows and where it ends.

- 4** What feature separates water that flows toward the Pacific Ocean from water that flows toward the Atlantic Ocean or Gulf of Mexico?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a four-sentence travel plan across the United States. Include at least four named physical features, including the Continental Divide, and use location words such as east, west, north, south, or near.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each of the six named physical features. Circle a nearby word or phrase that tells where each feature is located. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which land region is along much of the Atlantic coast, and which water body meets the coast south of the country?	The Atlantic Coastal Plain is along much of the Atlantic coast. The Gulf of Mexico meets the coast south of the country.
2	Where are the Great Lakes located?	They are farther north and inland, near the United States border with Canada.
3	What region is west of the Mississippi River? Tell the direction the Mississippi River flows and where it ends.	The Great Plains are west of the Mississippi River. The river flows south from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico.
4	What feature separates water that flows toward the Pacific Ocean from water that flows toward the Atlantic Ocean or Gulf of Mexico?	The Continental Divide.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I begin at the Atlantic Coastal Plain on the east coast. I travel north and inland to the Great Lakes near Canada. Next, I go west across the Great Plains toward the Rocky Mountains. At the Continental Divide, I notice that water on one side flows toward the Pacific Ocean.

Accept equivalent location wording that matches the passage. For the travel plan, accept any accurate four-sentence route using at least four features, including the Continental Divide, with clear location language.