

Cantrell Primary School Geography Curriculum

Year 4: What's so special about North America?

Use maps to identify equator, tropics of Capricorn and Cancer and locate countries within North America. Identify similarities and differences in physical and human geography of a region of the UK and a region within North America (Mexico.)

Objectives:

- Know and be able to locate on a world map the Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle
- Know the names of, and locate, at least five North American countries (Mexico, USA, Canada, Cuba and Jamaica)
- Know some of the key physical characteristics of North America
- Know some similarities and differences between a region of the UK and a region in a North American country.
- Be able to use maps and atlases to find and locate countries in North America

Key Factual Learning:

- ✓ The Earth is split into two hemispheres – Northern and Southern – with the equator being the middle. When the northern hemisphere is in Summer, the southern hemisphere is in winter.
- ✓ The Arctic circle is in the Northern Hemisphere and Antarctic is in the Southern Hemisphere.
- ✓ There are 23 countries in North America. Key countries include USA, Canada, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Jamaica.
- ✓ There are many different climates within North America. The Caribbean Islands and Mexico are very warm and have tropical climates. These have two seasons – the wet and dry season. Canada and USA have a mix of weathers as they are such big countries. Both have four seasons. Canada and Northern USA have very cold winters and can drop below freezing. They have warm summers but parts of Southern USA can be very hot which results in heat waves and wild fires.
- ✓ North America is home to many volcanoes including Yellowstone (dormant) and Popocatepetl (active.) It is also home to waterfalls including Niagara Falls which crosses two countries; the Rockies mountain range (also crosses two countries) rivers and fresh-water lakes.
- ✓ The capital of Britain is London; the capital of Mexico is Mexico City. Population of London is 8.98 million; Mexico City is 8.86million. Templo Mayor is a major landmark in Mexico City (old Aztec ruins) situated around the Zocalo (the main town square.) This is similar to Trafalgar Square.

Practical Tasks:

- Use an atlas to colour the different hemispheres in on a world map and label key continents and countries within each hemisphere. Label and identify countries that the tropics go through and label on a map.
- Label countries in North America using an atlas. (They will also need to identify Alaska and mark as USA.)
- Create a fact file about the different climates found in the continent by matching the climate to the definition and marking on the map.
- Children to sort various places into physical features and human features.
- Create a comparison chart between England and the USA, comparing climates, population, landmarks, physical features and other interesting facts the children find from their own research.

Key Vocabulary:

Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, Equator, Tropic of Capricorn, Tropic of Cancer, Arctic Circle, Antarctic, North America, countries, climate, tropical, seasons, wet season, dry season, heat wave, wild fires, physical features, volcanoes, waterfalls, deserts, coral reef, population, capital, landmarks.

Cross-Curricular Links:

History – The Maya
 Computing – research facts about Mexico City and London/ Map labelling activity on Purple Mash
 Literacy – travel brochures to Mexico/ guided reading book
 Music – Mexican Mariachi music

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Year 4: Rivers – Source to Sea

Map skills identifying key rivers around the world, how rivers are formed (water cycle) and key vocabulary linked to the formation of rivers. Local study into the River Leen and the River Trent

Objectives:

- Be able to explain the stages of a water cycle
- Be able to name some of the processes within the water cycle that are associated with rivers and mountains
- Know, name and locate the main rivers in the UK
- Know the name of and be able to locate a number of the world's longest rivers (Nile, Amazon, Yangtze, Mississippi)
- Know and be able to label the main features of a river
- Use maps and atlases to research countries in Europe
- Use 8-point compass points to locate things

Key Factual Learning:

- ✓ The Water cycle is a continuous cycle where water evaporates and condenses. The sun heats up large areas of water (sea, river, lakes, puddles) which turns the water into water vapour. This rises as it is light. As it cools, the vapour becomes heavier and condenses, turning into clouds. When these clouds become too heavy, precipitation happens (rain/ snow/ hail/ sleet.) The water flows downwards (pulled down by gravity) flowing through streams and rivers until it gets to the sea or a lake where the cycle starts again.
- ✓ The source of a river is always up high (mountainside/ hillside) sometimes this source can be underground. As water flows down from the source it forms a stream. The water travels across land meandering along (bendy path) where it gets bigger by joining with other waterways or by eroding the rock and ground around it. Sometimes, the water is so powerful it can erode rocks to form vast valleys, gorges or canyons. Eventually the river flows towards the sea. The mouth of the river forms an estuary (where the fresh water of the river meets the salty water of the sea.)
- ✓ There are many important rivers in the UK with big cities built around them. Cities form near rivers as a way of getting water and providing transport. Many cities have canals-man made built water courses that were used primarily for transport. Nottingham has a canal that runs through the city centre that links up to the River Trent. Rivers are indicated on maps as a blue line-this line tends to be wavy as it follows the path and shape of the river (not to be confused by a road map and how the motorways are marked.)
- ✓ The longest river in Asia is the Yangtze in China (3rd longest in world.) The Amazon is second longest river in the world and the longest in South America. The River Nile is the longest river in the world and the longest in Africa. The Volga is the longest river in Europe, starting the mountains in Russia and ending at the Caspian Sea. The Ganges in India is one of the most sacred rivers in the world to Hindus but it is also heavily polluted. The Mississippi is the longest river in North America. The River Severn is the longest river in the UK, followed by the River Thames. The River Trent is the third longest river in the UK.
- ✓ The River Leen is a small tributary (small sub river that flows from a larger one) of the River Trent. It is 15 miles long. It starts from a spring at the foot of Robin Hood Hills near Annesley and flows through the grounds of Newstead Abbey, Papplewick, Mill Lakes in Bestwood Country Park, along the Leen Valley (Bulwell, Basford, Radford and Lenton) where it flows into the Trent just behind the Notts County FC stadium. Over the years the direction of the river has changed, especially nearer town to accommodate the development of roads. There have also been changes to prevent flooding and bring water sources closer to developing areas. The Leen is measured in Bulwell on a daily basis. The usual height is between 0.27-1.1m but the highest recorded is 1.58m on 25th June 2007.
- ✓ A compass has 4 main points (N,S,E,W) and 4 in between points (NE, SE, SW, NW.)

Practical Tasks:

- Label the parts of the water cycle.
- Label a diagram of a river.
- Write a story as a little water drop and it's journey through the water cycle and then how it arrives back at the sea.
- Use atlases and maps of the UK to find and label rivers
- Children to find out key facts about major rivers from the UK and abroad, using atlases to help them.
- Create a report about the River Leen, including daily water levels, where it originates and where it enters the Trent.
- Map a route from school to Bulwell Bogs including where the River Leen runs.
- Children to label a compass with the 8 points and practise using compasses around the playground.

Key Vocabulary:

Precipitation, water cycle, evaporation, condensation, sun, run off, spring, source, underground, lake, bog, downstream, gravity, erosion, meander, basin, river bed, estuary, stream, river, mouth, gauges, valley, canyon, Yangtze, Nile, Amazon, Thames, Ganges, Severn, Mississippi, Volga, tributary, transportation, development, monitored

Cross-Curricular Links:

Computing – Research facts about rivers

Literacy – Rivers non-chronological report / The story of the Raindrop/ River Whale

Maths – ordering lengths

Art – River pictures and Waterlilies by Monet

Music – Listening and Appraising music around the theme of water-The Blue Danube, Handel's Water Music and Saint-Sanes Aquarium from Carnival of the Animals.