Canada, the United States, and Greenland
Canada and the United States are both located on the North American continent, in the Western Hemisphere. As well as sharing the same landmass, the two countries share many of the same landforms. They have great sweeps of craggy mountains in the west. They have rolling plains in the center. They have rounded mountains in the east.

The two countries also share some cultural features. Both are federal states. That means they are made up of a number of states or territories. These areas share power with the central government. Both are plural societies, which means they include different ethnic groups. Both countries, compared to the rest of the world, are wealthy, industrialized countries. And both were originally colonized by Europeans. They retain many features of European culture.

It has been more than 500 years since Europeans first came to the region. In that time, the face of the land has changed dramatically. Once, about half of the land—some 900 million acres—was covered by forest. Today, forests cover about one fifth of the land. Over time, both countries expanded from their bases on the east coast toward the west. Both created networks for transportation and communication that stretch some 2,500 miles (4,000 kilometers). These networks are a monument to human invention and grit. The barriers they cross in their east–west path, like the great Rocky Mountain Range, run from north to south.

Another change to the landscape has been the growth of cities. Both the United States and Canada began as mostly rural economies. With the growth of industry came the growth of cities. Cities are still growing. As more people move to them from both rural areas and from other countries, the outer edges of the cities keep expanding. In some places, the rural area between cities has shrunk so much that the cities almost merge with each other. They form an urban cluster. A cluster of cities like this is called a megalopolis—a “very large city.” In the United States, the largest megalopolis is the 600-mile-long (975-km-long) string of cities on the east coast. It runs from southern Maine to southern Virginia. Major cities within this megalopolis include Boston, Massachusetts; New York, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Baltimore, Maryland; and Washington, D.C. Another megalopolis can be seen on the west coast: San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego, California. Two others are developing around the Great Lakes, in both Canada and the United States. In Canada, this megalopolis may someday connect the cities of Quebec City, Quebec; Montreal, Quebec; Toronto, Ontario; and Windsor, Ontario. On the United States side of the Lakes, the merging cities include Chicago, Illinois; Detroit, Michigan; Cleveland, Ohio; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

The huge island of Greenland is physically part of the same region as Canada and the United States. But it has a very different culture. Greenland is a self-governing territory of Denmark. Most of the island is covered by an ice sheet almost two miles (three kilometers) thick. Because of the extreme cold, most people live on the southwest coast, where the climate is mildest.

Think About It

Compared to the rest of the United States, Hawaii has a very different location, climate, culture, and history. However, it is included in this geographic region. Why do you think it is included here?
**Political Features**

**COUNTRIES**
- Canada
- Greenland (Denmark)
- United States

**CAPITALS**
- Nuuk (Godthaab)
- Ottawa
- Washington, D.C.

**UNITED STATES**
- Alabama (AL)
- Alaska (AK)
- Arizona (AZ)
- Arkansas (AR)
- California (CA)
- Colorado (CO)
- Connecticut (CT)
- Delaware (DE)
- Florida (FL)
- Georgia (GA)
- Hawaii (HI)
- Idaho (ID)
- Illinois (IL)
- Indiana (IN)
- Iowa (IA)
- Kansas (KS)
- Kentucky (KY)
- Louisiana (LA)
- Maine (ME)
- Maryland (MD)
- Massachusetts (MA)
- Michigan (MI)
- Minnesota (MN)
- Mississippi (MS)
- Missouri (MO)
- Montana (MT)
- Nebraska (NE)
- Nevada (NV)
- New Hampshire (NH)
- New Jersey (NJ)
- New Mexico (NM)
- New York (NY)
- North Carolina (NC)
- North Dakota (ND)
- Ohio (OH)
- Oklahoma (OK)
- Oregon (OR)
- Pennsylvania (PA)
- Rhode Island (RI)
- South Carolina (SC)
- South Dakota (SD)
- Tennessee (TN)
- Texas (TX)
- Utah (UT)
- Vermont (VT)
- Virginia (VA)
- Washington (WA)
- West Virginia (WV)

**CANADIAN PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES**
- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- New Brunswick
- Newfoundland
- Northwest Territories
- Nova Scotia
- Nunavut
- Ontario
- Prince Edward Island
- Quebec
- Saskatchewan
- Yukon Territory

**Physical Features**

**MOUNTAINS**
- Alaska Range
- Appalachian Mts.
- Cascade Mts.
- Coast Ranges
- Mt. Logan
- Mt. McKinley (Denali)
- Rocky Mts.
- Sierra Nevada Mts.
### Word List (continued)

**Deserts**
- Death Valley Desert
- Great Basin Desert
- Mojave Desert
- Painted Desert

**Rivers**
- Arkansas River
- Colorado River
- Mackenzie River
- Mississippi River

**Missouri River**
- Ohio River
- Río Grande
- St. Lawrence River
- Yukon River

**Other Water Bodies**
- Atlantic Ocean
- Great Bear Lake
- Great Salt Lake
- Great Slave Lake

- Hudson Bay
- Lake Athabasca
- Lake Erie
- Lake Huron
- Lake Michigan
- Lake Ontario
- Lake Superior
- Lake Winnipeg
- Pacific Ocean