



*Introduction to Physical and Human
Geography of the USA*



美国 自然人文地理

常俊跃 赵秀艳 赵永青 主编



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

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图书在版编目(CIP)数据

美国自然人文地理/常俊跃,赵秀艳,赵永青主编. —北京:北京大学出版社,2009.7

(21世纪英语专业系列教材)

ISBN 978-7-301-15288-1

I. 美… II. ①常…②赵…③赵… III. ①英语—阅读教学—高等学校—教材②自然地理学—美国③人文地理学—美国 IV. H319.4:K

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2009)第 091381 号

书 名: 美国自然人文地理

著作责任者: 常俊跃 赵秀艳 赵永青 主编

责任编辑: 黄瑞明

标准书号: ISBN 978-7-301-15288-1/K · 0597

出版发行: 北京大学出版社

地 址: 北京市海淀区成府路 205 号 100871

网 址: <http://www.pup.cn>

电 话: 邮购部 62752015 发行部 62750672 编辑部 62767347

出版部 62754962

电子邮箱: zbing@pup.pku.edu.cn

印 刷 者: 北京大学印刷厂

经 销 者: 新华书店

787 毫米×1092 毫米 16 开本 14.5 印张 315 千字

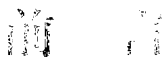
2009 年 7 月第 1 版 2009 年 7 月第 1 次印刷

定 价: 28.00 元

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电子邮箱: fd@pup.pku.edu.cn



《美国自然人文地理》是在内容依托教学理念指导下,依托国家哲学社会科学项目“英语专业基础阶段内容依托式教学改革研究”推出的系列英语内容依托教材之一,是大连外国语学院和辽宁省两级教学成果一等奖并被辽宁省推荐参评国家级教学成果的重要组成部分。这套系列教材的推出具有重要的理论意义和重大的现实意义。

随着我国英语教育的快速发展,英语专业长期贯彻的“以技能为导向”的课程建设理念及教学理念已经难以满足社会的需要。专家教师们密切关注的现行英语专业教育大、中、小学英语教学脱节,语言、内容教学割裂,单纯语言技能训练过多,专业内容课程不足,学科内容课程系统性差,高低年级内容课程安排失衡及其导致的学生知识面偏窄、知识结构欠缺、思辨能力偏弱、综合素质发展不充分等问题日益凸显。

针对上述问题,国家哲学社会科学项目“英语专业基础阶段内容依托式教学改革研究”以内容依托教学(CBI)理论为指导,确定了如下改革思路:

(一)更新语言教学理念,改革英语专业教学的课程结构 在不改变专业总体培养目标和教学时限的前提下,对课程结构进行革命性的变革,改变传统单一的语言技能课程模式,实现内容课程——语言课程的融合,扩展学生的知识面,提高学生的语言技能。

(二)开发课程自身潜力,同步提高专业知识和语言技能。内容依托课程本身也同时关注内容和语言,把内容教学和语言教学有机结合。以英语为媒介,系统教授专业内容;以专业内容为依托,在使用语言过程中提高语言技能,扩展学生的知识面。

(三)改革教学方法手段,全面提高语言技能和综合素质。依靠内容依托教学在方法上的灵活性,通过问题驱动、输出驱动等方法调动学生主动学习,把启发式、任务式、讨论式、结对子、小组活动、课堂展示、多媒体手段等行之有效的活动与学科内容教学有机结合,提高学生的语言技能,激发学生的兴趣,培养学生的自主性和创造性,提升思辨能力和综合素质。

本项改革突破了我国英语专业英语教学大纲规定的课程结构,改变了英语专业基础阶段通过开设单纯的听、说、读、写四种语言技能课提高学生语言技能的传统课程建设理念,对英语课程及教学方法进行了创新性的改革。首创了有英语专业基础阶段具有我国特色的内容——语言融合的课程体系;率先开发了适合英语专业基础阶段的内容依托课程;系统开发了英语国家史、地、社会文化、欧洲文化、中国文化、跨文化交际、《圣经》文化教材;以英语为媒介,系统教授专业内容;以内容为依托,全面发展学生的语言技能;扩展学生的知识面,提高学生的综合素质,以崭新的途径实现英语专业教育的总体培养目标。

经过七年的酝酿、准备、实验,内容依托教学改革取得了鼓舞人心的结果。

(一) 构建了英语专业基础阶段内容依托课程与语言课程融合的课程体系。新的课程体系改变了传统单一的听、说、读、写语言技能课程模式,实现了内容依托课程和语言技能课程两种模块的融合;语言技能课程包含综合英语、听力、语音、写作,内容课程包含了美国历史文化、美国自然人文地理、美国社会文化、英国历史文化、英国自然人文地理、英国社会文化、澳新加社会文化、欧洲文化、中国文化、跨文化交际、《圣经》与文化;语言技能课程密切关注听、说、读、写技能的发展,内容依托课程不仅关注系统的学科内容,而且也关注综合语言技能的培养。在课程外和课程内两个层面把内容教学和语言教学有机结合,通过内容教学培养学生综合语言运用能力,扩展学生的知识面,提高学生的综合素质和多元文化意识,从根本上改变英语专业学生知识面偏窄、综合素质偏低的问题。

(二) 系统开发了相关国家的史、地、社会文化以及跨文化交际课程资源。在 CBI 教学理论的指导下,在实施内容依托教学的关键期——英语专业的第一学年,成功开出了美国和英国的历史、地理、社会文化等课程。第二学年开出澳新加社会文化、欧洲文化、中国文化、跨文化交际、《圣经》与文化等课程。内容依托教材改变了传统的组织模式,系统组织了教学内容,设计了新颖的栏目板块,设计的活动也丰富多样,实践教学中受到了学生的广泛欢迎。此外还开发了开设课程所需要的大量资源。在北京大学出版社的支持下,系列教材已经陆续出版。

(三) 牵动了教学手段和教学方法的改革,取得了突出的教学效果。在内容依托教学理论的指导下,教师的教学理念、教学方法、教学手段得到更新。通过问题驱动、输出驱动等活动调动学生主动学习,把启发式、任务式、讨论式、结对子、小组活动、课堂展示、多媒体手段等行之有效的活动与学科内容教学有机结合,激发学生的兴趣,培养学生自主性和创造性,提高学生的语言技能,提升思辨能力和综合素质。曾有专家教师担心取消专门的英语泛读课以及缩减基础英语精读课会对阅读技能发展会产生消极影响。实验数据证明,内容依托教学不仅没有对学生的语言技能发展和语言知识的学习产生消极影响,而且还产生了多方面的积极影响;在取消专门英语阅读课的情况下,阅读能力发展迅速;内容依托教学对学科知识的学习产生了巨大的积极影响。

(四) 提高了教师的科研意识和科研水平,取得了丰硕的教研成果。项目开展以来,团队对内容依托教学问题进行了系列研究,活跃了整个教学单位的科研气氛,科研意识和科研水平也得到很大提高。课题组已经撰写研究论文 17 篇,在国际、国内学术研讨会交流 12 篇,在国际学术期刊 *World Englishes*, 国内外语类核心期刊《外语与外语教学》、《中国外语》、《教育理论与实践》等发表研究论文 8 篇。

教学改革开展以来,每次成果发布都引起强烈反响。在 2008 年 3 月的第三届中国外语教学法国际研讨会上,与会的知名外语教育专家戴炜栋教授等对这项改革给予关注,博士生导师蔡基刚教授认为本项研究“具有导向性作用”。在 2008 年 5 月的“第二届全国英语专业院系主任高级论坛”上,研究成果得到知名专家博士生导师王守仁教授和与会专家教授的高度评价。在 2008 年 7 月的中国英语教学研究会东北地区年会上,改革的系列成果引起与会专家的强烈反响,研究论文获得 3 个优秀论文一等奖,3 个二等奖,1 个三等奖。在 2008 年 11 月的中国英语教学研究会年会上,成果再次引起与会专家的强烈反响,博士生导师石坚教授等给予了高度评价。在 2008 年 10 月和 12 月,本项改

革成果分别获得大连外国语学院教学研究成果一等奖和辽宁省优秀教学成果奖一等奖,而且还被辽宁省特别推荐参评国家教学成果奖。在2009年5月的“第三届全国英语专业院系主任高级论坛”,本项改革成果再次赢得专家同行们的关注和赞誉。

目前,该项成果已经在全国英语专业教育领域引起广泛关注。它触及了英语专业的教学大纲,影响了课程建设的理念,引领了英语专业的教学改革,改善了教学实践,必将对未来英语专业教育的发展产生积极影响。

本项改革开展过程中得到了全国各地专家的关注、支持和帮助。衷心感谢戴炜栋教授、王守仁教授、文秋芳教授、石坚教授、蔡基刚教授、杨忠教授等前辈们给予的关注、鼓励、支持和帮助,衷心感谢大连外国语学院院长孙玉华教授、赵忠德教授、杨俊峰教授及其他各位领导的大力支持,感谢大连外国语学院教务处刘宏处长、姜凤春副处长以及工作人员们在改革实验中给予的大力支持,感谢大连外国语学院科研处张雪处长和工作人员们给予的热情帮助,感谢大连外国语学院英语学院的领导全力支持和同事们的无私帮助以及团队成员的共同努力。同时也真诚感谢为我们内容依托教学改革提供丰富教学材料的国内外专家们。特别感谢的是负责国家哲学社会科学项目评审的专家和工作人员、北京大学出版社富有远见的张冰主任和刘强助理,没有他们对新教学理念的认同,没有他们对英语专业教育的关注和支持,这套教材不可能如此迅速地面世。

《美国自然人文地理》教材针对的学生群体是具有中学英语基础的大学生。适用于英语专业一、二年级学生,也适用于具有中学英语基础的非英语专业学生和英语爱好者学习。总体来看,本教材具备以下主要特色:

(一) 遵循了全新的教学理念

经过几十年的快速发展,我国的英语教学已经出现了翻天覆地的变化。今天的英语学习者不再满足只是单词、语法、句型等等英语语言知识的学习,他们更希望读到地道的英语,在享受英语阅读乐趣的同时又能增长知识,开阔视野,了解英语国家,进而更好地运用英语与英语国家人民进行交流。本教材改变了“为学语言而学语言”的传统教材建设理念,在具有时代特色且被证明行之有效的内容依托教学理论指导下,改变了片面关注语言知识和语言技能忽视内容学习的作法。它依托学生密切关注的美国地理文化知识,结合自然人文知识内容组织学生进行语言交际活动,在语言交流中学习有意义的知识内容,既训练语言技能,也丰富相关知识,起到的是一箭双雕的作用。

(二) 涉及了系统的历史内容

《美国自然人文地理》是一本系统关注美国自然地理和人文地理的教材。全书分为15个单元,把美国划分为东北部、东南部、中西部、西南部和西部五大地理区域,帮助读者了解美国诸州及重要城市,领略美国的山川河湖以及国家公园的美景。在介绍了美国自然地理的基础之上,还介绍了美国的人文知识:传奇的历史、有趣的传说、伟大的人物、奇异的遗址、日新月异的工农业等等。

(三) 引进了真实的教学材料

英语教材是英语学习者英语语言输入和相关知识输入的重要渠道。本教材大量使用真实、地道的语言材料,为学生提供了高质量的语言输入。此外,为了使课文内容更加充实生动,易于学生理解接受,编者在课文中穿插了大量的插图、表格、照片等真实的视

觉材料,表现手段活泼、形式多种多样,效果生动直观,让读者身临其境,感同身受。

(四) 设计了新颖的教材板块

本教材每一单元的主体内容均包括 Before You Read, Start to Read, After You Read 和 Read More 四大板块,包括课前热身、课文正文、课后练习、辅助阅读、专有名词列表、娱乐园地、附录内容等。课前热身包括启发性的问题或准备活动;主课文介绍重要的自然和人文地理知识并突出显示了语言学习重点;课后练习关注美国地理知识学习和英语语言学习;辅助阅读内容对主课文进行补充,为学有余力的读者提供更加充实详细的内容;专有名词列表为读者省去了查阅美国地理专有名词的麻烦;相关网址、电影、书籍、歌曲推荐可以让读者选择自己感兴趣的内容,对美国进行多角度探索;附录内容提供了各种美国地图,介绍了各州州旗、州花、州鸟、州面积,主要城市的概况等等。教材不仅在结构上确立了学生的主体地位,而且系统的安排也方便教师借助教材有条不紊地开展教学活动。

(五) 提供了多样的训练活动

为了培养学生的语言技能和综合素质,本教材在保证历史知识体系完整的前提下,在关注英语语言知识训练和相关知识内容传授的基础上精心设计了生动多样的综合训练活动,如小组讨论、广告创意、故事接龙、对比写作等等。教材在每一单元都精心设计了旨在对学生在语法、词汇、篇章结构、语言功能等方面进行全面严格的基本技能练习。同时,编者通过参阅大量国外资料,设计出与美国自然人文地理相关的、学生参与度极高的课堂和课外活动。就连副课文都精心设计了培养寻读、略读能力的练习。多样化的活动打破了传统教材单调的训练程式,帮助教师设置真实的语言运用情境,组织富于挑战性的、具有意义的语言实践活动。它们改变了教师单纯灌输、学生被动接受的教学方式,促使学生积极思考、提问、探索、发现、批判,培养自主获得知识,发现问题和解决问题的能力,培养学生综合运用语言和知识进行沟通的能力、逻辑思维能力和探索求知的能力。

(六) 推荐了经典的学习材料

教材的另一特色在于它对教学内容的延伸和拓展。在每个章节的最后部分,编者向学生推荐经典的书目、影视作品、名诗欣赏以及英文歌曲等学习资料,这不仅有益于学生开阔视野,也使教材具有了弹性和开放性,方便不同院校不同水平学生的使用。这些活动的设置使得课堂教学得以延伸,也能激发学生的学习热情。

作为一项探索,我们团队成员虽然为打造这套精品教材做出了巨大努力,但由于水平所限,教材中难免存在疏漏和不足,希望全国各地的同仁不吝赐教,希望亲自体验内容依托教学的同学积极提出改进意见和建议,以期不断完善教材,为提高英语专业教育的质量共同努力。

编者

2009年6月

于大连外国语学院



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Unit 1

Panoramic View of the USA

In the United States there is more space where nobody is than where anybody is. That is what makes America what it is.

—Gertrude Stein (1874—1946)

Unit Goals

- To have a general idea of the geography of the USA
- To be familiar with useful geographical terms about the USA
- To learn the highlighted useful words and expressions that describe the geographical features of the USA
- To improve English language skills

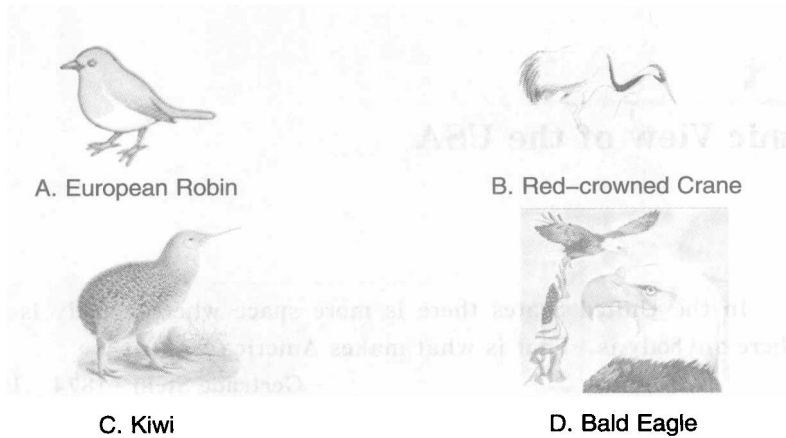
Before You Read

1. Tick (✓) the neighboring countries and oceans of the USA.

Countries	✓	Oceans	✓
China		the Pacific	
Canada		the Atlantic	
France		the Indian	
Mexico		the Arctic	

2. There are _____ states in the USA, and _____ states are contiguous.
3. Have you ever heard of “the backbone of the continent” in the USA? What is it?

4. Which of the following is the national bird of the USA?



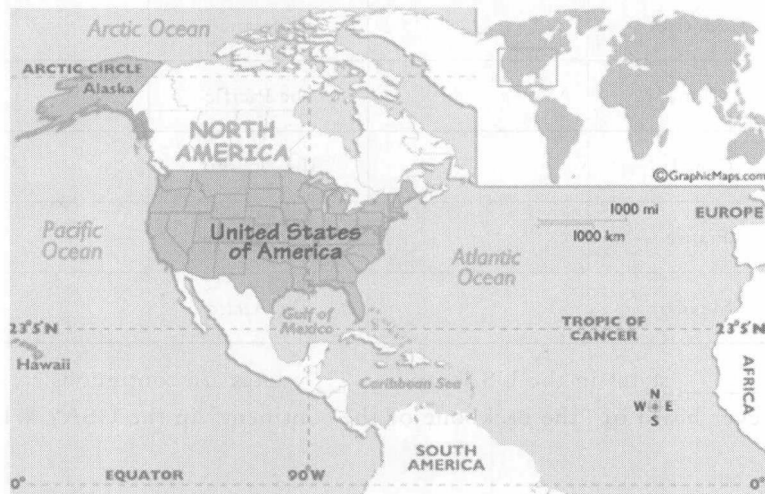
5. Form groups of three or four students. Try to find, on the Internet or in the library, more information about the USA which interests you. Prepare a 5-minute classroom presentation.

Start to Read

Text A

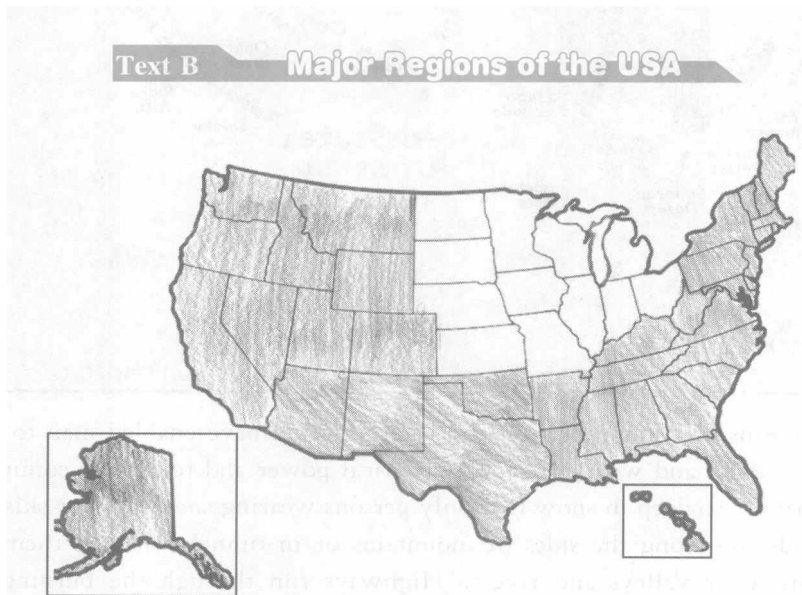
General Characteristics of the USA

The United States is a federal constitutional republic. The country is situated mostly in central North America in the Western Hemisphere. It consists of forty-eight contiguous states on the North American continent, Alaska, an enormous peninsula which forms the northwestern part of North America, and Hawaii, an archipelago in the Pacific Ocean. It also holds several United States territories in the Pacific and the Caribbean.



The United States shares land borders with Canada to the north and Mexico to the south, and a territorial water border with Russia in the northwest. The contiguous forty-eight states are otherwise bounded by the Pacific Ocean on the west, the Atlantic Ocean on the east, and the Gulf of Mexico on the southeast. Alaska borders the Pacific Ocean to the south, the Bering Strait to the west, and the Arctic Ocean to the north, while Hawaii lies far to the southwest of the mainland in the Pacific Ocean.

Forty-eight of the states are in the single region between Canada and Mexico; this group is referred to, with varying precision and formality, as the “continental or contiguous United States,” and as the “Lower 48.” Alaska, which is not included in the term “contiguous United States,” is at the northwestern end of North America, separated from the Lower 48 by Canada. The State of Hawaii is an archipelago in the Pacific Ocean. The capital city, Washington, District of Columbia, is a federal district located on land donated by the state of Maryland. (Virginia had also donated land, but it was returned in 1847.) The United States also has overseas territories with varying levels of independence and organization.

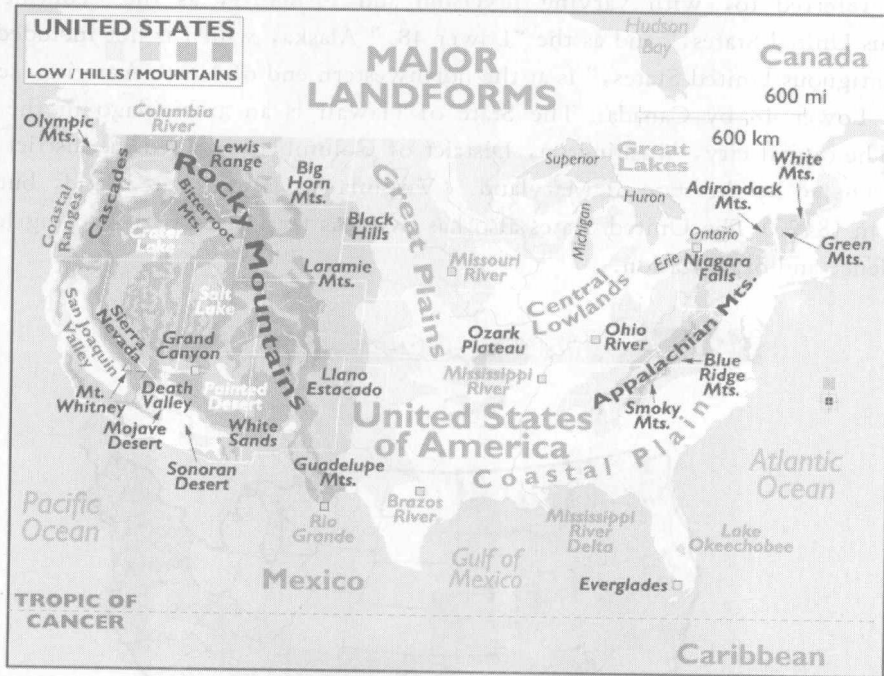


The United States could be divided into five regions. These regions are the Northeast, the Southeast, the Midwest, the Southwest, and the West. The regions of the United States are grouped by history, traditions, economy, climate, and geography. Each region is different from one another.

Text C **The Face of the Land**

On a topographic map of the United States, the mountains look like jagged masses, the plains like vast open flat spaces, and the rivers like meandering threads. Today, highways and railways crisscross the land, making travel easy. But only a few generations

ago, the topographic features on the map represented great dangers and difficulties. Today's visitors, riding over a good road in the Cascade Mountains in the west coast states of Oregon and Washington, may see marks on the rocks made by ropes where pioneer settlers painfully lowered their horses and wagons down cliffs to reach the fertile river valley far below. In the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California, the main route now runs through a mountain pass which was once too narrow for a wagon to go through. Pioneer families reaching that pass had to take their wagons apart piece by piece, carry them through, and then reassemble them on the other side.



Modern means of communication and transportation have enabled man to overcome these obstacles. Poles and wire now carry electrical power and telephone communication over ridges that are so deep in snow that only persons wearing snowshoes or skis can reach them. Railroads run along the sides of mountains or in tunnels through them. Bridges have been built over valleys and rivers. Highways run through the burning heart of deserts.

Much of the geography and history of the United States was determined some 10,000 to 25,000 years ago. At that time, the great northern ice cap flowed over the North American continent and ground into it a number of major changes. These ice flows determined the size and drainage of the Great Lakes. They changed the direction of the Missouri River and carved the channel of the Hudson River. They pushed soil off a huge part of Canada into the United States, thus creating the northern part of the central agricultural basin—one of the richest farming areas in the world.

On the Atlantic shore of the United States, much of the northern coast is rocky and uninviting, but the middle and southern Atlantic coast rises gently from the sea. It starts as low, wet ground and sandy flats, but then becomes a rolling coastal lowland somewhat

like that of northern and western Europe. The Appalachians, which run roughly parallel to the east coast, are old mountains with many coal-rich valleys between them. To the west of the Appalachians lie plateaus built up over the centuries from bits of stone that were washed down from the mountains and then cut into small hills by streams. Beyond is the great Central Lowland which, in its configuration, resembles the plains of Eastern Europe, or the plains of Manchuria, or the Great Plains of Australia, or certain plains in Africa or South America.

North of the Central Lowland, extending for almost 1,600 kilometers, are the five Great Lakes which the United States shares with Canada. The Lakes, estimated to contain about half of the world's fresh water, were gouged out of the land by the ice that once covered the northern United States.

West of the Central Lowland are the Great Plains, likened to the flat top of a table which is slightly tilted upward to the west. They are stopped by the Rocky Mountains, "the backbone of the continent." The Rockies are considered young mountains of the same age as the Alps in Europe, the Himalayas in Asia, and the Andes in South America. Like these ranges, they are high, rough and irregular in shape.

At first sight, the land west of the Rockies appears to be tumbled masses of mountains. However, it is actually made up of quite distinct and separate regions, shaped by different geological events. One region was formed of material which was washed down from the Rockies and pressed into rock. This now encompasses the high Colorado Plateau, in which the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River is cut, 1.6 kilometers in depth. But another region, the high Columbia tableland to the north, was created in much the same way as the great Deccan Plateau of India; lava poured from inside the earth, burying old mountains and filling valleys to a depth of thousands of meters.

Volcanoes also built the Cascade Mountains. The Sierra Nevada range and the ridges of the Great Basin, on the other hand, were formed when a strained portion of the earth's crust broke into high tilted blocks of rock. At the border of the Pacific Ocean lie the Coast Ranges, relatively low mountains, in a region where occasional earthquakes show that the process of mountain-building has not yet stopped.

After You Read



Knowledge Focus

1. Fill in the blanks according to the geographical knowledge you have learned in the texts above.
 - (1) The United States is a country in the _____ Hemisphere. It consists of _____ contiguous states on the North American continent, and Hawaii.
 - (2) The USA shares land borders with Canada and _____ and a water border with Russia.
 - (3) The contiguous forty-eight states are otherwise bounded by _____ on the west, _____ on the east, and the Gulf of Mexico on

the _____.

- (4) The United States could be divided into five regions. They are the Northeast, _____, Midwest, _____, and the West.
- (5) The five Great Lakes, which the United States shares with _____, are estimated to contain about half of the world's _____.
- (6) In the east of the USA lie _____, the oldest mountains in the United States.
- (7) _____, "the backbone of the continent," are considered young mountains of the same age as _____ in Europe, _____ in Asia, and _____ in South America.
- (8) Washington, D.C., is located on land donated by _____.

2. Write T in the brackets if the statement is true and write F if it is false.

- (1) The USA consists of 48 states. ()
- (2) The USA is bordered by Australia and Canada. ()
- (3) The Rockies, located in the west of the USA, are old mountains in the country. ()
- (4) Alaska borders the Pacific Ocean to the south, the Bering Strait to the west, and the Arctic Ocean to the north. ()
- (5) The Grand Canyon was cut by a great river called the Rio Grande. ()
- (6) West of the Central Lowland are the Great Plains, likened to the flat top of a table which is slightly tilted upward to the west. ()
- (7) The high Columbia tableland and the Cascade Mountains were built by Volcanoes. ()
- (8) At the border of the Pacific Ocean lie the Sierra Nevada, relatively low mountains in a region where occasional earthquakes show that the process of mountain-building has not yet stopped. ()

Language Focus

1. Fill in the blanks with the proper form of the following words or expressions you have learned in the texts.

resemble	take... apart	enable... to	grind
determine	break into	wash down	reassemble
roughly	consider		

- (1) This dictionary will _____ you _____ understand German words.
- (2) The rain _____ bits of stone from the mountain.
- (3) The Appalachians run _____ parallel to the east coast.
- (4) A stone hit the window and it _____ several pieces.
- (5) The Rockies are _____ young mountains.
- (6) Pioneer families had to _____ the wagons _____ piece by piece, carry them through, and then _____ them on the other side.
- (7) He _____ his father in character as well as in appearance.

- (8) The amount of the rainfall _____ the size of the crop.
- (9) The great northern ice cap flowed over the North American continent and _____ into it a number of major changes.
2. Fill in the blanks with the proper form of the words in the brackets.
- (1) Different _____ (geology) events have shaped the landform of this area.
- (2) There are _____ (coast) lowlands in northern and southern Europe.
- (3) The topographic features on the map represented many _____ (difficult).
- (4) This soil has good _____ (drain).
- (5) Along the Atlantic shore of the United States, much of the northern coast is rocky and _____ (invite).
- (6) That is when the Nile River flooded its banks, bringing water and _____ (fertile) to the land.
- (7) A marked change in _____ (topographic) is a fault or deep valley.
3. Fill in the blanks with the proper prepositions or adverbs that collocate with the neighboring words.
- (1) This group is referred _____ the “continental or contiguous United States,” and as the “Lower 48.”
- (2) Alaska, which is not included in the term “contiguous United States,” is _____ the northwestern end of North America, separated _____ the Lower 48 by Canada.
- (3) The United States also has overseas territories _____ varying levels of independence and organization.
- (4) The great northern ice cap flowed over the North American continent and ground _____ it a number of major changes.
- (5) _____ first sight, the land west of the Rockies appears to be tumbled masses of mountains.
- (6) It is made _____ quite distinct and separate regions.
- (7) Lava poured _____ inside the earth, burying old mountains and filling the valleys _____ a depth of thousands of meters.
- (8) A strained portion of the earth’s crust broke _____ high tilted blocks of rock.

Comprehensive Work

1. Pair Work: Work with your partner, and mark the following on the outline map of North America.

Canada	Mexico
Alaska	Hawaii
the Rockies	the Appalachians
the Great Lakes	the Mississippi
the Gulf of Mexico	the Sierra Nevada Mountains
the Pacific	the Atlantic