

The Northeast



The History

The Northeast region is made up of the following states:

Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware.

The first six states listed are also commonly called "New England." Native people had been living on this land for thousands of years before Europeans arrived. Norwegians were the first to explore what is now Maine. They arrived around the year 1200. The

Norwegians traded goods with the native people who lived there, but they did not attempt to settle the area. Among the earliest of the European settlers were people known as Pilgrims. They arrived in Massachusetts, on a ship called the *Mayflower*, in 1620. They left England hoping for religious freedom, far away from the ruling King. The native people and the settlers had complicated



Painting showing arrival of Pilgrims

relationships. Sometimes they were friendly and traded goods with each other. Other times they fought deadly battles. The fighting between the settlers and the Native American people lasted for well over 100 years.

This entire region is home to many important events in American history. Massachusetts was one of the original thirteen colonies and is where the American Revolution began. The Declaration of Independence, for example, was signed in Philadelphia on July 4, 1776. The Battle of Gettysburg (Pennsylvania) in 1863 was an important historical event of the American Civil War. In more recent history, from the late 1800s through 1954, Ellis Island was the entry point welcoming immigrants to the United States. Located near the Statue of Liberty in Upper New York Bay, over 12 million immigrants passed through on their way to becoming citizens. Today, New York City is known as a "Melting Pot."

That is because people from many different cultures make up this area.

The Northeast Region

Climate

The weather in the Northeast varies widely. The temperatures get colder as you move north and away from the coastline. The winters are very cold. Much of this region gets a lot of snowfall. Sometimes the Northeast gets really big snowstorms called blizzards. Areas in upstate New York can see over 100 inches of snowfall yearly, while the coastal areas of Maryland only receive small amounts. Major storms in the Atlantic Ocean, off the northeast coast, are referred to as nor'easters. They usually form between the months of September and April. Nor'easters bring heavy rain or snowfall and can cause severe coastal flooding. In the summer months, the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean cycle north and give this region hot and humid temperatures. This warm water can also bring hurricanes to the coastal areas. Many storms regularly come ashore throughout the region. They cause erosion of the land. This means that the wind and water from storms move soil and rocks away from one location and carry them to another.

The Land

The Northeast is made up of landforms ranging from large snow-capped mountain ranges and dense forests to sandy beaches and large metropolitan cities. It is bordered by Canada to the north and the Atlantic Ocean to the east. Over 63 million people live in the Northeast region. Outside of the major cities though, it has many forests and

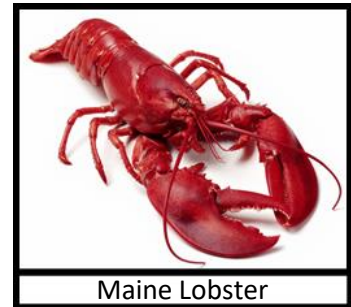


agricultural land. In the Northeast you will also find grasslands, coastal beaches and wetlands. The northern portion of the region, known as New England, has a very rocky Atlantic coastline. It is well-known for its rich marine life and fishing areas. The lower portion of the region has more fertile lands that can be used for farming. Mountains are found in many areas in the Northeast, as well. The mountainous areas range from rolling hills to peaks over 5,000

feet high. The Appalachian range extends throughout the region, stretching all the way from Canada down to Alabama, in the Southeastern region of the U.S.

Economy

The Northeast region has urban, rural and suburban communities. It is very densely populated. Since almost all of the states are on the Atlantic coast, the fishing industry is significant to the economy in this region. Maine, in particular, is known for its lobsters. Shipyards - where ships are built - are also found near the water.



The rocky soil in the upper portion of this region makes it difficult to grow many crops. A limited amount of crops will grow there such as potatoes, apples, blueberries and cranberries. Dairy farming is found in that area too. In the lower portion of this region, the land is fertile. Farmers in those states grow grain, oats, corn, cabbage and many other fruits and vegetables. There are many forests in the Northeast region. Trees have multiple uses for products that we use every day. Maple syrup is made from the sap of maple trees. Vermont is the largest producer of maple syrup in the U.S. When the trees are cut down, the pulpwood can be made into paper. Lumber can be used to make houses, furniture and a lot of other things. However, people must be careful not to cut down too many trees. It takes a long time for trees to grow really big.

Mining and production are also key to the economy in this region. Mining takes natural resources from the ground. In the Northeast, coal, granite and marble are all mined from the ground. In addition, people work in factories making items such as electronics, steel, chemicals, clothing and candy. Tourism is another important industry for this region. The beaches attract many vacationers throughout the year. People visit the mountains to ski and hike. New York City is visited by tourists from all around the world. People go to the city to see interesting attractions such as the Statue of Liberty and Times Square. Many tourists go there because of the world famous fashion industry or to see Broadway plays.

Natural Resources

Natural resources are materials that are found in the environment which are not made by humans. People can then use the natural resources to make other helpful things. There are many natural resources found in this region including coal, granite, marble, iron ore and forests (lumber). Water is a natural resource that is renewable.

Landmarks

Landmarks are important places. They can be man-made things such as a monument. They can be historical locations that help to remind us of important events that happened there. They can also be things created by nature that are unique in some way. There are many landmarks in the eleven states that make up the Northeast region. Here, we will take a look at just a few of them.



Niagara Falls (New York State/Ontario, Canada Border)

Niagara Falls were formed when glaciers receded at the end of the last ice age. The falls aren't extremely high but they are very wide. They are located on the Niagara River, which drains Lake Erie into Lake Ontario. The falls are known for both their beauty and for being a source of hydropower. The power that results from the energy of falling or fast moving water is called hydropower. It can be used to create electricity for people to use in their homes and businesses. This is a great way to create energy and it is not bad for the environment. The water's power is used without creating dangerous pollution. Plus, it is a renewable resource so we won't run out of it naturally.

The White House (Washington, D.C.)

Our first President, George Washington, chose the site of our nation's capital. The White House is the official home to our President. It took eight years to build the house and was first occupied by John Adams on November 1, 1800. It was originally called "The President's Palace" or "The President's House." Theodore Roosevelt gave the White House its official name in 1901. During the War of 1812, British soldiers sailed up the Potomac River and set fire to the White House. Before doing so, however, they marched right into the President's dining room and helped themselves to food that had been left on the table! It took 3 years to rebuild. The White House has 132 rooms. One of the rooms is called the Oval office. This is where the President works.



Plymouth Rock (Massachusetts)

Plymouth Rock is an important symbol in American history. The Plymouth Colony was one of the first European settlements in the land that eventually became the United States. It was a settlement of pilgrims who fled England because of religious persecution. Legend states that a rock, now called Plymouth Rock, was the landing place of those pilgrims when they stepped off of their ship called the Mayflower, in 1620.



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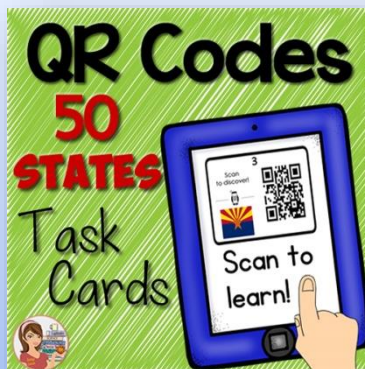
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