

Read and Respond-CANADA

Directions: Read and highlight the answers to each section on Canada. Write out your answers to each question in complete sentences on your own sheet of paper.

Geography of Canada

The Pacific Ocean is located off Canada's western coast, and the Atlantic is located off its eastern coast.

The landscape of western Canada is dominated by its largest mountain range, the Rocky Mountains. This mountain system extends for over 3,000 miles from the southwestern United States as far north as Alaska.

Canada's largest internal body of water is Hudson Bay, located in the northeast of the country. The land area around Hudson Bay is known as the Canadian Shield. This mineral-rich region extends across most of eastern Canada.

South of Hudson Bay, at the U.S. border, are the five Great Lakes: Lake Huron, Lake Ontario, Lake Michigan, Lake Erie, and Lake Superior. (These lakes can be remembered with the acronym HOMES.) The Great Lakes account for 21% of Earth's surface freshwater. Connecting the Great Lakes to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Atlantic Ocean is the St. Lawrence River in eastern Canada.

1. Which two oceans are located off of Canada's eastern and western coasts?
2. What is the largest mountain range in Canada?
3. What is the largest body of water in Canada?
4. What is the name of the mineral-rich region surrounding the Hudson Bay?
5. What lakes border Canada and the United States?

Canada is the northernmost country located in North America. It is bordered to the south (and northwest, if one counts Alaska) by the United States.

While the overwhelmingly majority of Canadians are English-speakers, Quebec, located in eastern Canada, is French-speaking. The cultural identity of this **province** can be traced back to the colonial period.

Vocabulary to Know

- province – a political division, similar to a state

6. Which province in Canada speaks French?

Location, Climate and Natural Resources

Canada is located in the northern extent of the North American continent. At over 3.8 million square miles, it is the largest country in North America, and the second largest country in the world after Russia.

The climate in Canada varies tremendously. The nation's Pacific coast is mostly temperate with substantial **precipitation**. Southeastern Canada, along the Atlantic coast, has a humid continental climate. Central Canada's climate is not moderated by ocean currents, and as such tends to experience cool summers and long, cold winters. The northern extent of the country ranges from subarctic to arctic temperatures.

Most of Canada's population is concentrated in the south of the country, within 100 miles of the U.S. border. This population distribution is partly the result of Canada's hard northern climate extremes, but also because of U.S.-Canadian economic cooperation along their shared 3,000-mile border. The population is especially dense in the Great Lakes / St. Lawrence region of southeastern Canada where manufacturing jobs and commercial shipping routes are most heavily concentrated.

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In terms of natural resources, Canada has an abundance of mineral wealth: iron ore, nickel, zinc, copper, gold, lead, diamonds, and silver. Canada's central Prairie Provinces grow cereal grains, particularly wheat. Canada also boasts a large timber industry and is a major producer of **hydroelectricity**.

Vocabulary to Know

- hydroelectricity – electrical power produced from the movement of water
- precipitation – scientific term for rainfall, snow, or hail

7. **Canada is the 2nd largest country in the world. What country is the largest?**
8. **Compare the climate in the northern part of Canada to the southern part of Canada.**
9. **Where do the majority of people in Canada live?**

Environmental Issues

The Great Lakes / St. Lawrence region of southeastern Canada is the site of most of the nation's industrial factories, commercial shipping, hydroelectric and coal-burning power plants. While business is booming in this area, so, too, unfortunately is pollution.

Vehicle exhaust and the smoke released from burning coal has created an ecological phenomenon known as **acid rain**. Acid rain results when noxious gases – such as carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxide – combine with water molecules in clouds. When these clouds burst, the rain released is toxic. Acid rain pollutes freshwater sources, poisons fisheries, kills forests, and even destroys architecture.

It should be noted, however, that Canadian industries in this region are not solely (or even mostly) to blame. Some 50-75% of the pollution which causes acid rain is actually coming from vehicles and factories on the U.S. side of the border.

The Canadian government has passed laws calling for stronger regulation of factory and vehicle exhaust emissions. It has also encouraged its citizens to use mass transit. U.S.-Canadian cooperation will be required to fully eliminate this ecological threat though.

Vocabulary to Know

- acid rain – toxic rain which results when noxious gases are released into the atmosphere and mix with water molecules
10. **What are two causes of air pollution in Canada?**
 11. **What is acid rain?**
 12. **What other country besides Canada is to blame for the pollution in Canada?**
 13. **What is Canada's government doing to help stop pollution?**

Canada's mining industry is concentrated in the Canadian Shield region which surrounds Hudson Bay. This area contains large deposits of gold, silver, copper, zinc, lead, iron ore, uranium, and nickel. Although the mining industry is very lucrative, the processes used to extract Canada's mineral wealth (i.e., blasting and digging) often result in environmental degradation, particularly in the areas around the mines themselves. Sulfur dioxide released from mining equipment reduces the air quality, and chemical runoff from mining processes often contaminates water supplies. The Canadian government has passed legislation to limit the amount of mining-related pollution allowed in its waterways, namely in an effort to protect fisheries and seafood safety.

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Canada's timber industry is also important to the nation's economy. Canada's forests are a source of lumber, plywood, and wood pulp. Like mining, however, there is an environmental downside to the timber industry. The destruction of natural habitats caused by **clear-cutting** is critical. Clear-cutting is cutting down all trees in a certain area leaving no trees behind to grow. Additionally, the heavy machinery used for logging frequently compacts the soil of the forest floor such that new growth is hindered. The Canadian government has done quite a bit in recent years passing laws to limit the damage associated with deforestation. As a result, Canada's deforestation rate is currently the lowest in the world.

Vocabulary to Know

- clear-cutting – cutting down and completely removing all trees in a given area

14. Name three valuable natural resources found in the Canadian Shield?

15. How does mining natural resources pollute the air and water?

16. What are Canada's timber resources used for?

17. What has Canada's government done to help protect the environment?

History of Canada

Canada is a nation with two distinct cultural identities, English and French.

Following the **Seven Years' War** (1754-1763), the American extent of which was known as the **French and Indian War**, Britain won control of eastern Canada from the French Empire. In so doing, under what became known as the **Quebec Act** (1774), Britain did not require its newly acquired **francophone** citizens to assimilate culturally. (this meant that they did not require them to become British) Resultantly, eastern Canada today – especially **Quebec** – is composed primarily of French-speaking Roman Catholics, whereas the rest of Canada is largely English-speaking Protestants.

The political movement for Quebec to separate from Canada as an independent, French-speaking nation can be traced back to a controversial 1967 speech delivered by French president **Charles de Gaulle**, in which he remarked ("Long live a free Quebec!") From there, Quebec's quest for **autonomy** began in earnest.

Referendums on Quebec's **sovereignty** took place in 1980 and in 1995; both were unsuccessful. The province's separatist movement has been fairly dormant since then; however, in the wake of the 2016 **Brexit** vote, the potential for a third referendum looms. The success of a third such vote is uncertain.

Vocabulary to Know

- autonomy – political independence
- Brexit – term for the United Kingdom's 2016 vote to separate from the European Union
- De Gaulle, Charles – leader of the French Resistance during World War II and later president of France
- francophone – French-speaking
- Quebec – a predominantly French-speaking province of eastern Canada
- Quebec Act – 1774 Act of Parliament permitting the citizens of Quebec to retain their French language and Catholic faith
- referendum – a special vote on a specific issue

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- Seven Years' War / French and Indian War – 18th century war between the major powers of Europe and the Ottoman Empire

- sovereignty – the right to self-rule

18. What led to Canada being controlled by the British?

19. What was the Quebec Act?

20. Why is English and French spoken in Canada today?

21. What is a referendum and why do you think people in Quebec are trying to become a separate country?

Government of Canada

Canada is an example of a parliamentary democracy. Canadians elect members of parliament (MPs) to represent them both at the provincial/territorial and national levels. Canada's citizens entrust the selection of the country's prime minister to the national parliament's leading political party. Canadians aged 18 and older are permitted to vote, and there are numerous political parties to choose from.

In Canada, the prime minister is considered the head of government in the executive branch, which is to say he/she is the true executive leader of the nation; however, Canada recognizes the monarch of the United Kingdom as its symbolic/ceremonial head of state. This political arrangement traces back to Canada's former status as a British colony.

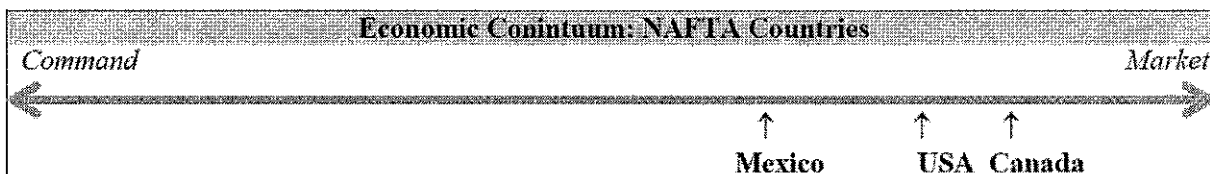
The interests of the British monarch are represented in Canada by a governor-general, who is chosen based on the recommendation of the Canadian prime minister.

22. What type of democracy is Canada?

23. What indirect role do citizens have in choosing the leader of Canada?

Economy of Canada

The economy of Canada may be described as a mixed economy that is mostly market-leaning. Canada's government strongly protects business and property rights. Starting a new business in Canada is also relatively simple. The nation's business sector is thriving due in large part to economic cooperation among Canada and its **NAFTA** trading partners – the United States and Mexico. It should be noted, however, that only 11% of Canada's total land area is privately owned. The government also controls the healthcare industry via a nationalized single-payer program.



Vocabulary to Know

- NAFTA – North American Free Trade Agreement among Canada, the United States, and Mexico- creates a free trade zone between the three countries

24. What type of economy does Canada have?

25. Why is Canada located where it is on the economic continuum?