

Knowledge Organiser – USA

Year 4 Term 1.1

Geography

Important Topic Vocabulary

state	The smaller areas some larger countries such as the USA are divided into.
resort	A place where people go for a holiday or recreation.
national park	A large area of land protected by a government because of its natural beauty.
urbanisation	When a rural area is made urban.
prairie land	A large area of flat, grassy land in North America.
blizzard	A very heavy snowstorm with strong winds.
tornado	A violent wind storm with a tall column of air that spins very fast.
hurricane	An extremely violent wind or storm.
natural phenomena	An observable event or process that occurs in nature and is not caused by humans.

What should you already know?

That the world is made up of two hemispheres and these are the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.

The Equator is an imaginary line around the Earth exactly midway between the North and South Poles.

The UK, Italy, USA, Iceland and Mexico are in the Northern Hemisphere.

Know the Mojave Desert is located in the USA in the continent of North America and the Colorado River can be found in this desert.

Know Las Vegas is a city found in this desert. Part of the Grand Canyon is located in this desert.

States

The country of the USA is split into fifty different areas called states.

Each **state** has its own laws and government but is also part of the **federal** government of the United States.

Each state also has its own flag, **motto** and culture.

The USA can also be split into six regions which have different landscapes and climates.

The six regions are New England, Mid-Atlantic, South, Midwest, Southwest and West.

Arizona



California



New York



The USA flag is known as the Star spangled banner, or Stars and Stripes.

Alaska



Texas



Hawaii



Florida



The States





The USA is a country that is located in the continent of North America.

Canada and Mexico are the other countries which make up the largest part of the continent of North America.

It is the third largest country in the world after Russia and Canada.

Physical Features

There are three main mountain ranges in the USA: the Appalachian Mountains (many states in the south west region), the Rocky Mountains (Colorado) and the Sierra Nevada (California). The Rockies are the highest mountains and run along the whole country from north to south.

Around a third of all the land in the USA is prairie land. Prairies are flat areas that consist mainly of grasses and wild flowers as opposed to trees.

There are four deserts in the USA: the Great Basin Desert, the Mojave Desert, the Sonoran Desert and the Chihuahua Desert.

Natural Phenomena

There are natural phenomena that occur in some parts of America that can make living in certain places difficult. Blizzards are severe snowstorms where there are low temperatures, fast winds and lots of blowing snow.

A tornado (also known as a twister) is a spiralling funnel of air which descends from a storm cloud to the ground. Tornadoes are formed when warm air meets cold air, which causes the air to twist around. This creates a vortex which then descends to the ground.

A hurricane is a tropical storm that starts in the Atlantic Ocean. They last much longer than tornadoes and can cause even more damage.

Earthquakes happen when the plates get jammed together. The forces pushing the rocks together then build up until the rocks distort.

Did you know ...?

Washington DC is the capital of the USA.

The White House (where the President lives) is in Washington, D.C.

New York is the largest city in the USA. Famous landmarks include The Statue of Liberty, The Empire State Building, Central Park, Times Square and the Brooklyn Bridge.

San Francisco is a city in the state of California.

Houston is the largest city in the state of Texas.

Las Vegas is the largest city in the state of Nevada and it is known for its luxury hotels, casinos and entertainment.

Orlando is a city in the state of Florida and is where Walt Disney World Resort is.



USA's **currency** is dollars and cents.



The Atlantic Ocean is on the east coast of the USA and the Pacific Ocean is on the west coast. The Arctic Ocean borders the state of Alaska in the north of the country.