



Year 6 North America

The first lesson in this unit offers an introduction to the North American continent. Children will identify the countries within this continent including the United States of America, Canada and Mexico. When looking at the United States of America, children will learn that the states have not always been united, and many battles have been fought over land and power. Children will study the biomes of the North American continent including coniferous forest, deciduous forest, temperate grassland semi-desert and tundra. They will learn about the permafrost that lies under the ground in the most northern parts of North America, creating a cold, tree-less landscape. They will contrast this with the temperate grassland in the Great Plains, and the prairie. In turn, this is will provide contrast with the tropical forest biome of some regions in Central America.

Turning to the physical geographical feature of rivers, children will learn that rivers are important to the economy, for trade and transport and also help to sustain a large population. In this unit, children will build on their knowledge of the world's rivers and will study the Mississippi River, one of the longest rivers in the world. Children will study how this huge physical geographical feature changes along its path and also how people's interactions with the river are changing it. The question of sustainability is addressed in the context of the Mississippi River. This understanding will be built upon in the forthcoming unit on Australia when children study the Murray-Darling.

As the National Curriculum requires, children will then study a region of North America and compare it with a region of the United Kingdom. Anchorage in Alaska will be compared with the local area, providing some important contrasts including climate, physical features, population, environment and regional activities. To conclude the unit, children will write an essay to explain why a geographer would describe North America as 'a large and diverse' continent.