

Summary: Land and Climate

Land and Water of the East

The region between the coast of the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes is called the East. It includes six New England States and five Mid-Atlantic states. The East has mountains and plains. It also has many lakes and rivers.

The Appalachian Mountains stretch from Maine to Alabama. They were formed millions of years ago when two continents collided. Wind and weather wore the mountains down. Glaciers made valleys in the mountains.

The coastal plain is east of the Appalachians. In New England, the coastal plain is mostly underwater. The coastal plain is wider from Massachusetts to Florida. People built big cities, farms, and factories on the coastal plain. More people live there than in the mountains. The land is less rough and it is closer to water routes. In the mountains people farm, mine coal, and cut trees.

The East is a land of lakes, rivers, and ocean. Glaciers formed many lakes. Rocks and sand left by glaciers also formed islands and capes. People built settlements near the best bays along the coast. Ships from other continents carried people and goods into these harbors along the coast. Boats could come inland on big rivers. Some of the rivers had waterfalls. People learned to use the waterfalls to power machines.

Climate and Its Effects

The East is about halfway between the North Pole and the equator. The East's location affects its climate. The climate is temperate. It is not too cold or too hot. There are four seasons. Winters are snowy and cold. Summers are warm and humid. It rains or snows during the four seasons.

The ocean affects the coastal climate. Cool breezes blow from the sea on hot days, and warm breezes blow on cold days. The climate affects the people, animals, and plants that live there. People cope with cold winters. Animals' food supplies change with the seasons. Squirrels bury nuts to dig up in winter. Bears and other animals hibernate. They sleep for up to 100 days. Trees like maples and oaks drop their leaves each winter to survive the lack of water.



Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

coast *noun*, land that borders an ocean

coastal plain *noun*, flat, level land next to a coast

cape *noun*, a point of land that sticks out into the water

bay *noun*, a body of water partly surrounded by land but open to the sea

temperate *adjective*, without extremes



After You Read

REVIEW Why are more cities built on the coastal plain than in the mountains? Circle the words that tell about land in the mountains.

REVIEW In what ways does the climate of the East affect the people, animals, and plants that live there? Draw a box around 6 sentences that tell what people, animals, and trees do to live in the climate.