

Year 5 The Western United States

Key Vocabulary

biomes	A large area on the Earth's surface defined by the types of animals and plants living there. We can also consider these "life zones"
climate	The long term prevalent weather conditions of an area, determined by latitude, altitude etc.
continent	A large area of land divided into countries.
country	An area that is controlled by its own government.
economy	How much money a country creates by making and selling goods.
flora/fauna	Plant and animal life.
region	An area of land that usually has common features, either human or physical
state	An association which has control over a geographic area or territory

What is the Western United States?

The USA is one of the 23 countries which make up the continent of North America.

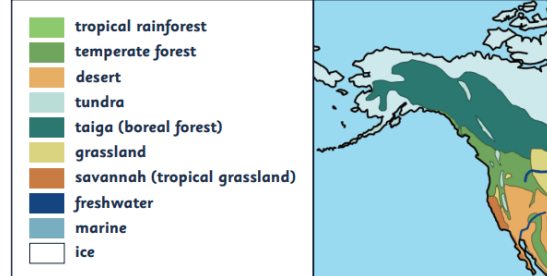
The country is divided into four regions: the West, the Midwest, the Northeast and the South.

The Western region of the USA consists of 13 states: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming.

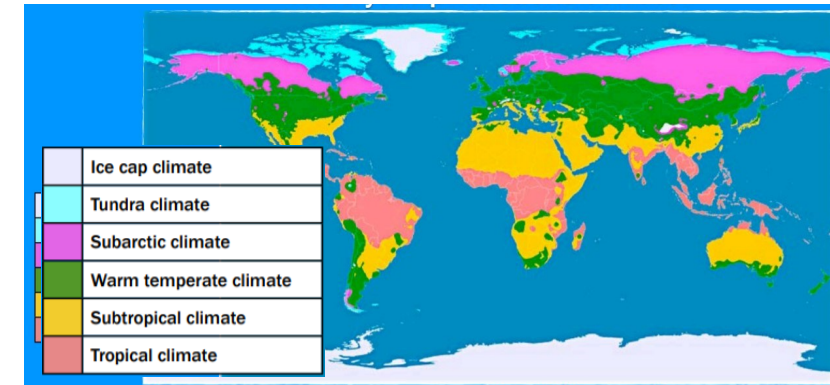


What are the vegetation belts?

The Western United States extends across a wide range of vegetation belts, including the following: tundra, coniferous forest, desert and dry shrub, Mediterranean shrub and temperate grassland.



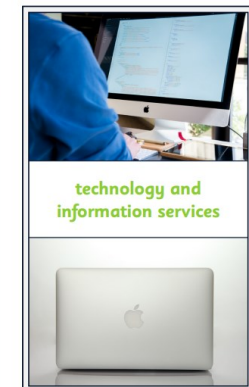
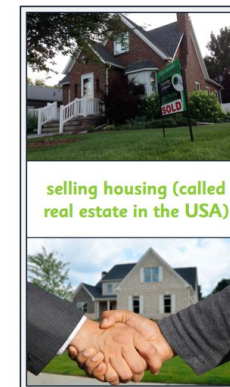
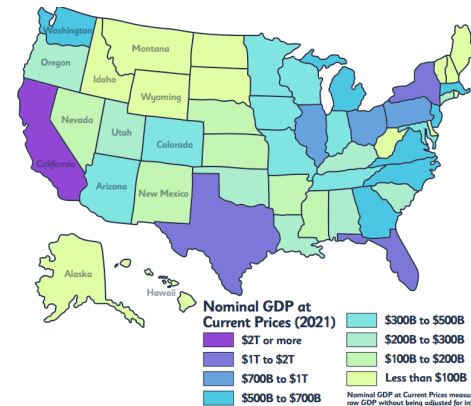
What are the climate zones of the Western United



The five main types of climate

- **Polar** - long periods of extreme cold, tundra, ice cap e.g. Antarctica
- **Temperate** - hot dry summers, and cooler wetter winters, this can be split into coastal and continental areas.
- **Subtropical** - long, hot summers and warm winters,
- **Tropical** - hot and humid, wet, rainforest e.g. Brazil
- **Dry** - arid, desert e.g. Nevada

What are the main economic activities of the West?

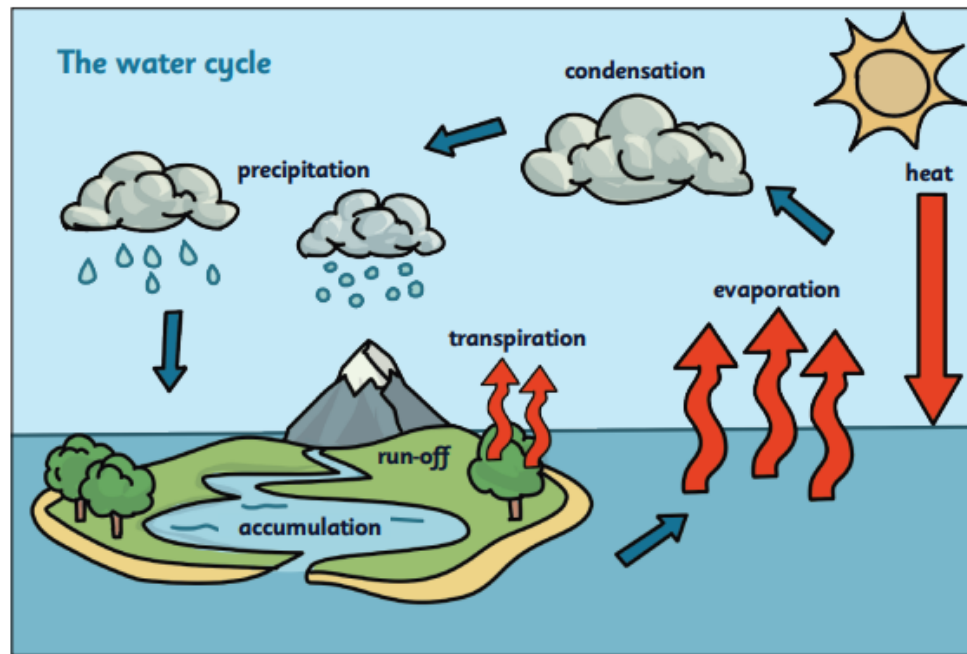


What are the features of the four regions of the United states?

Region	The West	The Midwest	The Northeast	The South
States				
Major Cities				
Landmarks			The Statue of Liberty, NYC	
Mountains / mountain ranges	The Rocky Mountains 			
Main Rivers				
Other physical features	Grand Canyon 		Niagra Falls 	

The water cycle

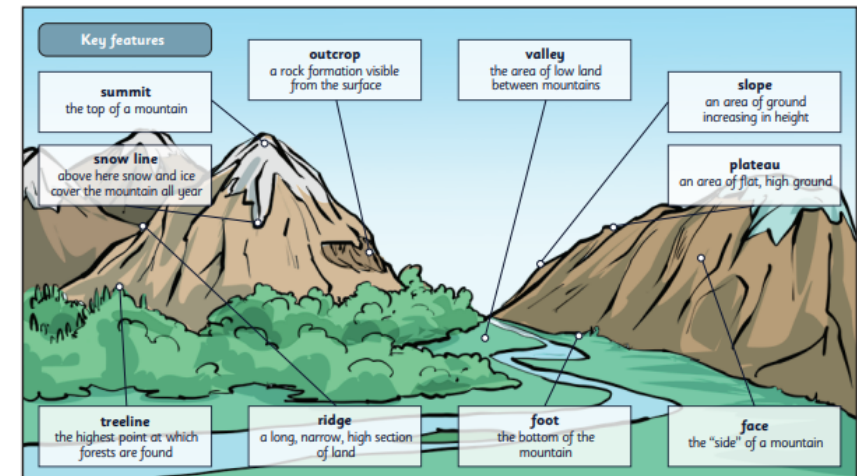
The water cycle has **four main parts**: evaporation, condensation, precipitation and accumulation.



1. **Evaporation** happens when the Sun causes the water in the rivers, lakes and oceans to heat up and turn into a water vapour gas, which then goes into the air. Water from plants and trees also enters the atmosphere. This is called **transpiration**.
2. As the water vapour rises during the evaporation stage, it cools down and turns back into liquid, causing droplets to form, becoming clouds. This is called **condensation**.
3. When a cloud becomes too full and heavy, the water falls to the ground as **precipitation**. Precipitation can take the form of rain, sleet, hail or snow.
4. When water falls back to Earth as precipitation, the Earth absorbs some of the water that falls to the ground. When the ground cannot absorb the water, it flows over the land, known as 'run-off'. The water that runs over the ground accumulates in rivers, lakes and oceans. This is called **accumulation**.

What are mountains?

Mountains are areas of land much **higher** than the land surrounding them. They are higher and usually steeper than a hill. They are normally over **600 metres high**. They are usually found in a group called a **mountain range**. Lines of ranges form mountain belts.



What are rivers?

A river is a naturally **moving body of water**. It flows from its source on high ground, across the land, and then into another body of water. This could be a lake, the sea, an ocean or even another river.

