Free US Geography Worksheets

Five original activities for grades 3 to 6, ages 8 to 12

The five worksheets

ID	Worksheet	Focus	Grades	Time
GW-01	Find the State	State identification	3-5	15-20 min
GW-02	Regions of America	US regions	3-6	25-30 min
GW-03	States and Capitals Challenge	State capitals	4-6	20-25 min
GW-04	Geography Detective	Multi-clue reasoning	4-6	25-30 min
GW-05	Map Skills Mission	Reading maps	3-6	25-30 min

How to use them

1. Print on US Letter paper in black and white. Use a pencil; every worksheet has room to write and rub out.
2. Do one worksheet at a time, in any order. Each one has its own ID (GW-01 to GW-05) and stands on its own.
3. GW-01 and GW-05 use the map on their map pages, and GW-02 uses the Region Guide. Everything a worksheet needs is printed on its pages.
4. The answers are in a separate PDF, so nobody sees them by accident. Share the answer key with the grown-up marking.

Good to know

These worksheets use the four regions of the U.S. Census Bureau: Northeast, Midwest, South and West. Other books and maps group the states differently (some, for example, split the South into a Southeast and a Southwest), so a state can belong to a different group there. If your class uses another system, follow your own guide; the answers here follow the Census Bureau.

Washington, DC is not one of the 50 states. The Census Bureau counts it in the South region, but it does not appear on these worksheets.

The maps show the United States in two parts: the lower 48 states, and Alaska and Hawaii in boxes at the lower left. The boxes are there to save space. Alaska and Hawaii are not in their real places and are not drawn at the same scale, so this map has no scale bar. Map outlines come from Natural Earth, a public-domain map dataset.

For teachers: every question has exactly one correct answer, and the answer key says which alternative wordings to accept.

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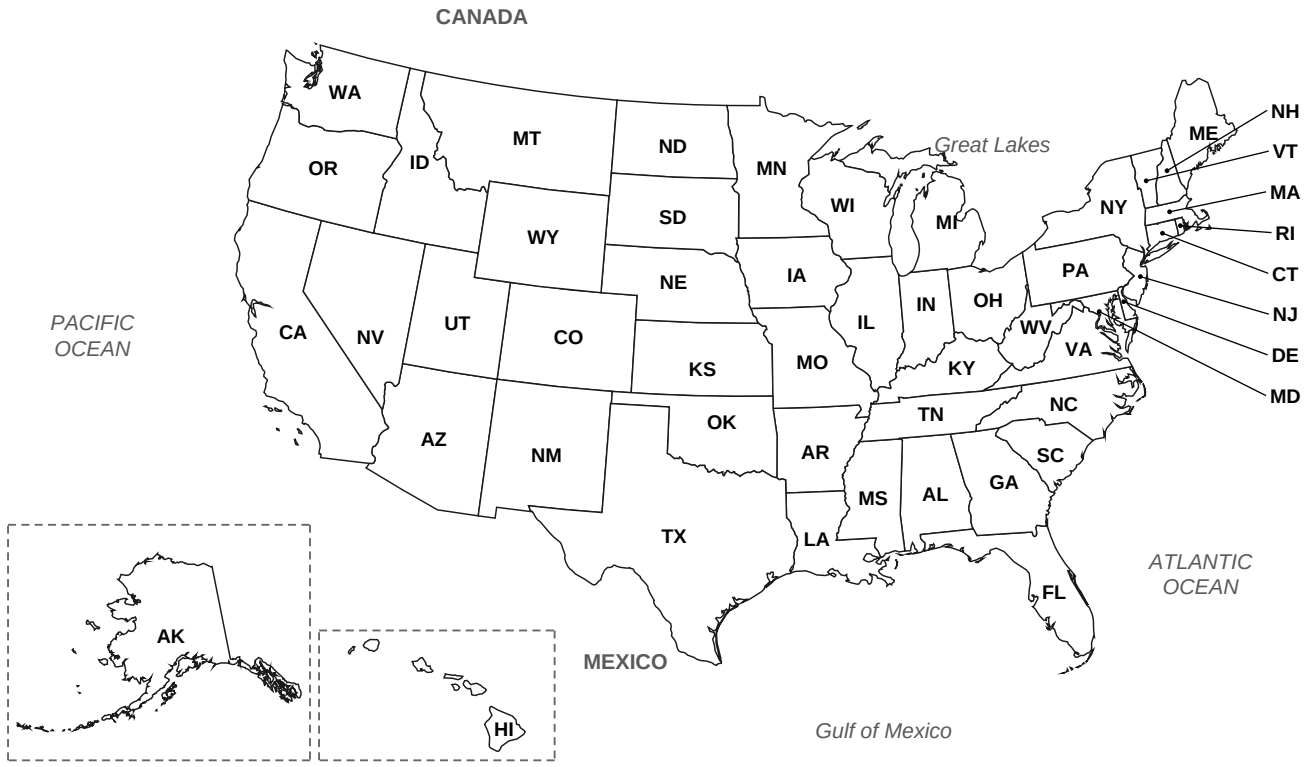
GW-01 Find the State

Map page. Keep this beside you while you work on the questions.



Alaska and Hawaii are drawn in the boxes. Alaska touches Canada on its east side. Hawaii is a chain of islands in the Pacific Ocean, far from every other state. Neither is in its real place.

The 50 states and their codes

AL Alabama	HI Hawaii	MA Massachusetts	NM New Mexico	SD South Dakota
AK Alaska	ID Idaho	MI Michigan	NY New York	TN Tennessee
AZ Arizona	IL Illinois	MN Minnesota	NC North Carolina	TX Texas
AR Arkansas	IN Indiana	MS Mississippi	ND North Dakota	UT Utah
CA California	IA Iowa	MO Missouri	OH Ohio	VT Vermont
CO Colorado	KS Kansas	MT Montana	OK Oklahoma	VA Virginia
CT Connecticut	KY Kentucky	NE Nebraska	OR Oregon	WA Washington
DE Delaware	LA Louisiana	NV Nevada	PA Pennsylvania	WV West Virginia
FL Florida	ME Maine	NH New Hampshire	RI Rhode Island	WI Wisconsin
GA Georgia	MD Maryland	NJ New Jersey	SC South Carolina	WY Wyoming

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GW-01 Find the State

Grades 3-5 · Reading a labeled map

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Use the labeled map on the map page. Each clue tells you something you can see on the map. Find the state it describes and write its name on the line. A two-letter code is fine too.

1. I have a coastline on the Atlantic Ocean. I have a coastline on the Gulf of Mexico.

Answer: _____

2. I do not touch any other state. I do not border Canada.

Answer: _____

3. I do not touch any other state. I share a border with Canada.

Answer: _____

4. I have a coastline on the Gulf of Mexico. I share a border with Mexico.

Answer: _____

5. I border exactly 1 other state.

Answer: _____

6. I have a coastline on the Atlantic Ocean. I touch at least one of the Great Lakes.

Answer: _____

7. I have a coastline on the Pacific Ocean. I share a border with Canada. I border Idaho.

Answer: _____

8. I have a coastline on the Pacific Ocean. I border Oregon, Nevada and Arizona.

Answer: _____

9. I border Wisconsin, Indiana and Ohio.

Answer: _____

10. I border Nebraska and New Mexico.

Answer: _____

11. I have a coastline on the Gulf of Mexico. I border Tennessee and Georgia.

Answer: _____

12. I share a border with Canada. I border North Dakota and Idaho.

Answer: _____

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GW-02 Regions of America

Grades 3-6 · Region Guide and Part A

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Read the Region Guide. Then shade the map, answer the questions and sort the twelve states.

Region Guide: the four regions of the U.S. Census Bureau

Northeast 9 states
Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont

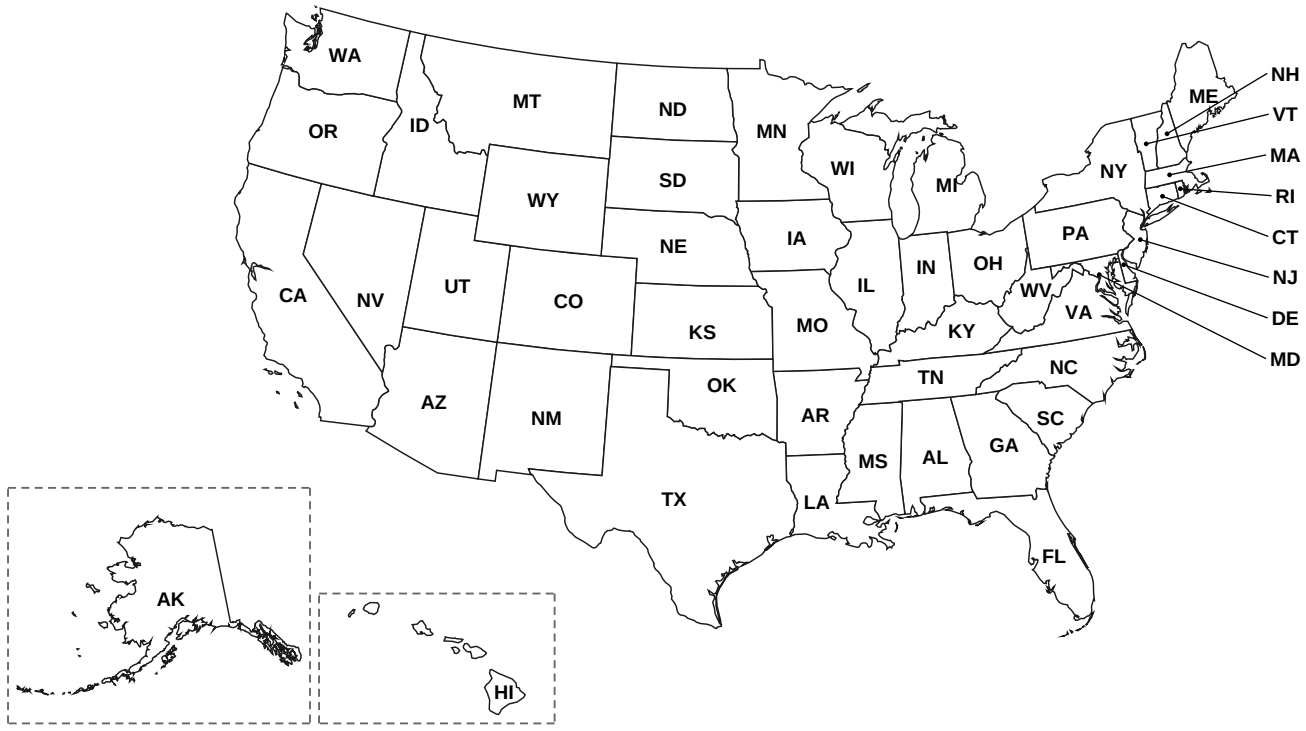
Midwest 12 states
Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

South 16 states
Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia

West 13 states
Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

Part A: Shade the map. Use a different pattern for each region (see the key). Find each state by its two-letter code, then shade it using the Region Guide.

Northeast **Midwest** **South** **West**



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GW-02 Regions of America

Grades 3-6 · Grouping states into regions

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Part B: Count and compare

Use your shaded map and the guide.

Northeast _____ **Midwest** _____ **South** _____ **West** _____ **Total** _____

Count the states of each region on your shaded map. The four numbers should add up to the total number of states.

1. Two regions have states on the Atlantic Ocean. Name both.

Answer: _____

2. Only one region has states on the Gulf of Mexico. Which one?

Answer: _____

3. Which region has the Pacific Ocean coast, including Alaska and Hawaii?

Answer: _____

4. Which region has no state that touches an ocean or the Gulf of Mexico?

Answer: _____

5. Which region has the fewest states?

Answer: _____

Part C: Sort the states

Write each state in the box for its region. Each region gets three states.

States to sort: Colorado, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Nevada, Oklahoma, Iowa, Georgia, Vermont, Oregon, Kentucky, Ohio, Nebraska.

Northeast	**Midwest**
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

South	**West**
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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GW-03 States and Capitals Challenge

Grades 4-6 · Linking states and their capitals

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Three short rounds. No lists to copy from: use what you know, and the letters and choices in each round.

Round 1: Capital scramble

The first letter of each capital is given. The other letters are mixed up. Write the capital.

1.	**Colorado**	D + E N V R E	_____
2.	**Arizona**	P + O H N E I X	_____
3.	**Massachusetts**	B + O T O S N	_____
4.	**Connecticut**	H + T R F D A O R	_____
5.	**Tennessee**	N + V S H L L A I E	_____
6.	**Ohio**	C + S B U U O L M	_____
7.	**Georgia**	A + A A L N T T	_____
8.	**Michigan**	L + N I S G N A	_____
9.	**Texas**	A + T I N U S	_____
10.	**Wisconsin**	M + A S N D I O	_____

Round 2: Whose capital?

Circle the state that has this capital.

1. Which state has Boise as its capital?

(a) Illinois (b) Idaho (c) Iowa

2. Which state has Salem as its capital?

(a) Oregon (b) Ohio (c) Oklahoma

3. Which state has Pierre as its capital?

(a) North Dakota (b) South Dakota (c) South Carolina

4. Which state has Montpelier as its capital?

(a) Vermont (b) Virginia (c) West Virginia

5. Which state has Santa Fe as its capital?

(a) New Mexico (b) New Jersey (c) New York

6. Which state has Jefferson City as its capital?

(a) Minnesota (b) Mississippi (c) Missouri

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GW-03 States and Capitals Challenge

Grades 4-6 · Linking states and their capitals

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Round 3: Capital or famous city?

Each state has a famous city, and it is not always the capital. Circle the capital.

1.	**New York**	New York City	Albany
2.	**California**	Sacramento	Los Angeles
3.	**Illinois**	Chicago	Springfield
4.	**Washington**	Seattle	Olympia
5.	**Texas**	Austin	Houston
6.	**Pennsylvania**	Philadelphia	Harrisburg

Your turn: write the capital of the state where you live, and one other capital you want to remember.

My state's capital: _____ Another: _____

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GW-04 Geography Detective

Grades 4-6 · Eliminating suspects with evidence

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Each case has six suspects and a fact file about them. Read every clue. Cross out each suspect that breaks a clue. The state left standing is the answer.

Borders lists states that share a boundary line, not corner points or lake and bay boundaries. Region is the U.S. Census Bureau region.

GW-04-01 The Pacific Postcard (Level 1)

A postcard with no name on it has landed on the detective desk. The sender is one of the six states in the fact file.

Suspect	Region	Water	Capital	Borders
Utah	West	No ocean coast	Salt Lake City	Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Nevada, Wyoming
Hawaii	West	Pacific Ocean	Honolulu	none
California	West	Pacific Ocean	Sacramento	Arizona, Nevada, Oregon
Oregon	West	Pacific Ocean	Salem	California, Idaho, Nevada, Washington
Alaska	West	Pacific Ocean; Arctic Ocean	Juneau	none
Washington	West	Pacific Ocean	Olympia	Idaho, Oregon

1. It has a coastline on the Pacific Ocean.
2. It borders Idaho.
3. Its capital's name starts with S.

The mystery state is _____

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GW-04 Geography Detective

Grades 4-6 · Eliminating suspects with evidence (continued)

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

GW-04-02 The Lakeshore Letter (Level 1)

A letter was posted from a state with a lake on its edge. Six states could have sent it.

Suspect	Region	Water	Capital	Borders
Ohio	Midwest	No ocean coast; Great Lakes	Columbus	Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Pennsylvania, West Virginia
Illinois	Midwest	No ocean coast; Great Lakes	Springfield	Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri, Wisconsin
New York	Northeast	Atlantic Ocean; Great Lakes	Albany	Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Vermont
Indiana	Midwest	No ocean coast; Great Lakes	Indianapolis	Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio
West Virginia	South	No ocean coast	Charleston	Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia
Michigan	Midwest	No ocean coast; Great Lakes	Lansing	Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin

1. It does not touch an ocean or the Gulf of Mexico.

2. It touches at least one of the Great Lakes.

3. It borders Pennsylvania.

The mystery state is _____

GW-04-03 The Mountain Memo (Level 2)

A memo was found pinned to a trail sign. It came from one of the six states in the file.

Suspect	Region	Water	Capital	Borders
Iowa	Midwest	No ocean coast	Des Moines	Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota, Wisconsin
Wyoming	West	No ocean coast	Cheyenne	Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, South Dakota, Utah
Arizona	West	No ocean coast	Phoenix	California, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah
California	West	Pacific Ocean	Sacramento	Arizona, Nevada, Oregon
Alaska	West	Pacific Ocean; Arctic Ocean	Juneau	none
Colorado	West	No ocean coast	Denver	Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Utah, Wyoming

1. It is in the West region.

2. It borders Nebraska.

3. It does not border Kansas.

The mystery state is _____

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GW-04 Geography Detective

Grades 4-6 · Eliminating suspects with evidence (continued)

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

GW-04-04 The Prairie Telegram (Level 2)

A telegram was tapped out across the plains. It came from one of the six states in the file.

Suspect	Region	Water	Capital	Borders
Iowa	Midwest	No ocean coast	Des Moines	Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, South Dakota, Wisconsin
Illinois	Midwest	No ocean coast; Great Lakes	Springfield	Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri, Wisconsin
Nebraska	Midwest	No ocean coast	Lincoln	Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, South Dakota, Wyoming
Michigan	Midwest	No ocean coast; Great Lakes	Lansing	Indiana, Ohio, Wisconsin
Arkansas	South	No ocean coast	Little Rock	Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas
Kansas	Midwest	No ocean coast	Topeka	Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma

1. It is in the Midwest region.

2. It borders Missouri.

3. Its capital's name starts with L.

The mystery state is _____

GW-04-05 The River Riddle (Level 3)

A note in a bottle floated down a river with four clues on it. The six suspects are in the file.

Suspect	Region	Water	Capital	Borders
Kentucky	South	No ocean coast	Frankfort	Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia
Missouri	Midwest	No ocean coast	Jefferson City	Arkansas, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Tennessee
Mississippi	South	Gulf of Mexico	Jackson	Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee
Oklahoma	South	No ocean coast	Oklahoma City	Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Texas
Tennessee	South	No ocean coast	Nashville	Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Virginia
Texas	South	Gulf of Mexico	Austin	Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma

1. It is in the South region.

2. It does not touch an ocean or the Gulf of Mexico.

3. It borders Arkansas.

4. It does not border Texas.

The mystery state is _____

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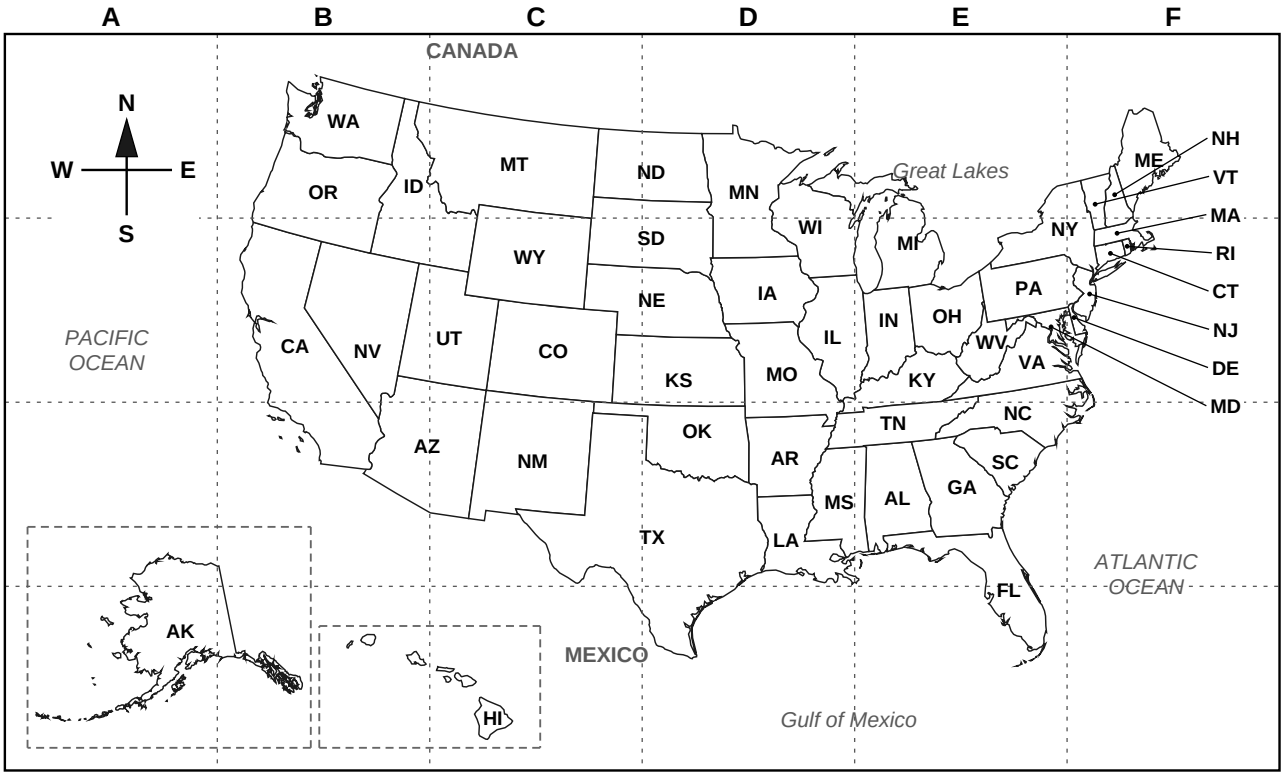
GW-05 Map Skills Mission

Grades 3-6 · Map page and Part A

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Use the map on this page. It has a compass rose, a grid (columns A to F, rows 1 to 4) and the two-letter code of every state.



Part A: Map parts

Circle the best answer.

1. The arrow that shows north, south, east and west on a map is called the...
- (a) legend
- (b) compass rose
- (c) scale

2. Which two states are drawn in the boxes at the lower left of the map?
- (a) Alaska and Hawaii
- (b) Maine and Florida
- (c) Texas and California

3. Why are Alaska and Hawaii drawn in boxes?
- (a) They are not part of the United States.
- (b) They are far from the other 48 states, so the map shows them in boxes to save space.
- (c) They are both islands.

4. This map has no scale bar. Why can you not measure real distances on it with a ruler?
- (a) Alaska and Hawaii are drawn smaller than they really are, so one scale would be wrong for the whole map.
- (b) Maps never show distances.
- (c) The map is too small to print.

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GW-05 Map Skills Mission

Grades 3-6 · Using directions, a grid and borders (continued)

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Part B: Directions

Use the compass rose. Circle north, south, east or west.

1.	Montana is ____ of Texas.	north	south	east	west
2.	Florida is ____ of Ohio.	north	south	east	west
3.	Maine is ____ of Minnesota.	north	south	east	west
4.	California is ____ of Missouri.	north	south	east	west
5.	Kansas is ____ of North Dakota.	north	south	east	west
6.	New Mexico is ____ of Georgia.	north	south	east	west

Part C: The grid

Columns run A to F from left to right. Rows run 1 to 4 from top to bottom. Write the square (for example, B3) or the state.

1. In which grid square is the label KS? Answer: _____

2. In which grid square is the label ME? Answer: _____

3. Which state's label is in grid square C1? Answer: _____

4. Which state's label is in grid square C3? Answer: _____

Part D: Border hopping

You can only go from a state to a state it touches. Name the state you must cross.

1. You travel from Washington to Wyoming, crossing as few other states as possible. Which state do you cross?

I cross: _____

2. You travel from North Dakota to Nebraska, crossing as few other states as possible. Which state do you cross?

I cross: _____

3. You travel from Texas to Kansas, crossing as few other states as possible. Which state do you cross?

I cross: _____

4. You travel from Maine to Massachusetts, crossing as few other states as possible. Which state do you cross?

I cross: _____

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