

The West: People, Places, and Cultures



Take a look at these pictures of the Western United States. What do you notice? What do you wonder?





Open Ended Question

When you looked at the photos of the Western Region of the United States, what did you notice? What do you wonder about the West?

States in the West

There are 11 states in the West of the United States.

They are:

ALASKA -- This state is the the farthest north of every state in the US

CALIFORNIA -- This state is home to Hollywood and a lot of movies are made here

COLORADO -- The capital of this state, Denver, is one mile above sea level

HAWAII -- This is the only state made up entirely of islands

IDAHO -- The state that produces the most potatoes in the US

MONTANA -- This state has more grizzly bears than any other state in the US

NEVADA -- This state has more mountain ranges than any other state in the US

OREGON -- This state is the only state to have an official state nut: the hazelnut

UTAH -- This state is known for its great ski slopes

WASHINGTON -- This state has over 3,000 glaciers that you can visit

WYOMING -- This is the least populated state in the US

WHICH STATE WOULD YOU LIKE TO VISIT?



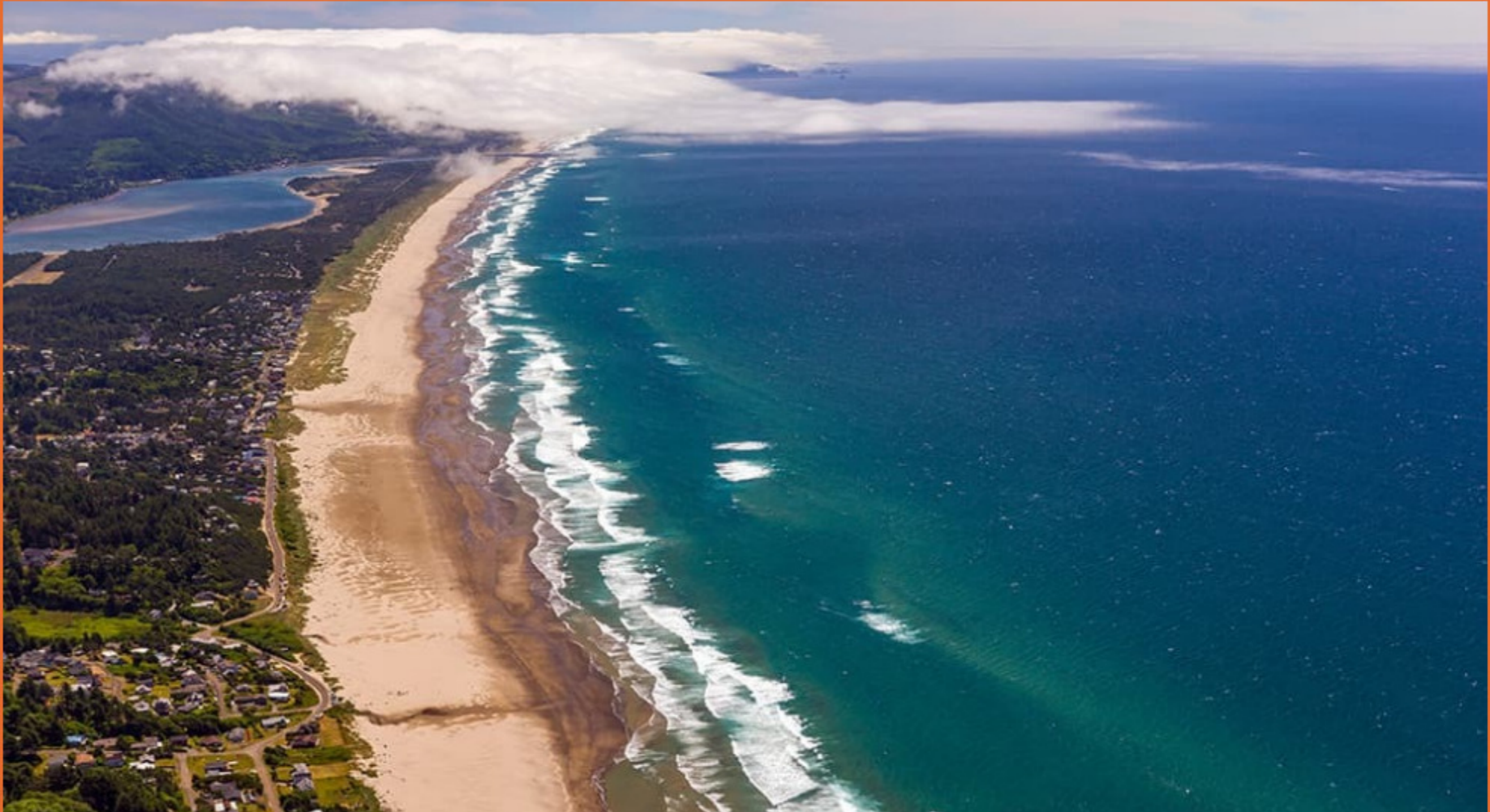
Western States

Which Western state would you most like to visit? Why?

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Western States

Physical Features and Landmarks of the West



The West of the United States has a very diverse landscape. There are mountains, deserts, forests, and more! In the northern parts of the region, it can get very cold and snowy, but in the southern parts of the region, it stays warm all year round. Depending on where in the west you are, the plants, animals, and ways of life can be very different.



The West contains many tourists destinations. Visitors to this region can stroll down Hollywood Boulevard, where famous actors have their names written in the stars, relax on a beach in Hawaii with ukelele music playing in the background, or climb on ancient glaciers in Alaska. Where would you visit?

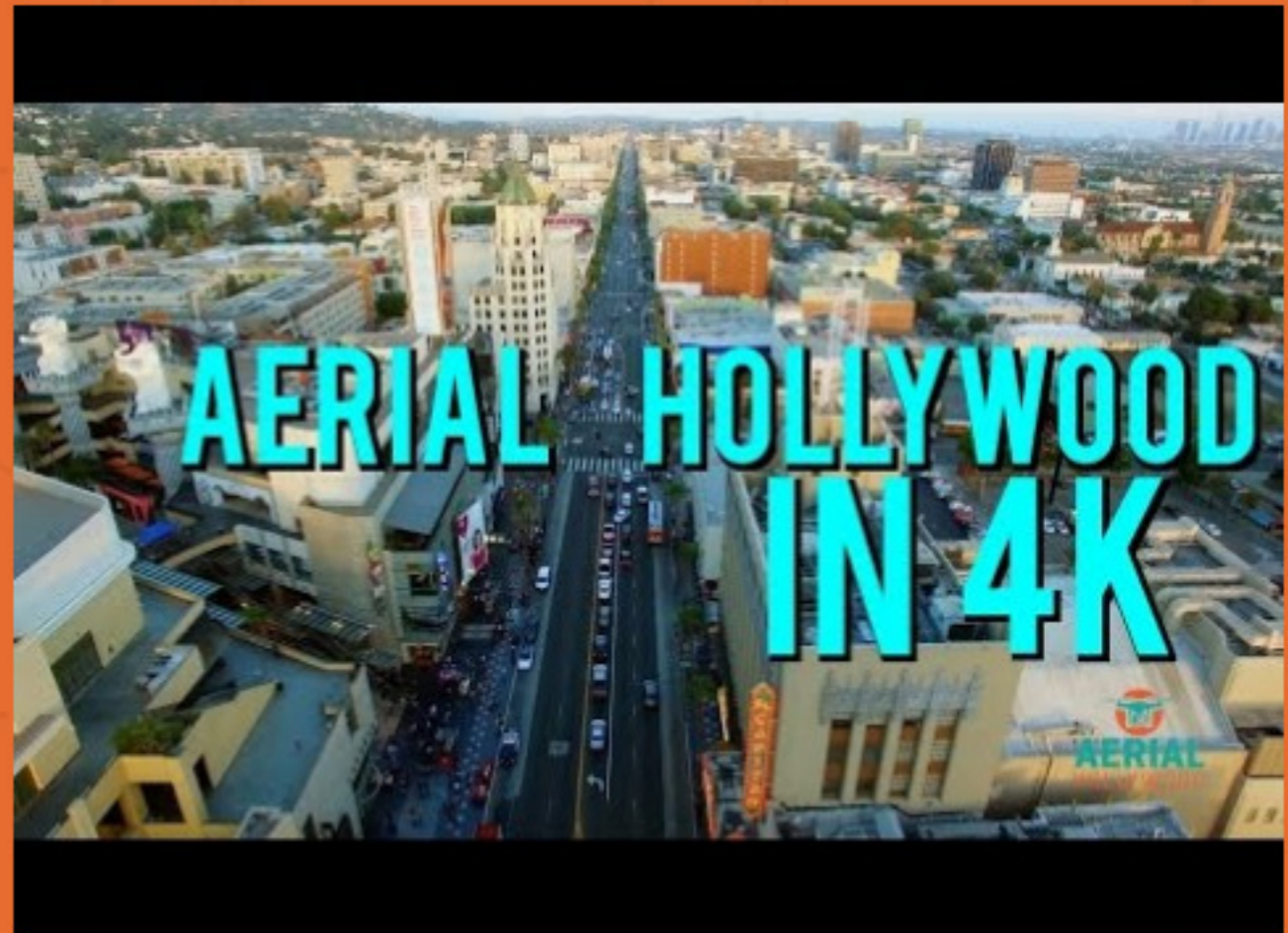


Poll

If we could choose to go to one of these locations on a class field trip, where do you think we should go?

- Hollywood Boulevard
- Waikiki Beach, Hawaii
- Glacier hiking in Alaska

Based on the answers to the poll, we will go on one virtual field trip.



Virtual Trip



Share something you saw, liked, or learned on our virtual field trip. Then read your classmates' responses!

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Virtual Field Trip

Weather and Natural Disasters

The Western Region of the United States experiences many different weather patterns and natural disasters. For example, the West frequently experiences drought, which is when there is little to no rain. It is very difficult to grow food during these times.

The forests of the West experience a lot of forest fires. These forest fires can be devastating to the natural environment and to communities caught in the blaze, and they have been getting worse every year because of climate change.

There are 169 active volcanoes in the US, and all but 2 of them are in the Western Region. Let's watch one erupt!



Poll

Would you like to visit Hawaii Volcanoes National Park in person?

- YES! I'd get as close as I safely could to the eruption, take lots of pictures, and bring home lava rocks!
- NO! I don't want to fall into a pit of lava!

Resources and Industry in the West



The West has many natural resources and industries. Gold, silver, lead, and copper are all found and mined in the Rocky Mountains. The West also has lots of forests, and most timber (wood) sold in the US comes from the West. This wood is used to make furniture, paper, books, and much more. The American film industry is centered in Hollywood, California, and has produced countless famous movies throughout the years.





Resources and Industry in the West

What is your favorite Hollywood movie? Check out your classmates' responses!

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Resources and Industry in the West

Important People and Cultures in the US



Many famous people and historical figures are from the West.

Tom Brady, the greatest quarterback of all time, was born in California

Kamala Harris, our Vice President, was also born in California

President Ronald Reagan was a Hollywood actor and then Governor of California



Native Americans in the West

There are many Native American tribes that call the West Coast of the United States home. Among them are the Paiute, which inhabit many western states, the Coast Salish, who call the coast of Washington home, and the Inuit, from Alaska.

The Inuit people are a resilient tribe who have made lives for themselves in the freezing cold Alaskan wilderness. They dress in fur clothing to keep warm, and are known for their skills in hunting and trapping.

Let's watch and learn about Inuit life in the Arctic!



The Oregon Trail and Westward Expansion

After the expeditions of Lewis and Clark in 1804 - 1806, many Americans were eager to travel west in search of land, new opportunities, and a better life.

The Oregon Trail, which stretched 2,000 miles from Independence, Missouri to Oregon City, Oregon, took hundreds of thousands of pioneers into the Western Region of the United States. These people traveled with their families in covered wagons. Making it all the way across the plains and through the mountains to reach the West was a very difficult journey which took four to six months.



Fill in the Blanks

Oregon

Pioneers

Governor

actor

Inuit

fur

The _____ People in Alaska live in brutal conditions by wearing clothes made from _____ and being skilled in hunting and trapping.

President Ronald Reagan was an _____ before he became _____ of California .

_____ in the 1800s came to the West by taking the _____ Trail across the country.

Quiz

Let's Review!

Which of these states is NOT in the Western Region of the United States?

- Idaho
- Colorado
- California
- Kansas

Which of these is a landmark in the West?

- Ellis Island
- The St. Louis Arch
- Hollywood Boulevard
- Fort Sumter

Which of these is a major industry in the West?

- Timber
- Coal
- Peanuts
- Car Manufacturing

Which elected official is from California?

- Joe Biden
- Kamala Harris
- Charlie Baker
- Nancy Pelosi

Wow!  cool!

What was the most interesting thing about the West that you learned today? Be sure to check out your classmates' responses!

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Wow! That's cool!