

Name _____



Continents and Oceans

By Trista L. Pollard

Our planet has many physical features. There are water, land, and **vegetation** that cover the Earth. Vegetation is the trees, grass, and plants that we see everyday. When you look at a globe or a map, you see the land and the water. On **physical maps** you would see mountains, deserts, and grassy areas. Physical maps use color to show the different types of landforms on Earth. Globes also use different colors to show landforms. Let's start with **landmasses**.



Landmasses are the largest pieces of land on Earth. Geographers call these landmasses **continents**. Continents are usually surrounded by water. Geographers have named seven continents. They are **Africa, Asia, Australia, Antarctica, Europe, North America, and South America**. If you live in the United States or Canada, then you are living in North America. You would find the **countries** of England, France, and Spain in Europe.

Remember when you read that continents are usually surrounded by water? Well, Europe and Asia are not surrounded by water. In fact, Europe and Asia are separated by land. The **Ural Mountains** separate the two continents. There are at least two **seas** that separate Europe and Asia. Seas are bodies of saltwater that are surrounded by land. These two seas are the **Caspian Sea** and the **Black Sea**.

Africa, one of the larger continents, is south of Europe and part of Asia. Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, and Kenya are located in Africa. Madagascar is an island that is found off the eastern coast of Africa. China, Japan, and India are located in Asia. South America, just like its name, is found below North America. It is even connected to North America by a small piece of land. This piece of land is called

Central America. If you went to South America, you could visit Brazil, Chile, and Ecuador.

Australia and Antarctica are the last two continents. Australia is the only continent that is an **island**. It is completely surrounded by water. Australia has six states. If you visit the city of Sydney, you would be in the state of New South Wales. Melbourne is located in the state of Victoria. Antarctica is found at the South Pole. Since it is very cold, there are very few people who live there. Scientists work there to study the environment. Part of Antarctica's land is located close to the tip of South America. This is where you will find **stations** or camp sites. Scientists do their experiments and research at these stations.

So, now that we have covered the land, let's talk about the water. Our planet has five **oceans**. Oceans are very large bodies of salt water. They are not completely surrounded by land. Almost three-fourths of our planet is covered by ocean water. The Earth's oceans are the **Atlantic Ocean**, the **Arctic Ocean**, the **Indian Ocean**, the **Southern Ocean**, and the **Pacific Ocean**. The Pacific Ocean is the largest. It is located between Asia and North America. The Atlantic Ocean is the second largest. It is found between North America and Europe. It is also between South America and Africa. The Southern Ocean is around Antarctica. Sometimes it is called the Antarctic Ocean. The Indian Ocean is between Africa and Australia. It is also below Asia. The last ocean, the Arctic, is the coldest and smallest. You would find this ocean at the North Pole.

These are the Earth's largest physical features. They are also the ones you would see if you were looking down from space.

Name _____



Continents and Oceans

Questions

1. What is a continent?

_____ 2. England, France, and Spain are located in _____.

- A. North America
- B. Africa
- C. Europe
- D. Asia

3. Name the five oceans.

4. Name the seven continents.

_____ 5. Put these oceans in order from smallest to largest. Arctic Ocean, Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean.

- A. Arctic Ocean
- B. Indian Ocean
- C. Atlantic Ocean
- D. Pacific Ocean

_____ 6. Australia has six _____.

- A. Countries
- B. Territories
- C. Stations
- D. States

7. Why are there very few people who live in Antarctica?

8. If I am in the Atlantic Ocean, what continents am I between?

Write an acrostic poem about continents. Think of words that begin with each letter of the word "continent." Use these words to describe continents in your poem.
