
Grade Level: 6-12  Curriculum Focus: Geography  Duration: 16 segments; 100 minutes

Program Description
This library of videos contains segments on the geography, climate, culture, and history of the United States.

UNITED STATES
- A Look at North America (4 min.)
- Regional Overview of the Northeast (6 min.)
- Paul Revere and the Minutemen (7 min.)
- Harnessing Natural Resources (7 min.)
- Large Cities in the Northeast (8 min.)
- Regional Overview of the South (7 min.)
- The Mighty Mississippi (4 min.)
- Miami’s Cuban Culture (3 min.)
- Living on the Southern Coast (7 min.)
- Regional Overview of the Midwest (6 min.)
- Farming the Prairie (7 min.)
- Prairie Ecosystem (8 min.)
- Regional Overview of the West (11 min.)
- Mysteries of the Anasazi (5 min.)
- The Quest for Gold in the West (5 min.)
- Earthquakes and Volcanoes (5 min.)

Thematic Units
Help your students evaluate and analyze what they view in the videos with the Essential Questions for each Thematic Unit.
History

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

• How has the geography of North America affected the history of the continent?
• What geographical features of North America have played pivotal roles in the history of the continent? Cite examples from the video segments.
• What natural resources in North America have been significant in shaping the political and economic history of different areas of the continent?

SEGMENTS

How New York City Grew

• Pre-viewing question
  What are some features of New York City that make it such a well-known city?
• Post-viewing question
  What measures have city developers taken to help New York City grow into a thriving metropolis?

Paul Revere and the Minutemen

• Pre-Viewing Question
  What was Paul Revere’s role in initiating battle between the colonists and the British?
• Post-Viewing Question
  Why did Paul Revere shout, “The Regulars are coming”? What does this indicate about how the colonists saw the British soldiers?

Mysteries of the Anasazi

• Pre-Viewing Question
  Who were the Anasazi? When and where did they live?
• Post-Viewing Question
  How does the design of an Anasazi kiva demonstrate understanding of the seasons? Why was this important?

The Quest for Gold in the West

• Pre-viewing question
  What does the name “49ers” refer to? Why did these people settle in California?
• Post-viewing question
  What other natural resources have caused people to migrate within the United States?

The Cuban Missile Crisis

• Pre-viewing question
  What Caribbean country was the focus of a major showdown between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1962? What was this conflict called?
Post-viewing question
What actions did Premier Khrushchev take that created the Cuban Missile Crisis? What measures did President Kennedy take to end the crisis?

Culture

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
- Where is evidence of European cultures found in North American countries?
- What mixing of cultures has survived in North America?
- What elements of mixed cultures stand out in North America?

SEGMENTS
Large Cities in the Northeast
- Pre-viewing question
  What are the three largest cities in the Northeast? What geographical feature do they have in common?
- Post-viewing question
  Why is water an important resource for supporting the growth and economy of a city?

Miami’s Cuban Culture
- Pre-Viewing Question
  Where is Cuba located?
- Post-Viewing Question
  How have Cubans in the United States maintained their culture?

Economics

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
- What natural resources have been used to sustain the economies of North American countries?
- What natural resources have had a significant influence on regional economies in North America? Where are they found?
- What are the challenges of harvesting natural resources to benefit the local economies?

SEGMENTS
Farming the Prairie
- Pre-viewing question
  What states make up the Midwest? How would you describe this region’s economy and culture?
• Post-viewing question
  How can the Midwestern states be divided based on their agricultural products? How does farming affect the economy and culture of these states?

Harnessing Natural Resources
• Pre-Viewing Question
  What is the Earth’s most abundant natural resource? How is it used?
• Post-Viewing Question
  How is the geography of the Northeast ideal for producing maple syrup?

The Quest for Gold in the West
• Pre-viewing question
  What is a prospector? Who were the well-known prospectors during the westward expansion of the United States?
• Post-viewing question
  What drove the gold miners in the 19th century to make sacrifices and move west? How did this quest for gold affect the population patterns of the United States?

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)
McREL’s Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit link: http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp
This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

• Geography – The World in Spatial Terms: Knows the location of places, geographic features, and patterns of the environment; Places and Regions: Understands the physical and human characteristics of place, Understands the concept of regions; Human Systems: Understands the nature and complexity of Earth’s cultural mosaics, Understands the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth’s surface

• Language Arts—Viewing: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)
NCSS has developed national guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to http://www.socialstudies.org
This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

• Culture
• Time, Continuity, and Change
- People, Places, and Environments
- Power, Authority and Governance
- Production, Distribution, and Consumption
- Science, Technology, and Society
- Global Connections

**Support Materials**

**Related Lesson Plans**

You can find hundreds of lesson plans online at [http://www.discoveryschool.com](http://www.discoveryschool.com). The following lesson plans work well with the video segments in this library collection.

- **U.S. Geography: The Midwest** (grades 3–5)
- **U.S. Geography: The Northeast** (grades 3–5)
- **U.S. Geography: The South** (grades 3–5)
- **U.S. Geography: The West** (grades 3–5)
- **North American Cultures** (grades 6–8)
- **African-American Population Shifts** (grades 6–8)
- **U.S.-Cuba Relations** (grades 9–12)
- **The Vinland Map Science Mystery** (grades 9–12)

**Other Resources**

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- [http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html](http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html)
**DVD Content**

This program is available in an interactive DVD format. The following information and activities are specific to the DVD version.

**How To Use the DVD**

The DVD starting screen has the following options:

*Play Video* — This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.

*Country Index* — This DVD is divided into one country selection, indicated by a video thumbnail icon. Within this country selection, you can select a submenu of video segments. Watching all the segments in sequence is similar to watching a video from start to finish; the total running time (TRT) is listed for each segment. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the remote control; on a computer, click once to highlight a thumbnail or menu item, and click again to start the segment.

*Thematic Units* — This option groups the segments by curricular units. Videos that fall under the themes of History, Culture, and Economics are regrouped as such.

*Maps* — Select an individual map or view all maps as a slide show.

*Standards Link* — Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

*Teacher Resources* — This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.

**Country Index**

UNITED STATES

A Look at North America (4 min.)

North America is composed of Canada, the United States, and Mexico, as well as Bermuda, Greenland, the seven nations that make up Central America, and the island nations of the Caribbean. The continent exhibits varied climates, topographies, and cultures.

Regional Overview of the Northeast (6 min.)

Studying different types of maps and their information helps us understand where a place is located, as well as how a region’s location and natural resources affect the people who live there.

Paul Revere and the Minutemen (7 min.)

The midnight ride of Paul Revere signaled the beginning of the Revolutionary War against England. After years of increased tension between the colonies and the crown, the clash between minutemen and redcoats made clear there was no chance for a peaceful settlement.
Harnessing Natural Resources (7 min.)
The natural resources of a region determine the types of industry that can be supported. The Northeast has an abundance of water and other renewable and recyclable resources.

Large Cities in the Northeast (8 min.)
The Northeast is the most densely populated region of the United States, and it supports large centers of commerce by effectively making use of its natural resources.

Regional Overview of the South (7 min.)
Once driven exclusively by a farm-based economy, the American South now capitalizes on its diverse geographical features and moderate climate.

The Mighty Mississippi (4 min.)
Harnessing the power of the Mississippi River requires knowing its strength and working with it to move people and goods from state to state.

Miami’s Cuban Culture (3 min.)
Hispanics make up one of the fastest growing segments of the U.S. population. Many people from Cuba have settled in a southern Florida community called Little Havana.

Living on the Southern Coast (7 min.)
From the wetlands of the Chesapeake Bay region to the Florida Everglades, the coastal areas of the South have diverse wildlife and their own unique cultures.

Regional Overview of the Midwest (6 min.)
Known as America’s heartland, the Midwest has vast grasslands, large freshwater lakes, eroded cliffs and valleys, and thriving urban hubs.

Farming the Prairie (7 min.)
It’s called America’s breadbasket for a reason. Because it has a moderate climate and rich soil, Midwest farmland provides grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy products, and meats for the rest of the country.

Prairie Ecosystem (8 min.)
Once thought to be a destructive force of nature, fire is an essential element in the life cycle of the prairie’s inhabitants.

Regional Overview of the West (11 min.)
Mountains, deserts, canyons, and forests are some of the highlighted topographical features of the U.S. West.
Mysteries of the Anasazi (5 min.)
Pueblo Bonito in New Mexico demonstrates the Anasazi people’s reverence for the sun and sophisticated understanding of astronomy.

The Quest for Gold in the West (5 min.)
Although the California Gold Rush and the Klondike Fever of Alaska made few people rich, both events sparked westward migrations that permanently altered the population patterns of the United States.

Earthquakes and Volcanoes (5 min.)
Volcanoes and earthquakes are visible and dramatic evidence of the shifting tectonic plates beneath the Earth’s surface. These powerful upheavals in the Earth’s crust are most common in the western United States.