

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Great Lakes

by Olivia Mendoza



If you live in the United States or Canada, you've likely heard of the Great Lakes. What are they? Where did they come from? What makes them so "great"?

the Great Lakes are kept full from



## Preview

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Eight U.S. states border the Great Lakes: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and New York. The Canadian province of Ontario borders all the Great Lakes except Lake Michigan.

The Great Lakes began to form about 14,000 years ago. That was after the Last Ice Age. Big sheets of ice dug huge grooves in the earth. The grooves filled up with water as the ice melted. Now

currents, big waves, and huge surface areas that remind people of seas. In fact, many people call them inland seas! These big, beautiful bodies of water affect the weather too. You can enjoy a warm breeze on their shores well into fall. You can also enjoy the way they act like an air conditioner in the summer. You may not enjoy their lake effect snow in the winter, though!

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The Great Lakes have also played a big role in history. They don't just connect to each other. They connect to the Atlantic Ocean too. This makes them great for moving people and goods. The Great Lakes still see hundreds of billions in trade each year.

Next time someone brings up the Great Lakes, you'll know how they got their name!



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- Lake Superior holds about 2,900 cubic miles (almost 12,100 cubic kilometers) of water. That's more than half the Great Lakes' total water volume!

- The world-famous Niagara Falls helps connect Lake Erie and Lake Ontario.

- Lake Huron has more than 3,800 miles (6,150 kilometers) of shoreline. That's because it has more than 30,000 islands in it!

- Lake Michigan is the largest lake located entirely within one country—and the state of Michigan touches all of the Great Lakes except Lake Ontario!

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- Which U.S. state does **not** border a great lake?
  - Montana
  - Indiana
  - Minnesota
  - New York

- Reread the following sentence from the article.

They have strong **currents**, big waves, and huge surface areas that remind people of seas.



**Preview**  
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- It has the largest surface area of the Great Lakes.
- It has many islands that add to its shoreline.
- It has nine states bordering it that add to its shoreline.

- List the Great Lakes shared by Canada and the U.S.

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- Put an **O** next to the statements that are opinions. Put an **F** next to the statements that are facts.

- \_\_\_ The Great Lakes are more than 10,000 years old.
- \_\_\_ You can reach the Atlantic Ocean through the Great Lakes.
- \_\_\_ Autumn breezes on the Great Lakes are enjoyable.
- \_\_\_ More than  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the world's fresh water is in the Great Lakes.
- \_\_\_ The Great Lakes should be renamed as seas.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Great Lakes



The following terms are vocabulary words from the article. Match the vocabulary word with its correct definition by writing the corresponding letter on the line.

1. \_\_\_\_ straits

a. to have an effect on; to impact

2. \_\_\_\_ grooves

b. a light wind



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6. \_\_\_\_ trade

f. narrow waterways connecting two larger bodies of water

7. \_\_\_\_ volume

g. to close around or touch on the edge

8. \_\_\_\_ border

h. used to change something about a thing, such as temperature or softness

9. \_\_\_\_ affect

i. business; buying and selling of goods

10. \_\_\_\_ conditioner

j. long dents or channels

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# The Great Lakes



In the article, "The Great Lakes," you read about five big and important lakes.

Have you ever visited a lake, ocean, or river? If so, describe what it was like and what you did while there. If not, pretend you are going to visit the Great Lakes. Describe what you think it would be like and what sorts of things you would do there.



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## ANSWER KEY

# The Great Lakes

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1. Which U.S. state does **not** border a great lake?

**a. Montana**

b. Indiana



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- F** The Great Lakes are more than 10,000 years old.
- F** You can reach the Atlantic Ocean through the Great Lakes.
- O** Autumn breezes on the Great Lakes are enjoyable.
- F** More than  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the world's fresh water is in the Great Lakes.
- O** The Great Lakes should be renamed as seas.

## ANSWER KEY

# The Great Lakes



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