

Montana

Reading and Discussion

Montana is located in the western United States. There are many mountains in this state, and in fact, seventy-seven named ranges of the Rocky Mountains are located in Montana. This fact is reflected in the name of the state. The name Montana comes from the Spanish word “**montaña**,” which means mountain. Montana has a few different nicknames, including “**Land of Shining Mountains**,” “**The Treasure State**,” “**Big Sky Country**,” and “**The Last Best Place**.” The state capitol is **Helena**, even though the largest city in Montana is Billings. Montana is bordered by Canada in the north. The western and southwestern border is shared with Idaho, and Wyoming is located to the south. The state’s eastern border is shared with North and South Dakota.

In the eastern part of the state, the economy is mainly based on wheat farming, ranching, oil, and coal. In the western part of the state, the economy is mainly based on hard rock mining, lumber, and tourism. Montana is home to the **Glacier National Park**. This National Park has two mountain ranges and more than 130 lakes. The Glacier National Park is home to more than 1100 species of plants and hundreds of animal species.

The **Battle of Little Bighorn**, also known as Custer’s Last Stand, took place in Montana. The site of this battle is still a point of interest for many tourists who also visit the state because three of the five entrances to **Yellowstone National Park** are located in Montana.

Montana is the fourth largest state in terms of area, but in ranks 44th in terms of population. As a result, Montana has the third lowest population density in the United States. Montana was part of the **Louisiana Purchase**. Gold and copper were discovered in the state in the late 1850s. Montana became the 41st state on November 8, 1889.

Montana’s state flower is bitterroot, and the state tree is the ponderosa pine. The state motto is “**Oro y Plata**,” which is Spanish for “Gold and Silver.” The state bird is the western meadowlark, and the state animal is the grizzly bear. Montana has the largest grizzly bear population in the continental United States. Montana has received some interesting awards. For example, in 2005, President George W. Bush gave Montana an award for having the best state government and citizens.

The planned battleship **USS Montana** was named in honor of the state, but the ship was never completed. In fact, Montana was the only one of the 48 states during World War II that did not have a battleship named after it. In fact, even after Alaska and Hawaii became states, Montana was still the last state to have a ship named in its honor. The submarine, USS Montana, was not named until 2007.

Montana’s triple divide allows water to flow into three different oceans. This occurs at the **Triple Divide Peak** in Glacier National Park. The water at this point is able to flow into the Pacific Ocean, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Arctic Ocean.

Name _____

Date _____

Activities

Activity A: Multiple Choice:

1. Michigan is nicknamed all of the following EXCEPT:
 - a. Land of Shining Mountains
 - b. The Treasure State
 - c. The Last Best Place
 - d. The Mountain State

2. Michigan was the _____ state admitted to the Union:
 - a. forty-first
 - b. thirty-eighth
 - c. twenty-sixth
 - d. twenty-second

3. The state bird of Michigan is the:
 - a. hummingbird
 - b. western meadowlark
 - c. woodpecker
 - d. American robin

Activity B: Fill in the Blanks:

1. The Capitol of Montana is _____.
2. Montana's triple divide allows water to flow into _____ different oceans.
3. Montana's state animal is the _____.
4. The Battle of Little Bighorn, also known as _____, took place in Montana.

Activity C: True or False:

- ____ 1. Montana was the first state to have a ship named in its honor.
- ____ 2. Montana's state flower is bitterroot.

Name _____

Date _____

Answer Key

Activity A

1. Michigan is nicknamed all of the following EXCEPT:
 - a. Land of Shining Mountains
 - b. The Treasure State
 - c. The Last Best Place
 - d. **The Mountain State**
2. Michigan was the _____ state admitted to the Union:
 - a. **forty-first**
 - b. thirty-eighth
 - c. twenty-sixth
 - d. twenty-second
3. The state bird of Michigan is the:
 - a. hummingbird
 - b. **western meadowlark**
 - c. woodpecker
 - d. American robin

Activity B

1. The Capitol of Montana is _____ Helena _____.
2. Montana's triple divide allows water to flow into _____ three _____ different oceans.
3. Montana's state animal is the _____ grizzly bear _____.
4. The Battle of Little Bighorn, also known as _____ Custer's Last Stand _____, took place in Montana.

Activity C

- F 1. Montana was the first state to have a ship named in its honor.
- T 2. Montana's state flower is bitterroot.