WASHINGTON

THE EVERGREEN STATE *Became a state November 11, 1889 (42nd)*

Washington sits in the far northwest corner of the country, between the Pacific Ocean and Idaho. The Cascade Mountains split it into a rainy, forested west and a dry, sunny east.



Why the Evergreen State?

Winds from the Pacific Ocean drop heavy rain on western Washington. All that water grows thick forests of hemlock and other trees that stay green all year. In 1890, a few months after Washington became a state, a Seattle businessman named C.T. Conover called it the Evergreen State in a booklet. The name stuck.



A Volcano Under Ice

Mount Rainier is a volcano 14,410 feet high. More ice covers it than any other peak in the 48 connected states. Many Native people call it Tahoma. In 1792 the British captain George Vancouver named it for his friend Peter Rainier. Over the winter of 1971 and 1972, 1,122 inches of snow fell at a spot called Paradise, a world record then.



Floods That Carved the Land

Near the end of the last Ice Age, a wall of ice held back a huge lake in Montana. Between 15,000 and 13,000 years ago, the ice dam broke again and again. Each time, water roared across eastern Washington at up to 80 miles an hour. The floods carved deep canyons. Palouse Falls drops into one of them.



The Giant on the Columbia

Grand Coulee Dam was built across the Columbia River between 1933 and 1942. It is nearly a mile long and 550 feet high. Its power plant is the largest in the country, and its water turns dry land into farms. It holds about 12 million cubic yards of concrete. That is enough for a sidewalk twice around the Earth at the equator.



Why So Many Apples?

East of the Cascade Mountains the days are sunny, the nights are cool and the soil is full of old volcanic ash. Rain is scarce, but melting mountain snow supplies water for the orchards. Washington grows about six of every ten apples picked in the United States, and each one is picked by hand.



The Cape That Flattered

Cape Flattery is the far northwest corner of the 48 connected states. It is the home of the Makah, whose name for themselves means the people who live by the rocks and seagulls. In 1778 the British captain James Cook saw an opening in the coast that “flattered” him with hopes of a harbor. He named the cape for it.

BY THE NUMBERS

Population	About 8 million (13th most)
Size	About 71,300 square miles (18th largest)
Highest point	Mount Rainier, 14,410 feet
Counties	39
Neighbors	Oregon, Idaho, and Canada to the north

DID YOU KNOW?

- Washington is the only state named for a president. Lawmakers turned down the name Columbia as too much like the District of Columbia.
- The Space Needle is 605 feet tall. Workers built it in about eight months in 1961.
- Olympic marmots sleep through seven or eight months of the year. They warn each other of danger with a sharp whistle.
- Washington also grows more pears, sweet cherries and hops than any other state.

FIND IT ON THE MAP

1. Which city is closest to Spokane River Falls?
2. Which animal on the map lives only in Washington?
3. What carved Palouse Falls?

Answers: 1. Spokane 2. Olympic Marmot 3. Ice Age floods