

# Earth Science Regents

## Internet Drainage Exercise (Mr. Lanik)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

Open Mr Lanik's web page ([www.sotarochester.org](http://www.sotarochester.org)) go to the *Class Work/Notes* page and click the United States Drainage Map link to do/answer the following:

1. Notice the area drained by the Mississippi River (yellow). About what percentage of the total surface area of the US is drained by the Mississippi?

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2. Notice the area shaded in purple. What body of water do all the rivers in those basins ultimately drain into?

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3. Look at the Mississippi basin, and the basins shaded in green. What body of water do all the rivers in those basins ultimately drain into?

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4. On the grayscale map provided with this lab ("Map 1 - United States Drainage), use a pencil or pen to trace the divide that separates all the drainage that ultimately ends up in the Atlantic from all the drainage that ends up in the Pacific. That major divide has a special name...the "**Continental Divide**". Label it on your map.

5. Click "back" and then click the Physiographic Map of the Western US link. What physiographic (landscape) feature(s) seems to correspond with the divide you just labeled?

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6. Click "back" and then click and view the Physiographic Radar Composite Map of the Eastern US. What physiographic (landscape) feature seems to correspond with the divide between the Mississippi Basin and the smaller river systems that flow east across the Atlantic Coastal Plain (shaded green)?

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7. Explain how/why a mountain range can create a drainage system divide. \_\_\_\_\_

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Click "back" and then click and view the United States Drainage map.

8. Examine the rivers in the basin that's shaded in blue (western US—within the purple area). List the noticeable differences between those rivers and the others on the map.

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9. If you haven't already done so, notice that the rivers in the blue shaded basin appear to 'just end', that is, they don't flow ultimately to the oceans. What do you suppose happens to the water in those rivers? Where DOES it go?

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10. One of those rivers in the blue basin flows into the Great Salt Lake (which has no outlet). The river water flowing into the Great Salt Lake comes largely from Rocky Mt. snow melt which is not salty (though it picks up a little tiny bit of various salts as it flows over the earth on the way to the lake). Review or rethink your answer to #9 above and then explain why Great Salt Lake is so darn salty.

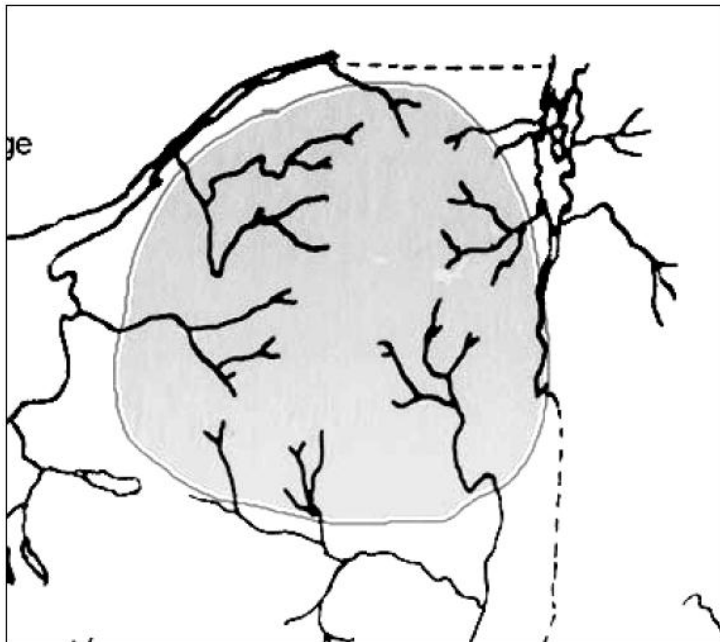
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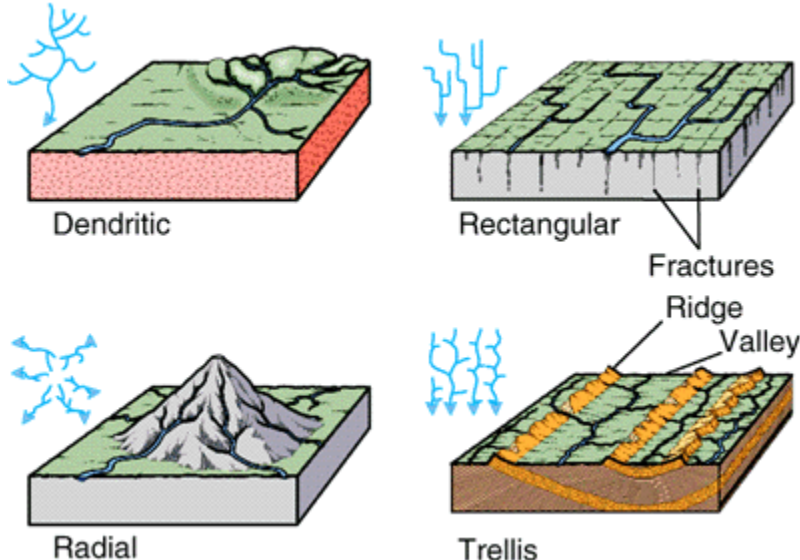
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11. Click "back" and then click the Adirondack Drainage map link. Use this image and the map below to answer questions. Estimate the position **and draw** the divides of the streams that drain the Adirondack Mts. Remember, no area on Earth's surface is not part of some drainage basin (so don't leave any space that is not part of one of the stream drainage basins).

**Adirondack Drainage:**



12. Look at the river drainage patterns below and figure out which pattern resembles the pattern that the streams draining the Adirondacks make. \_\_\_\_\_



13. Click "back" and then click the Adirondack Geologic map link to find Mt. Marcy, the highest point in NYS, and mark its position on the map above. Is Marcy near the point where your dividing lines meet? You can stand on Mt. Marcy and by just rotating 360 degrees you can see 4 different drainage basins. Into what river does the water going south drain?

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14. Into what body of water do the streams NW of Mt. Marcy drain into? What about the streams NE of Mt. Marcy?  
 NW: \_\_\_\_\_ NE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Interesting extra credit:** Click "back" and then click on one or both of the glacier links. Can you figure out what type of features or deposits forms the divide between the Mississippi basin and the Great Lakes.

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# United States Drainage Basins

Map 1 - United States Drainage

