

# *What is the American West?*

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**PART 1** - The Autry Museum of the American West is located in Griffith Park in Los Angeles, California. The Autry Museum is a museum about the American West. There are a lot of different opinions about what the American West is.

When you think of the American West, what words, phrases, and images pop into your mind? Write these words, phrases, and images in the space below or on a separate piece of paper.

American West Words, Phrases, and Images



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**PART 3** - Some of the words, phrases, and images that popped into your mind might be based on the imagined West from fiction books, movies, and television programs about *Westerns*. Some of the other words, phrases, and images that popped into your mind might be based on the actual American West from non-fiction books, movies, television programs, and your own experiences with the American West.

Is the American West a time-period from the past or a place? Why do you think so? Write your answers to these questions in the space below or on a separate piece of paper.

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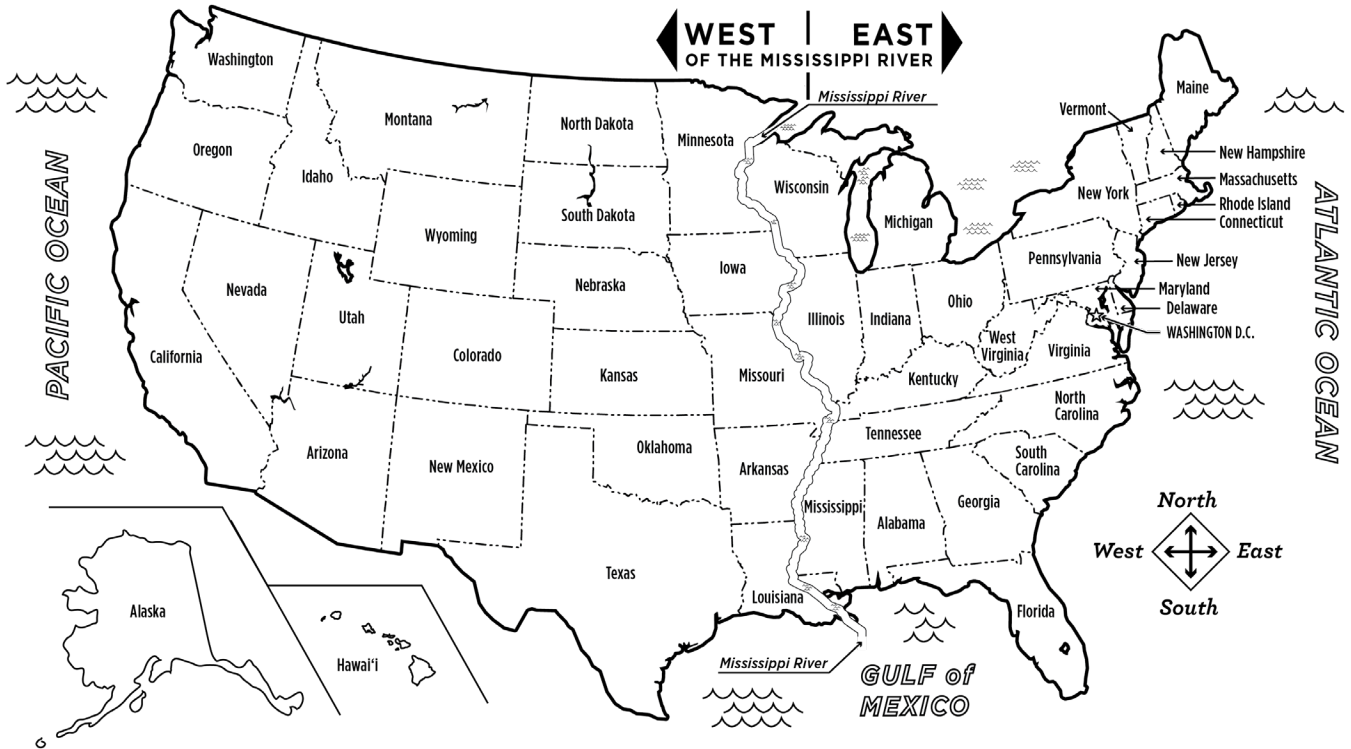
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## **Glossary**

**Westerns:** books, movies, and television and radio shows about life in the western United States, usually involving cowboys, especially in the last part of the 19th century

# What is the American West?

**PART 4** - The American West isn't just a time-period from the past. The American West is a place that includes all of the animals, land, people, plants, and types of water in it. When we think about the American West, we should be thinking about the past, the present, and the future of the American West. Now think about where the American West is located. Look at the United States map below.

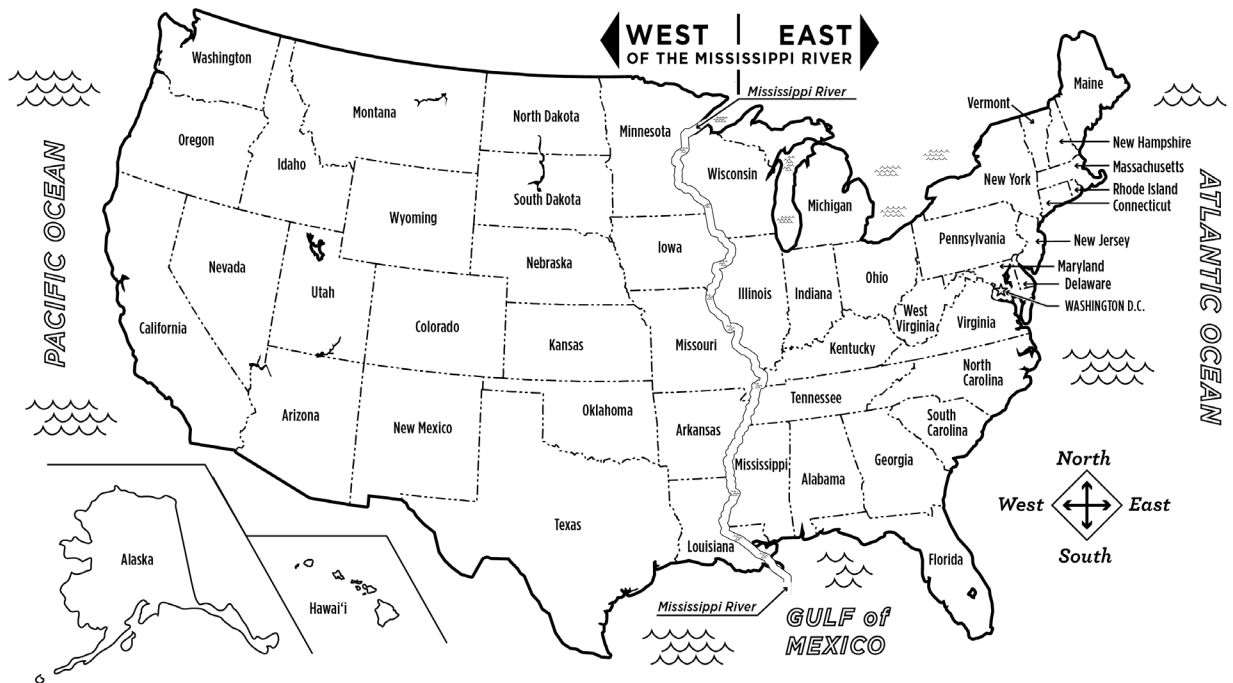


Which states are located in the American West? Write the names of the states that you think are located in the American West in the space below or on a separate piece of paper.

## States in the American West

# What is the American West?

**PART 5** – The Autry Museum defines the American West as everything west of the Mississippi River including Hawai'i and Alaska as shown in the map below.



The Autry Museum recognizes that the American West is huge and that it includes lots of different people who have stories to tell. The Autry's *mission* is to bring together the stories of all peoples of the American West, connecting the past with the present to inspire our shared future. The Autry Museum shares as many of these stories as possible through education, *exhibitions*, and programs.

Learn more about the stories the Autry Museum shares by going to the Autry Museum's website at [TheAutry.org](http://TheAutry.org). Look for and click on **EXHIBITIONS**. Click on the titles of three different exhibitions. Read about the exhibitions and look at the images. Then write at least one new thing that you learned about each of these exhibitions in the space below or on a separate piece of paper.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Glossary

**Exhibitions:** displays of artifacts for people to look at in a public place

**Mission:** goal, objective, or purpose

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**PART 6** - After learning more about the American West and the Autry Museum, what words, phrases, and images would you add to the previous list that you created in PART 1? Write these additional words, phrases, and images in the space below or on a separate piece of paper.

**Additional American West Words, Phrases, and Images**

# What is the American West?

**PART 7** – The Autry Museum tells stories about the different peoples of the American West through artifacts such as documents, objects, and artwork. Artwork can be drawings, paintings, performances, photographs, *sculptures*, and so much more.

Choose one of the American West words, phrases, or images that you wrote about in PARTS 1 or 6. Then create a drawing, painting, performance, photograph, or sculpture that tells a story about the American West word, phrase, or image you selected. Plan your artwork before creating it by writing your answers to the questions in the space below or on a separate piece of paper.

QUESTIONS	ANSWER EXAMPLES	ARTWORK PLAN
Which American West word, phrase, or image did you select?	Choose one American West word, phrase, or image from PARTS 1 or 6.	
What type of artwork will you create?	Drawing Painting Performance Photograph Sculpture Other	
What materials will you use to create your artwork?	Camera Colored Pencils Costumes Crayons Markers Music Paint Paper Pens Pencils Props (Objects used in a performance.) Other: Cotton balls, paper towel rolls, popsicle sticks, etc.	
What story will your artwork tell about the American West word, phrase, or image you selected? What will your artwork represent?	You can tell a story about your American West word, phrase, or image by showing one or more of the following in your artwork: Animals Land People Plants Types of Water Other	

## Glossary

**Represent:** serve as a sign or symbol

**Sculptures:** three-dimensional works of art made by artists out of materials that are used in interesting ways

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**PART 8** – Create your artwork using your Artwork Plan from PART 7. Depending on the type of artwork you are creating, please feel free to use the space below or a separate piece of paper to create your artwork. Include a title for your artwork.

**Artwork Title:** \_\_\_\_\_





# Resources

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United States of America Map Illustration by Alban Cooper

***Do you want to see the artwork you created on our Instagram or Twitter?***

Ask an adult to send a photograph of the artwork you created along with your name, your age, and the title of your artwork to [outreach@theautry.org](mailto:outreach@theautry.org) for a chance to be featured on our social media! Accepting work from artists of all ages. Must be 18-years or older to submit.