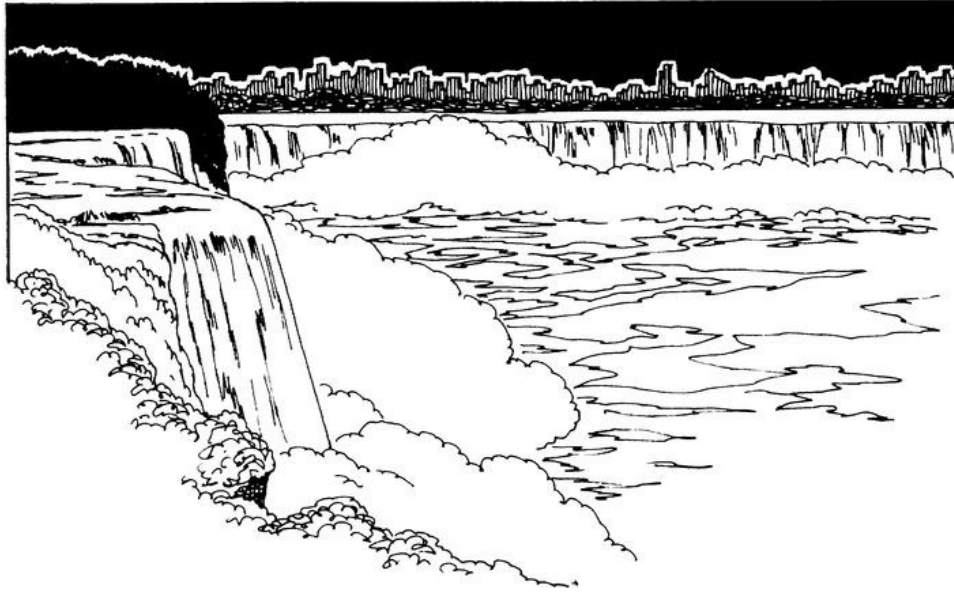


NIAGARA FALLS



The Niagara Falls are located on the border between the United States and Canada. They are a group of falls in the state of New York and the Canadian province of Ontario. This group is the second-largest in the world, in terms of volume of water flowing over its edge. It is the largest in North America. It is a popular tourist destination.

The Niagara Falls were formed approximately 10,000 years ago when glaciers melted at the end of the last ice age. Water from the Great Lakes carved a path to the Atlantic Ocean, forming the Niagara River. The Niagara Falls are not very high, but they are very wide. The amount of water flowing over the falls varies throughout the year. During seasons of high flow (usually springtime) more than 6 million cubic feet (168,000 m³) of water passes over the falls per minute. The annual average flow rate is almost 4 million cubic feet (110,000 m³) per minute.

The Niagara Falls have two main sections, Horseshoe Falls and the American Falls. They are separated by Goat Island. Horseshoe Falls, on the Canadian side, are the larger of the two. They drop about 173 feet (53 m) and are about 2,600 feet

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(790 m) wide. The American Falls drop between 70–100 feet (21–30 m) and are 1,060 feet (320 m) wide.

The Niagara Reservation State Park was created in 1885 to protect the Niagara Falls from excessive development. It was New York's first state park. In Canada, the Niagara Parks Commission protects the lands all along the Niagara River, from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario.

American Indian tribes lived in the Niagara Falls area for thousands of years. The first European explorers came to the region in the early seventeenth century.

Tourism became popular in the area in the 18th century. Thanks to the impressive waterfalls it quickly became the area's main industry.

People first attempted to harness the power of the falls in 1759, when Daniel Joncaire used water to power his sawmill. Others soon also used it to power gristmills and tanneries. Electricity was first generated there in 1881.

In 1961, the Niagara Falls hydroelectric project went on line. At the time, it was the largest hydroelectric power facility in the Western world. Even today, Niagara remains the largest electricity producer in New York State. It has a generating capacity of 2.4 gigawatts. Up to 375,000 U.S. gallons (1,420 m³) of water a second is diverted to power plants that supply power to nearby areas of Canada and the United States.

The Niagara Falls have attracted many daredevils. They went over the falls in barrels, or walked over them on tightropes. Some of them survived the trip, some did not.

The first person to go over the Niagara Falls in a barrel was Annie Edson Taylor, an American teacher who took the plunge in 1901, on her 63rd birthday. She survived. Can you imagine your teacher doing that?

But the Niagara Falls are not only popular with daredevils. They are also popular with honeymooners and other tourists. About 12 million people visit the area every year. Would you like to visit the Niagara Falls some day?

Name _____ Date _____

Choose the best answer for the question on this page

1. What is the significance of the Niagara Falls?
 - a. They are home to bats.
 - b. There are hotels there.
 - c. They are the world's second-largest waterfall (by volume).
 - d. They are on the border between Canada and the US.

2. When were the Niagara Falls formed?
 - a. 10,000 years ago
 - b. In 1604
 - c. In 1759
 - d. In 1901

3. How wide are the Horseshoe Falls?
 - a. 2,600 feet
 - b. 1,060 feet
 - c. 173 feet
 - d. 70 feet

4. Where are the Niagara Falls located?
 - a. In New York State
 - b. In Ontario
 - c. Both of the above
 - d. None of the above

5. How much water flows over the falls in high flow season?
 - a. 6 million cubic feet/minute
 - b. 4 million cubic feet/minute
 - c. 168,000 cubic feet/minute
 - d. 100,000 cubic feet/minute

6. About how many people visit the Niagara Falls annually?
 - a. 50,000
 - b. 500,000
 - c. 1.1 million
 - d. 12 million

Name _____ Date _____

Use several complete sentences to answer the the questions on this page.

1. Why are the Niagara Falls popular with tourists?

2. Tell how something in the article reminds you of something you have done with your family.

3. After reading the story what do you think is meant by *excessive*?

4. What did you learn about the Niagara Falls that you did not know?
How will you use that new information?

Name _____ Date _____

Answers to MAMMOTH CAVE

Multiple-choice

1. c
2. a
3. a
4. c
5. a
6. d

Short-answer

1. Answers will vary. Accept reasonable answers. (They are huge and impressive, the second-largest in terms of volume in the world, largest in North America. They are close to populated areas, and therefore easily accessible...)
1. Answers will vary. Accept reasonable answers.
2. *excessive* = extreme, unnecessary, too much, disproportionate
3. Answers will vary. Accept reasonable answers.