

Hunter College - CUNY  
Department of Geography  
Nature of New York

**Optional Exercise 5: Political and Physical Maps**

**Check One:** For grading  For extra credit

Due no later than the day of the Midterm Exam

**INTRODUCTION:** In order to study any area on earth we need to be able to place it within its larger region and be aware of the interrelationship of its parts to the whole.

**PURPOSE:**

This exercise will introduce you to NYS's location by identifying its boundaries (land and water) noting the political entities that border it, and acquainting you with the political subdivision of the state: its 62 counties.

This exercise will also familiarize you with location and characteristics of the 11 major physiographic regions of NYS that are described in **Geology of New York** and summarized on the chart that will be distributed in class and the 9 major bodies of water surrounding the state.

**This exercise has FOUR parts. Do all for maximum credit.**

Go to the **Geography of NYS Course Page** via the Dept. of Geography's home page. From the **HANDOUTS** section, **print** a NYS outline map with county boundaries. You can also photocopy or scan the outline map in the syllabus. **ATTACH THE MAP TO THIS SHEET.**

**PART I.** On the **outline map**, do the following:

- 1. Add the names** of all adjacent US states and Canadian provinces. **Locate their borders** by drawing in a small section of their boundaries where they touch NYS including the water areas.

Canada	Vermont	Massachusetts
Quebec Prov.	New Jersey	Connecticut
Ontario Prov.	Pennsylvania	Rhode Island

- 2. Mark in blue** and **label** the boundaries from section 1 that are found in water. Be sure to look closely at the area around New York City when doing this part of the exercise. **Remember to mark only the boundary portion of the feature.**

St. Lawrence River	Lake Champlain	Lake Ontario	Hudson River
Niagara River	Lake Erie	Delaware River	Raritan Bay
Long Island Sound	Kill Van Kull	Atlantic Ocean	Arthur Kill

**PART II.** Answer Part II on a separate sheet of paper.

- At [http://www.dos.ny.gov/kids\\_room/508/counties2.html](http://www.dos.ny.gov/kids_room/508/counties2.html) find the **toponymy** (study of the origin of place names) of each county named.
- Then go to the "I Love NY" web site ([www.iloveny.com](http://www.iloveny.com)) and locate the **tourist region** in which each county is located.

COUNTY	TOPONYMY	REGION
> Bronx	_____	_____
> Broome	_____	_____

- > Cattaraugus \_\_\_\_\_
- > Delaware \_\_\_\_\_
- > Essex \_\_\_\_\_
- > Fulton \_\_\_\_\_
- > Genesee \_\_\_\_\_
- > New York \_\_\_\_\_
- > Niagara \_\_\_\_\_
- > Rensselaer \_\_\_\_\_
- > Rockland \_\_\_\_\_
- > Steuben \_\_\_\_\_
- > Tioga \_\_\_\_\_
- > Yates \_\_\_\_\_

**Part III.** To acquaint yourself with the names and locations of all 62 counties of NYS, including the five counties within New York City (note that three of them have different borough names, e.g. Kings County is the Borough of Brooklyn), answer the questions below by filling in the names of the appropriate counties in each sentence. Since the purpose here is to introduce you to county names, try not to repeat the names of the counties. **Place your answers on the separate sheet of paper used for Part II.**

1. The three largest counties in area are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The smallest county in area is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Three elongated counties are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A county that is an island is \_\_\_\_\_.
5. A county with seven bordering counties is \_\_\_\_\_.
6. A stair-step-shaped county is \_\_\_\_\_.
7. A near perfect triangular-shaped county is \_\_\_\_\_.
8. A near perfect rectangular-shaped county is \_\_\_\_\_.
9. The most irregularly shaped county appears to be \_\_\_\_\_.
10. The six counties sharing a **land** or **river** boundary with Canada are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Three counties with the name of a U.S. president after whom those counties were named (Clinton does not count!) are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
12. Two counties with the name of a famous American who was **not** a president are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
13. Four counties whose names are the same as that of a **U.S. state** are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Three counties touching Connecticut are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
15. The two colors represented by county names are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Four counties with obvious Native American names are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
17. The four counties found on Long Island are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
18. The five counties of New York City are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
19. Names of five counties **not used** in Part II or to fill in any of the blanks in Part III are \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

REMEMBER TO TRANSFER YOUR ANSWERS TO THE HOMEWORK SHEET FOR GRADING.

**PART IV.** Go to the **course home page** and **PRINT** the **Physiographic Diagram of NY-NJ-PA** which portrays the region's surface landform features. An examination of the map will reveal numerous details of the highland and lowland areas that at first seem to be a confused and unreadable collection of lines. Turn this drab map into a vivid portrayal of the upland and lowland regions of NYS.

1. **Locate** the **political boundary** of NYS. Use a **BLACK** felt tip pen/marker to draw it in.  
 2. **Outline in RED** the boundaries of the **four upland** and **seven lowland** areas listed below. **Use the numbering system from the boxes to identify the areas.** Consult the maps in the **Handouts** and **Maps** sections of the course home page and also Fig. 1.1 in *Geology of New York*.

<b>I. Upland Areas</b> (green)
1. Adirondack Mts
2. Tug Hill Plateau
3. Appalachian Uplands
4. New England Uplands

<b>II. Lowland Areas</b> (yellow)
5. Erie-Ontario Lowland
6. Black River Valley
7. St. Lawrence Valley
8. Champlain Lowland
9. Hudson-Mohawk Lowlands
10. Triassic Lowland
11. Atlantic Coastal Lowlands

<b>III. Water Areas</b> (blue)
12. Lake Erie
13. Lake Ontario
14. Niagara River
15. The Finger Lakes
16. St. Lawrence River
17. Lake Champlain
18. Atlantic Ocean
19. Long Island Sound
20. New York Harbor

3. Add the 15 counties listed below to the map (see instructions):

Allegany = A
Columbia = C
Dutchess = D
Erie = E

Franklin = F
Greene = G
Herkimer = H
Jefferson = J

Lewis = L
Montgomery = M
Nassau = N
Orange = O

Seneca = S
Tompkins = T
Westchester = W

- a) **List** the counties on the side of the map.
- b) **Locate** them on the map by placing the first letter of their name at their approximate location (W = Westchester County).
- c) **Note** the **physiographic areas** found in each county by placing appropriate numbers (1-11) after its name. Some counties may be part of two or more physiographic areas. *For example, Rensselaer County = R(4,9) for New England Upland and Hudson-Mohawk Lowland*

4. **After adding the county information, shade lightly the**

- a) four upland areas in **green**.
- b) seven lowland areas in **yellow**.
- c) nine water areas in **blue** (use the numbers in Box III to identify them).

5. **Make a KEY** in the upper right corner to explain the colors, letters and numbers or attach as a separate sheet of paper with the color and letters keys. (**NOTE: The boxes in paragraph IV.2 can be copied or cut and taped to the map as part of the key.**)