Reading a Map

Direction and Distance

In “What Really Happened to Amelia Earhart?” you learned how to figure out direction and distance on a map. Knowing how to determine direction and distance helps us answer important questions, including: Where is this place in relation to that place, and how far apart are they? Use this map of the United States and its capital cities to gauge direction and distance. Then answer the questions on a separate sheet of paper.

Questions

1. Which states border Montana to the south?
2. Which border it to the east?
3. In which direction would you travel to get from Charleston, West Virginia, to Lansing, Michigan?
4. What is the straight-line distance in miles between those two cities?
5. In which direction would you travel to get from the capital of New Mexico to the capital of Texas?
6. The straight-line distance between those two cities is about how many miles?
7. What is that distance in kilometers?
8. Which two capital cities are about 300 miles southwest of Nashville, Tennessee?
9. If you were to fly from Virginia’s capital to New York’s, then from there to the capital of Wisconsin, in which directions would you travel?
10. What is the approximate distance in straight-line miles for each leg of that trip?

Write About It! We can use this map’s compass rose and scale for the 48 contiguous (connected) states but not for Alaska and Hawaii. Why not? Why are those two states pictured off to the side and in separate boxes?