28. America – position and regional classification

Position
Stretching from the frozen Arctic through equatorial climatic zone to the cold Antarctica
=> the longest of all the continents (continent with the longest coastline).
Involves *all the climatic zones* (from the equatorial to polar).

Discovered (for Europeans) by Christopher Columbus in 1492, but the first were Vikings.

Surrounding macro-regions:
N = Arctic Ocean, Beaufort Sea, Baffin Bay, Labrador Bay, Hudson Bay
S = Southern Ocean (transition between Pacific and Atlantic Ocean)
W = Pacific Ocean
E = Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea

Regional classification
1. *North America* (USA, Canada, Mexico)
2. *Central America* (countries of Central-American mainland: Belize, Honduras, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Salvador, Pamana and Caribbean islands, e.g. Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti)
3. *South/Latin America* (Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Brazil, Surinam, French Guyana, Guyana.)

Basic economic regions
❖ Economically most-developed countries (USA, Canada)
❖ Well-developed countries (Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina, Chile)
❖ Economically less-developed countries (Haiti, Peru, Ecuador)

Geology and Geomorphology
▪ Geomorphological units of North America: Rocky mts., Appalachians, Sierra Madre Occidental/Oriental, Great Plains (prairies), Panama Canal (Isthmus of Panama), Antilles
▪ Geomorphological units of South America: Andes, Amazon basin, Patagonia plateau, pampas

Features:
Highest point: Aconcagua (6,959 m), Mt. McKinley (6,194 m)
Highest volcano: Mt. Popocatépetl (5,452 m)
Lowest point: Death Valley (-86 m)
Driest place: Arica (0.8 mm), Death Valley (<70 mm)
Longest river: Amazon (altogether with Ucayali and Apurimac – 7,025 km), Mississippi (altogether with Missouri – 6,212 km)
Largest lake: Lake Superior (82,414 km^2)
Largest island: Greenland (2,175,600 km^2), Tierra del Fuego (48,185 km^2)
Largest peninsula: Labrador peninsula
Largest sweet-water lake: Lake Titicaca