

Welcome To Alaska

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

I live in Alaska. It is not one of the Lower 48 states. It is not connected to the other states, because Canada is between Alaska and the rest of the United States. Alaska is famous for glaciers, bears, crab, fishing, ice, oil, and cold weather! It is by far the largest state. It is only 47th in population size, beating only North Dakota, Wyoming, and Vermont. It is also the least densely populated state, so there is a lot of open space for each person! You might know some of the major cities, like Anchorage, Fairbanks, or Juneau. The state capital is Juneau. Now that you know some of the basic facts about Alaska, let me tell you a little more about my state.

The first thing to really know about is the size of Alaska. It is more than twice the size of Texas, which is a very large state. In fact, it's around the size of Montana, Texas, and California all combined. Beyond that, there are only 18 countries in the world larger than Alaska! Alaska is HUGE, bigger than most countries! Additionally, Alaska has more coastline than all other U.S. States combined. It is just that big.

The next thing to know is that Alaska is cold. Yes, it has a summer and some warm weather, but in the winter it is very, very cold. It is not easy to live there. It is very pretty to visit, though. You just have to be ready to see some ice, snow, and glaciers. Cold weather and harsh environments have made it the subject of TV shows like *Ice Road Truckers* and *The Deadliest Catch*. Cold weather makes Alaska a deadly place if you're not careful.

You can see moose, bears, and lots of other wildlife in Alaska, too. You can see whales in the ocean and polar bears in the far north. It is a paradise for hikers, fishermen, skiers, adventurers, and snowmobilers. Travel across hundreds of thousands of square miles of land. You might not see many people, though, so be careful. Half of Alaska's people live in Anchorage, making it by far the largest city. Outside of the city, people can be few and far between. That's why it's nicknamed *The Last Frontier*.

Alaska is a popular place to visit. Lots of people want to walk on a glacier or catch salmon from a stream. Some people want to visit the Denali National Park. It's actually a rain forest! You wouldn't expect that so far from the tropics, would you? Nearby is Mount McKinley, the tallest mountain in North America. There's quite a bit to see in Alaska.

Now that you know a little more about Alaska, are you thinking about visiting? It is a very amazing place to see, probably very different from where you live. That makes it quite an adventure! Hope to see you soon!



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What is Alaska's size ranking?

- A. 1st
- B. 4th
- C. 2nd
- D. 3rd

2. True or False: Alaska is bigger than most countries.

- A. True
- B. False

3. Which of these is Alaska NOT famous for?

- A. glaciers
- B. crab
- C. bears
- D. ice cream

4. Which of these is one of Alaska's nicknames?

- A. The Long Shore
- B. The Frozen State
- C. The Last Frontier
- D. The Largest State

5. SHORT ANSWER: Would you like to visit Alaska? Why or Why Not?

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