

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Hyphens and Dashes

## Definition

**Hyphens (-) and dashes (– or —)** are punctuation marks with distinct functions. Hyphens join words or parts of words, while dashes (including en dashes and em dashes) indicate ranges, interruptions, or emphasis in sentences.

## Example

| Mark        | Use                | Example                                                |
|-------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Hyphen (-)  | Compound modifiers | well-known author                                      |
| En dash (–) | Ranges             | pages 10–15                                            |
| Em dash (—) | Interruption       | The concert—<br>which was sold<br>out—was<br>postponed |

## Part 1: Multiple Choice Questions

**Select the sentence that uses hyphens and dashes correctly.**

1. a) The Western Interior Seaway—a shallow sea that divided North America 100-80 million years ago—covered much of the Great Plains region.
- b) The Western Interior Seaway - a shallow sea that divided North America 100-80 million years ago - covered much of the Great Plains region.
- c) The Western Interior Seaway—a shallow sea that divided North America 100—80 million years ago—covered much of the Great Plains region.
- d) The Western Interior Seaway-a shallow sea that divided North America 100-80 million years ago-covered much of the Great Plains region.

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2. a) Fossil-rich sedimentary rocks tell scientists about the seventy five million year old history of the Great Plains.  
b) Fossil rich sedimentary rocks tell scientists about the seventy-five million-year-old history of the Great Plains.  
c) Fossil-rich sedimentary rocks tell scientists about the seventy-five-million-year-old history of the Great Plains.  
d) Fossil-rich sedimentary rocks tell scientists about the seventy-five million year-old history of the Great Plains.
3. a) During the late Cretaceous Period—approximately 100–65 million years ago—the Great Plains were covered by water.  
b) During the late Cretaceous Period - approximately 100-65 million years ago - the Great Plains were covered by water.  
c) During the late Cretaceous Period—approximately 100-65 million years ago—the Great Plains were covered by water.  
d) During the late Cretaceous Period - approximately 100–65 million years ago - the Great Plains were covered by water.
4. a) The sediments—sand, clay, and organic material—compacted over time to form the region's rock layers.  
b) The sediments - sand, clay, and organic material - compacted over time to form the region's rock layers.  
c) The sediments-sand, clay, and organic material-compacted over time to form the region's rock layers.  
d) The sediments — sand, clay, and organic material — compacted over time to form the region's rock layers.
5. a) Scientists study the twenty three-million-year climate record preserved in the sediments.  
b) Scientists study the twenty-three million year climate record preserved in the sediments.  
c) Scientists study the twenty-three-million-year climate record preserved in the sediments.  
d) Scientists study the twenty three million-year climate record preserved in the sediments.

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## Hyphens and Dashes

### Part 2: Fill in the Blank

**Add appropriate hyphens or dashes where needed in these sentences about the Great Plains.**

1. The Great Plains region stretches from Texas in the south to Alberta Canada in the north spanning approximately 1800 miles.
2. Paleontologists many from prestigious universities have discovered numerous dinosaur fossils in the Hell Creek Formation.
3. The Ogallala Aquifer a vital underground water source supplies irrigation for much of the region's agriculture.
4. A well maintained database of soil samples provides information about the Plains' ten thousand year environmental history.
5. The Rocky Mountains formed 80 40 million years ago contributed sediments that were carried eastward to form parts of the Great Plains.

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## Hyphens and Dashes - Answer Key

### Part 1: Multiple Choice Questions

1. a) The Western Interior Seaway—a shallow sea that divided North America 100-80 million years ago—covered much of the Great Plains region.
2. c) Fossil-rich sedimentary rocks tell scientists about the seventy-five-million-year-old history of the Great Plains.
3. a) During the late Cretaceous Period—approximately 100–65 million years ago—the Great Plains were covered by water.
4. a) The sediments—sand, clay, and organic material—compacted over time to form the region's rock layers.
5. c) Scientists study the twenty-three-million-year climate record preserved in the sediments.

### Part 2: Fill in the Blank

1. The Great Plains region stretches from Texas in the south to Alberta, Canada in the north, spanning approximately 1,800 miles.
2. Paleontologists—many from prestigious universities—have discovered numerous dinosaur fossils in the Hell Creek Formation.
3. The Ogallala Aquifer—a vital underground water source—supplies irrigation for much of the region's agriculture.
4. A well-maintained database of soil samples provides information about the Plains' ten-thousand-year environmental history.
5. The Rocky Mountains—formed 80–40 million years ago—contributed sediments that were carried eastward to form parts of the Great Plains.