Student Worksheet 1

Name: _____

Deep Water

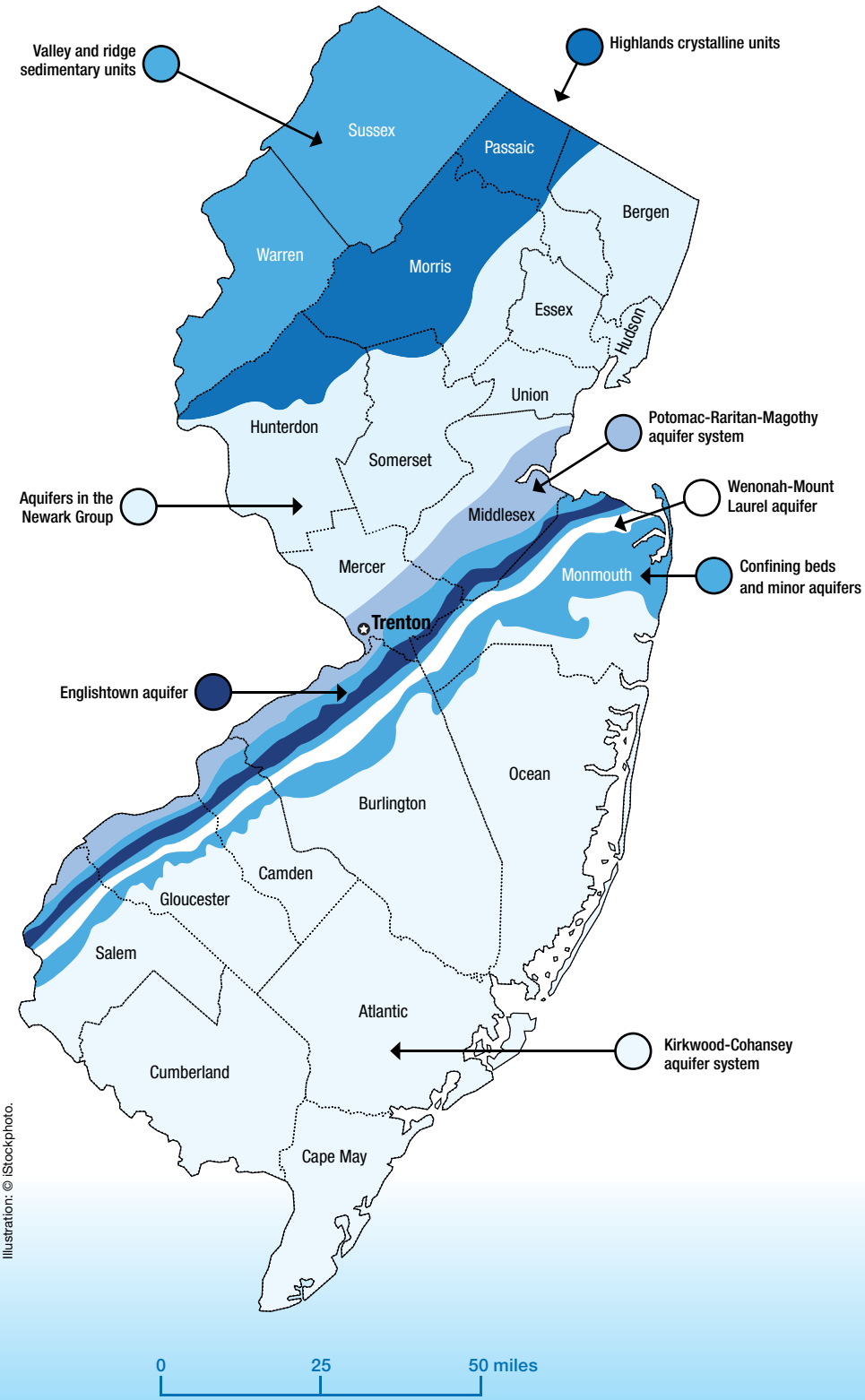
Turn on the faucet, and out comes water. It might seem like magic, but in fact, that water took quite a journey to reach your sink. Some of our drinking water comes from rivers, lakes, or reservoirs. But much of it comes from groundwater deep beneath our feet. There's a hundred times more water underground than there is in all of Earth's rivers and lakes!

Those underground water sources are called *aquifers*. Aquifers are deep layers of gravel or porous rocks. Water fills the gaps between the rocks. Around the world, humans access groundwater by drilling wells deep into the aquifers. In New Jersey, a system of more than 100 aquifers provides drinking water for half the state's population.

Over time, water from rain and snow trickles down through the soil to refill aquifers. That refilling can take a long time, though. And human activities such as agriculture, urban development, and damage to natural wetlands can slow the refilling process. As the population grows, it puts more pressure on our underground water supply. If we're not careful, we can pump too much from an aquifer and run it dry or allow it to be refilled with saltwater from the ocean.

Let's take a closer look at the important aquifers of New Jersey.

COASTAL PLAIN AQUIFER



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