



# Rivers that Flow from Continental Divide: The Journey of Two Rivers

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**Grade Level** 5  
**Duration** 2 class periods

**ELL Adaptation by** Chad Kobold and Gale Olp Ekiss

SIOP Elements		
<p><b>Preparation</b>            Adapting content  <b>Linking to background</b>  <b>Linking to past learning</b>            Strategies used</p>	<p><b>Scaffolding</b>  <b>Modeling</b>  <b>Guided practice</b>            Independent practice            Comprehensive input</p>	<p><b>Grouping Option</b>            Whole class  <b>Small groups</b>  <b>Partners</b>            Independent</p>
<p><b>Integrating Processes</b>            Reading  <b>Writing</b>            Speaking  <b>Listening</b></p>	<p><b>Application</b>  <b>Hands on</b>            Meaningful            Linked to objectives            Promotes engagement</p>	<p><b>Assessment</b>  <b>Individual</b>  <b>Group</b>            Written            Oral</p>

**Arizona English Language Proficiency Standards**  
 Stage III  
 Basic  
 Reading  
**Comprehending Text**  
**Standard 4: The student will analyze text for expression, enjoyment, and response to other related content areas. The student will demonstrate reading comprehension by:**  
 B-20: identifying content vocabulary within math, science, and social studies texts.  
 B-24: locating specific information from external text in nonfiction text for a specific purpose.  
**Writing**  
**Standard 1: The student will express his or her thinking and ideas in a variety of writing genres. The student will express his or her thinking and ideas in a variety of writing genres, as demonstrated by:**  
 B-4: writing an expository paragraph or a simple report containing a topic sentence, supporting details, and a concluding statement using a model.  
**Research**  
**Standard 5: The student will demonstrate research skills by using a variety of reference materials to complete a variety of writing tasks. The student will demonstrate research skills by using a variety of reference materials to complete a variety of writing tasks as evidenced by:**  
 B-1: recording and organizing information, observations or questions on a familiar topic from one or two sources (experiment, textbook, guest speaker, video, Internet, etc.) for report/research purposes.

## Overview

Students often do not understand that rivers flow in a logical path from higher elevation to a lower one. In fact, many students do not believe that a river can flow north because they believe that north equals UP. Therefore, students need instruction in this basic concept: water originates at a source and flows to a lower level of elevation, and that usually it joins another body of water.

## Key Vocabulary

**river** – a large natural stream of water emptying into an ocean, lake, or other body of water

**mouth** – the point where the river empties into a large body of water

**source** – the place where the river gets the water from

**creek** – a small stream of water that feeds into a river

**Continental Divide** – a series of mountain ranges in the Rocky Mountains. From here the rivers run east and west across the continent.

## Additional Materials Needed for ELLs

- Blue colored pencils
- The United States, its Major Rivers, and the Continental Divide  
<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/USRIVCD.pdf>
- (optional) The United States and its Major Rivers  
<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/us-rivers.pdf>
- (optional) The United States map (with state names)  
<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/US-NAMES.pdf>
- Vocabulary Cards
- Continental Divide Video (1.41 min or up to 4.42 min)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSme5fWSk\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSme5fWSk_M)
- Electronic devices
- (optional) Google Earth.com
- (if possible) Mountain model

## Procedures

### SESSION ONE

1. Ask the students what does the word “divide” mean? (**Preparation: Linking to Past Learning**)

After students give a variety of answers, explain that today we are going to learn the way geographers use the term “divide.”

2. Distribute and project The United States, its Major Rivers, and the Continental Divide map. Distribute the Vocabulary Cards. Discuss the physical features on the map: rivers, source, Continental Divide, etc. Use the Vocabulary Cards to reinforce the concepts.

**(Scaffolding: Comprehensible input)**

3. If possible, have a demonstration on how water acts as it flows from the high point of the mountains to the lowlands using a mound of waterproof material and pouring water over it. Discuss how the water can go east and west of the highest points.

**(Scaffolding: Comprehensible input)**

4. Have partner groups discuss what a river is and where they have seen rivers in their lives. Have the partners determine where one river begins on the map and write “source.” One of the partners should color blue a river that flows from the source. Repeat with the other partner finding a different source and river. (**Grouping: Partners; Preparation: Link to Past Learning, Linking to background; Integrating Processes: Listening**)

5. In pairs, students should find a third river on the map whose source is the Continental Divide. Have them color this blue as well. (**Grouping: Partners; Integrating Processes: Writing**)

6. Show the YouTube Video (up to 1.41 min)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSme5fWSk\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSme5fWSk_M)

On the Continental Divide which emphasizes that there are many divides around the world.

### SESSION TWO

7. Partners should research their river on electronic devices. They should find the length of the river, what states it passes through, what larger body of water is at its mouth, and one fun fact. (**Integrating Processes: Writing**)

8. Beginning ELLs will write sentences that include:

- The name of my river is
- The length of my river is
- The states that my river passes through are
- The larger body of water at my mouth is
- A fun fact about my river is

Intermediate ELLs will write a brief narrative about the “Journey of a River.” The following prompt can be given, “You are a river beginning your journey on top of the Continental Divide”. Describe your beginning and your pathway through the states to the mouth. (**Scaffolding: Guided Practice, independent practice; Assessment: Written, Individual or group**)

## Assessment

## Rivers That Flow from the Continental Divide

### **Geography**

The map work will be assessed for accuracy in coloring the 3 rivers. Mastery will be considered 75% or higher.

### **ELA and Geography**

The paragraph or sentences will be graded using the Six Traits of Writing Rubric. For this particular assessment, Ideas/Content will be measured.

Mastery will be considered a score of 3 out of 6 on the rubric.

### **Extensions**

Students will use Google Earth for satellite images of their 3 rivers to add to their written assessment.