



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

Author Andree Charlson
Grade Level 5
Duration 2 class periods

ELL Adaptation by Chad Kobold and Gale Olp Ekiss

National Standards

GEOGRAPHY
Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms
 1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information
Element 3: Physical Systems
 7. The physical processes that shape the patterns of earth's surface.
Element 5: Environment and Society
 15. How physical systems affect human systems.

AZ Standards

ELA
Reading Literature
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity
5.RL.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, at the high end of the grades 5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.
Writing
Text Types and Purposes
5.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
 a. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
 b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
 c. Use a variety of transitional words, phrases, and clauses to manage the sequence of events.
 d. Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.

Arizona Social Science Standards

GEOGRAPHY
The use of geographic representations and tools help individuals understand their world.
 5.G1.1 Use and construct maps and graphs to represent changes in the United States.
Global interconnections and spatial patterns are a necessary part of geographic reasoning.
 5.G4.1 Describe how economic activities, natural phenomena, and human-made events in one place or region are impacted by interactions with nearby and distant places or regions.

SIOP Elements		
Preparation Adapting content	Scaffolding Modeling	Grouping Option Whole class

Rivers That Flow from the Continental Divide

Linking to background Linking to past learning Strategies used	Guided practice Independent practice Comprehensible input	Small groups Partners Independent
Integrating Processes Reading Writing Speaking Listening	Application Hands on Meaningful Linked to objectives Promotes engagement	Assessment Individual Group Written Oral

Arizona English Language Proficiency Standards

Grade 5

Basic

Listening and Reading

Standard 1 By the end of each language proficiency level, an English learner can construct meaning from oral presentations and literary and informational text through grade appropriate listening, reading, and viewing.

B-1: determine the central idea (in informational text) and theme (in literary text) and explain how they are supported by key details.

B-2: recount a text including specific details and information.

B-3 identify and describe similarities and differences within a text

B-4 utilize visual information to understand the text

Speaking and Writing

Standard 3 By the end of each language proficiency level, an English learner can speak and write about grade appropriate complex literary and informational texts and topics.

B-3 compose informational text that includes details to develop a topic while using appropriate conventions.

B-5: use examples of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary within informative texts.

Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing

Standard 6 By the end of each language proficiency level, an English learner can participate in grade-appropriate oral and written exchanges of information, ideas, and analyses, responding to peer, audience, or reader comments and questions.

B-1: participate in discussions about familiar topics and texts.

Standard 7 By the end of each language proficiency level, an English learner can conduct research and evaluate and communicate findings to answer questions or solve problems.

B-1: gather information from multiple provided resources to answer questions.

Overview

Students often do not understand that rivers flow in a logical path from a 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.

Purpose

The students will trace a river from its source to its end (which is usually a mouth of the river) while learning that the Rocky Mountains serve as a

continental divide. This lesson contains adaptations for diverse learners (ELLs).

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.

Rivers That Flow from the Continental Divide

Materials

- 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) (could be used as a quiz)
<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/US-NAMES.pdf>
- 6 Traits Writing Rubric
- Blue colored pencils or markers
- Tears Falling on the Continental Divide—The Tale of Two Rivers (optional)
- Vocabulary Cards
- Continental Divide Video (1.41 min or up to 4.42 min)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSme5fWSk_M
- Computer, Internet, and projection device
- Electronic devices
- (optional) Google Earth.com
- (if possible) Mountain model

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- chart the course of a river from its source to its mouth.
- describe how water flows from a high elevation to a lower one.

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 (fake mountain) and pouring water over it. Discuss how the water can go east and west of the

highest points. **(Scaffolding: Comprehensible input)**

4. Divide the class into groups of threes. Have small groups discuss what a river is and where they have seen rivers in their lives. On the map, have one group member determine where one river begins and write “source” and then color the river blue. Then then write “mouth” where the river ends. Repeat with the other group members each finding a different source and mouth to a river, then coloring. **(Grouping: Small group; Preparation: Link to Past Learning, Linking to background; Integrating Processes: Listening)**
5. Note: If they haven’t picked a river that has its source in the Continental Divide, they will pick a 4th river identifying its source and mouth. Have them color this blue as well. **(Grouping: Small group; Integrating Processes: Writing)**
6. Show the YouTube Video (up to 4.42 min)
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. Group members 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. Diverse learners who need additional help can use sentences starters 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

English proficient students will write a brief narrative about the “Journey of a River.” The following prompt can be given, “You are a river beginning your journey to its mouth. Describe your beginning and your pathway through the states as you travel to the mouth. **(Assessment: Written, Individual)**

9. Students may illustrate their stories if time.
10. Read the story Tears Falling on the Continental Divide—The Tale of Two Rivers to give the students an idea of how one person might write about a river’s journey.

Assessment

Geography

The map work will be assessed for accuracy in coloring the 3-4 rivers. Mastery will be considered 100%.

ELA and Geography

Rivers That Flow from the Continental Divide

The narrative 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 4 out of 6 on the rubric.

Extensions

Students can explore how the river they identified has affected the region(s) through which it flows. They can also report on how man has changed the natural flow of the river and why this was done.

Discuss and learn the geographic terminology associated with the physical aspects of the river (tributaries, oxbows, creeks, lakes, dams, waterfalls, etc.).

Students will use Google Earth for satellite images of their 3-4 rivers to add to their written assessment.