Rivers that Flow from the Continental Divide: The Journey of Two Rivers
Students trace the courses of rivers and learn about the regions through which they flow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
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<tr>
<td>Grade Level</td>
<td>4-5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>3 class periods</td>
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### National Geography Standards

**ELEMENT ONE: THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS**
1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.

**ELEMENT THREE: PHYSICAL SYSTEMS**
7. The physical processes that shape the patterns of earth's surface.

**ELEMENT FIVE: ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY**
15. How Physical systems affect human systems.

### Arizona Geography Strand

**Grade 4**
**Strand 4 Geography**
**Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms**
PO 3 Construct maps using symbols to represent human and physical features. PO 6 Locate physical and human features using maps, illustrations, images or globes. a. physical - river, lake, mountain range, coast, sea, desert, gulf, bay, strait, plain, valley, volcanoes, isthmus, canyon, plateau, mesa, oasis, dunes 

**Grade 5**
**Strand 4 Geography**
**Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms**
PO 3 Identify the location of significant geographic features from content studied on a physical or political map 

**Concept 2 Places and Regions**
PO 1 Describe how the following regions exemplify the concept of region as an area with unifying human or natural factors: a. West, Midwest, Northeast, Southeast, and Southwest

### Other Arizona Standards

**ELA Common Core Standards**
**Reading**
**Literature**
**Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity**
4.RL.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text
4.RL.10 and 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 4–5 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

**Writing**
**Text Types and Purposes**
4.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 dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
c. Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
d. Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
5.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or
Rivers That Flow from the Continental Divide

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.

### Materials
- Map of the U.S.
- Atlas
- The United States and its Major Rivers map
- Markers
- Chart paper
- Writing paper
- Story of "Tears Falling on the Continental Divide"

### 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
1. Locate the Rocky Mountains on the map. Identify the Continental Divide. Point out the rivers that have their source on top of the Continental Divide.

2. Read the story "Tears Falling on the Continental Divide."

3. In pairs, students should find a river whose source is the continental divide. Have them write "source" where the river begins. One of the students should track a river that flows east and the other student tracks a river that flows west.

4. Students draw the course of the river. They should name it, and name the states through which it flows. They should write "mouth" where the river empties into a larger body of water.

5. They will then write a brief narrative of the "Journey of a River" from the first person perspective. The following prompt can be given, "You are a river beginning your journey on one top of the Continental Divide. Describe your origin and your pathway through the states to the mouth.

6. Students present oral reports of their narratives, supported by illustrations.

### Assessment
The drawing will be assessed for accuracy with a map of the U.S. The terms source and mouth should be clearly labeled. A student should correctly draw the river and identify its mouth and source. Points can be assigned to each item required. Mastery will be considered 80% or higher.

The narrative will be graded using the Six Traits Writing Rubric. For this particular piece of work, the two traits of conventions and ideas/content will be used in grading. Mastery will be considered 4 or higher.

### Extensions
Students can explore how the river they identified has affected the regions through which it flows.

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

Measure rivers in miles using the map scale.