

United States Political – Lesson 3
Water Features

Objectives To identify and locate various water features on a United States map

Materials Needed A pencil and your map

Lesson

Water, Water Everywhere

Over 70 percent of the Earth's surface is water. Many different water features can be shown on maps. On your map all water feature names appear in a lettering style called italics. Italic lettering slants to the right. Here are three examples of italic lettering. On your desk map the italic lettering is printed with blue ink.

LAKE ERIE

Gulf of California

Missouri River

A **river** is a large stream of water. The **river source** is its beginning. The **river mouth** is where the river empties into a larger body of water.

The largest river system in the United States is the Mississippi River. Look at the United States map. Locate the Mississippi River. Trace the Mississippi River from its source in Minnesota to its mouth in Louisiana. Use the United States map to help answer the following questions. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. The Mississippi River forms boundaries for which states? List them in order from north to south.

The Mississippi River has many important **tributaries**. A tributary is a smaller river that empties into a larger one.

2. Two important tributaries empty into the Mississippi River near St. Louis, Missouri. What are the names of these two rivers?

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3. What important Mississippi River tributary's mouth is located at the Illinois, Kentucky and Missouri borders?

4. Trace the Ohio River from its source to its mouth. The Ohio River forms boundaries for which states?

5. What is the name of the Mississippi River tributary that has its source near Amarillo, Texas?

6. Trace the Missouri River from its source near the Montana/Idaho state line to its mouth near St. Louis. What states does the Missouri River flow through. Include the states where the Missouri River forms the state boundaries.

Other Rivers

Use your United States map to help you answer the following questions about some other rivers,

7. The source of the Colorado River is in what state? _____
8. Where is the mouth of the Colorado River? _____
9. The Columbia River is found in the northwest part of the United States. Locate the Columbia River on the United States map. Answer the following questions about the Columbia River.

Where is the source of the Columbia River? _____

Where is the mouth of the Columbia River? _____

10. What two important rivers in California are located in the valley between the Sierra Nevada Mountains and the Coast Ranges?

11. What is the name of the river that forms the boundary between the state of Texas and the country of Mexico? _____

Lakes

A **lake** is a body of water that is completely surrounded by land. The largest lakes in the United States are the Great Lakes. Use the United States desk map to locate the Great Lakes.

12. List the names of the Great Lakes in order from east to west

13. What is the name of the big lake in Utah? _____

14. What is the name of the large lake in Florida? _____

Gulfs

A **gulf** is a body of water that extends from the ocean or sea into a large indentation of the coastline. The Gulf of Mexico is an example. The Gulf of Mexico is south of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

Use your United States map to locate and name the following gulfs. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

15. What is the name of the gulf located in the mouth of the St. Lawrence River?

16. What is the name of the gulf located south of Anchorage, Alaska?

17. What is the name of the gulf located south of California? _____

Bays

A **bay** is an arm of an ocean, sea or lake usually smaller than a gulf. An example is Appalachia Bay. Look at your United States map. You will find that Appalachia Bay is located south of Tallahassee, Florida. Use your United States map to help you answer the following questions. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

18. This bay is the home of a large naval shipyard. Its coastline is Virginia and Maryland. What is the name of this bay? _____
19. Locate Lake Huron. What two bays are found there?
