

The Challenges – Teacher Resources

Home Is Where the Rivers Are

Materials

- Map of the U.S. or the world
- Computer with Internet access
- Longest Rivers of the World chart found on U.S. Geological Survey Web site at ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/riversofworld.html

Directions

1. Take a look at a map of the U.S. or of any country in the world. Notice that towns and cities tend to be located next to rivers. This is no coincidence. Rivers provide water for the essential needs of both tiny towns and huge cities. There's a good chance that you live near one of our nation's large rivers.
2. Look carefully at the map and note the rivers that look the longest.
3. Use the chart (Longest Rivers of the World) to compare the length of the rivers.
ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/riversofworld.html



(Source: J.C. Kammerer, *Largest Rivers in the United States*, U.S. Geological Survey Fact Sheet OFR 87-242, rev. 1990)

It's not so easy to define how long a river is. If a number of tributaries merge to form a larger river, how would you define where the river actually begins? Here, we define river length as the distance to the outflow point from the original headwaters.

(*Statistical Abstract of the United States*, 1986)
