

RIVERS OF NORTH AMERICA

13 PART SERIES

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LOWER MISSISSIPPI
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MISSOURI
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POTOMAC
RIO GRANDE
SACRAMENTO / AMERICAN

Consider Visiting These Web Sites:

www.britannica.com
<http://web.gmu.edu/bios/Potomac/>
www.encyclopedia.com
<http://www.virginiaplaces.org/16potomac.html>
<http://www.millenniummemorial.org/DChistory.htm>



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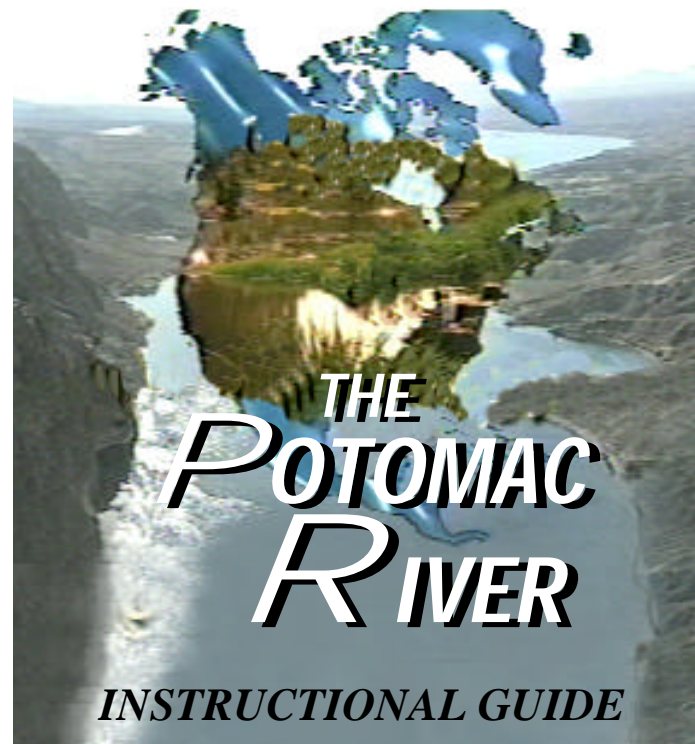
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Presents

**Rivers
of
North America**

13 Part Series



INTRODUCTION TO SERIES

Rivers of North America Series brings a unique perspective to the role great rivers have played in the early development and subsequent settlement of a region and a nation. Each river has its own unique story to tell, it's own geology, geography and history.

As a complementary device with each video, an instructional guide suggests exercises to help teachers, parents and students. These interactive exercises will reinforce and further develop a student's level of comprehension.

The instructional guide provides:

Vocabulary

Chronology / Q & A

Native People / Explorers

Discussion Points / Activities

Geography / Geology

River / Cities Development

**Permission granted to copy the
exercises provided in this guide.
For educational use ONLY.**

*E-Guides available at
www.filmideas.com*

NOTES:

ENVIRONMENT of *The POTOMAC RIVER*

Today much of the natural wetlands, marshes and wildlife habitat of the Potomac River has been lost over the years to development. On the solid black lines name some of the species affected by these past environmental abuses. Then explain what some of those abuses have been.



THE *POTOMAC RIVER*

Although just 383 miles in length, the Potomac has witnessed more American history than any other river. From its headwaters high above the Allegheny Mountains in West Virginia, to its mouth at Point Lookout, Maryland, on the Chesapeake Bay the Potomac's journey is aligned with numerous geological formations. Its colorful route is peppered with mountains, valleys, towns, country prairies and most notably America's capital city – the District of Columbia.

Around 280 million years ago, the 14,670 square mile Potomac River Basin was covered with a shallow marshy sea. This sea produced marsh plants which over millions of years compressed and formed into coal. Nearly 12,000 years ago nomadic Indian tribes became the first early inhabitants to occupy the Potomac River area. These early cultures hunted the local animals for food and clothing. Later, descendants of these earlier tribes settled into the river valleys where the abundance of water suited their newly adopted farming methods. In 1565 Spanish explorer, Admiral Pedro Menendez became the first European to sail up the Potomac River. Soon after, other European colonists also arrived onto the scene.

One of the Potomac's most famous natives was George Washington. During the Revolutionary War, George Washington was appointed chief commander and later became the first President of the United States. As President, Washington decided the site for the nation's new capital would be along the Potomac. After the Revolutionary War, the Potomac River became a battleground for another historic war– the Civil War. Throughout the Civil War, the Potomac River became the boundary line between the North and South.

Following the Civil War, many people settled into the Potomac River Basin. Through time the Potomac River region has become home for many national monuments, museums, and memorials. However small, the Potomac River itself has become a national icon – and from its historic past to its hopeful future will forever reflect the vast American spirit.

VOCABULARY of *The POTOMAC RIVER*

ABOLITIONISTS: A group of people prior to the Civil War who believed that slavery was evil and should be eliminated in America.

AQUIFERS: Water filled pockets which lie between many layers of rock formed by the movement of continental plates.

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA: Located across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. Home of Arlington National Cemetery where the Tomb of the unknown soldier and the eternal flame of John F. Kennedy is located. Also the home to Pentagon Headquarters where U.S military operations are conducted.

BRACKISH: The mixed fresh and salt water from the estuary area where the river flows into an ocean.

BULL RUN also known as the Battle of Manasses: The location of a major battle fought between the North and South during the Civil War.

CONFLUENCE: The point where two rivers join together. i.e. The Potomac & Shenandoah Rivers.

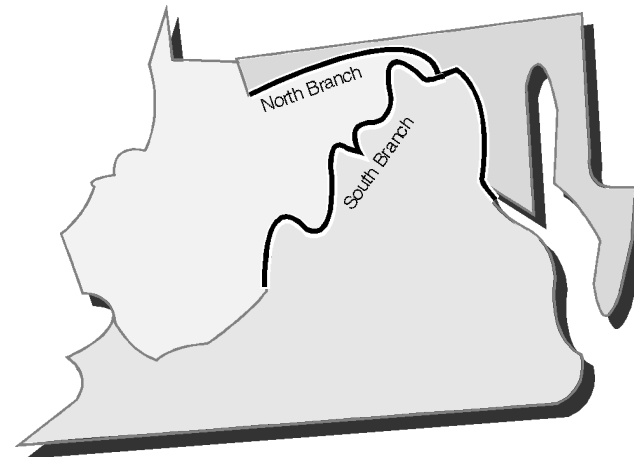
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA also known as Washington, D.C.: Located along the Potomac it is a federal district designated as the Capital City for the United States of America. Three branches of government headquartered in Washington, D.C.: 1) The President, Head of the executive branch lives in the White House; 2) The Legislative Branch, consisting of the Senate and House of Representatives meet in the Nation's Capitol Building; 3) Judicial Branch, headed by the Supreme Court meets near the Capitol.

Letters A thru C describe three Potomac River cities. Write the name of the city on the solid black line. Then with a Black Marker write the letter **A, B, C** to indicate where on the Potomac River map each city is located.

A) _____ is the capital city for the United States of America .

B) The headquarters for the Pentagon is located in _____ .

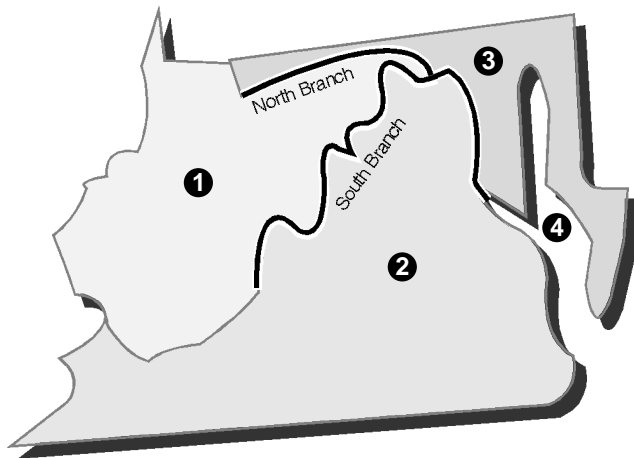
C) _____ ,Maryland was the headquarters for British General Braddock during the French and Indian War.



GEOGRAPHY of *The POTOMAC RIVER*

The Potomac River journeys through **three states before emptying into a body of water**. On the solid black line name each of these areas.

STATES:	BODY OF WATER
① _____	④ _____
② _____	
③ _____	



ESTUARY: Area where the fresh water from a river mixes with the salt water from an ocean. (i.e. Potomac River and Atlantic Ocean).

FALL LINE: A line joining the waterfalls on numerous rivers that marks the point where each river descends from the upland to the lowland and limits the navigation through each river.

GEORGE WASHINGTON: Chief Commander during the Revolutionary War and first President of the United States. Surveyed present site for U.S. capital which today bears his name – Washington D.C.

HEADWATERS: The mixture of melting snow and rain form into the little creeks and streams which become the initial water source for larger bodies of water (i.e. The Potomac River.)

PIERRE CHARLES L'ENFANT: A Frenchman who designed the city of Washington, D.C.

POTOMAC RIVER (THE): Travels approx. 383 miles from its headwaters located in the Allegheny Mountains in West Virginia to its mouth at Point Lookout, Maryland, on the Chesapeake Bay.

SEDIMENT: Soil, rock and organic material that settles to the bottom of a river and is moved along by its current.

TIDAL BASIN: Located below the Falls where the ocean tides affects the rise and fall of the river.

TRIBUTARIES: A small river or stream flowing into another larger body of water (i.e. into the Potomac River).

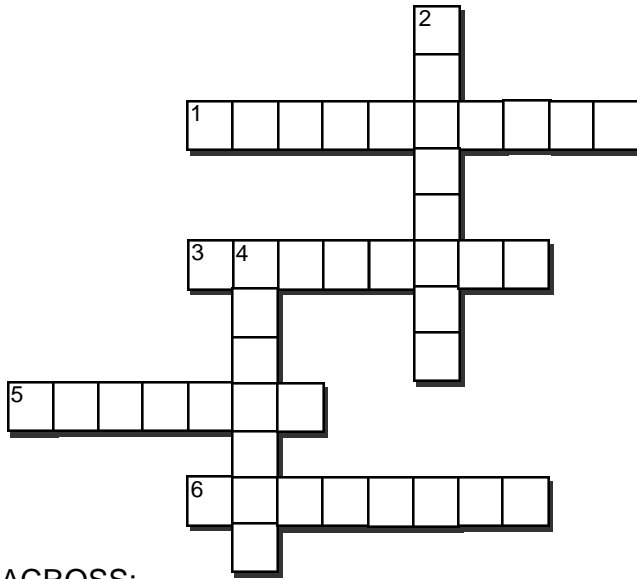
CHRONOLOGY of *The POTOMAC RIVER*

- **280 Million years Ago:** Potomac River Basin is covered with a shallow marshy sea producing marsh plants which over million of years formed into coal.
- **12,000 years ago:** Evidence of the first nomadic tribes (hunters-gathers) present in the Potomac River region.
- **1565:** Spanish Explorer Admiral Pedro Menendez becomes the first European to sail up the Potomac River.
- **1607:** First English colonists arrive in the Potomac River region.
- **1608:** Captain John Smith explores the area.
- **1614:** Indians introduce tobacco to the Europeans.
- **1627:** Europeans successfully cultivate and begin to annually ship large amounts of tobacco to Europe.
- **Early 1700's:** German and Scot-Irish immigrants begin to arrive.
- **1732:** George Washington is born at Popes Creek near the Potomac.
- **Early 1770's:** Citizens of Virginia and Maryland are part of a movement to declare the 13 colonies independence from England.
- **1775:** Revolutionary War begins.
- **1776:** Continental Congress signs the Declaration of Independence.
- **1781:** Revolutionary War ends after Gen. George Washington defeats British General Cornwallis at the Battle of Yorktown, Virginia.
- **1798:** The 2nd U.S. President John Adams moves the Nation's Capital from New York to Washington D.C.
- **1814:** British troops attack Washington D.C. during the War of 1812.
- **1861:** Civil War begins.

Discussion Points / Activities

1. If possible visit some of the locations along the banks of the Potomac River as discussed in the video. SEE Pg. 5 of this guide. Also checkout the internet for web sites about the rivers rich heritage. SEE BACK PAGE.
2. Draw a map (if you like, use a computer or the map provided on page 11) of the river, indicating significant points of interest. For example, Washington D.C., Arlington National Cemetery etc.
3. Discuss how each of the following events have affected the past and present-day conditions of the Potomac River Region:
 - 1) Mining of Coal & Cultivating Tobacco
 - 2) Revolutionary and Civil Wars
 - 3) The arrival of Indian cultures & European explorers
 - 4) Development of cities
4. The ecosystems along rivers and other bodies of water sustain many different life forms. If possible visit a river (the Potomac River) and imagine you are an ecologist. Study these different life forms and document their relationships with the river environment. i.e. bring binoculars, take photographs, paint a river scene, write a poem, sample various vegetation to view under a microscope etc.

Use the words described in this guide on pgs. 2, 3 & 5 to complete the crossword.



ACROSS:

- 1) The point where two rivers join together.
- 3) Soil, rock and organic material that settles to the bottom of a river.
- 5) Major battle during the Civil War.
- 6) The mixed fresh and salt water from the estuary area where the river flows into an ocean.

DOWN:

- 2) Water filled pockets which lie between many layers of rock.
- 4) Area where the fresh water from a river mixes with the salt water from an ocean.

ANSWERS:
 Across - 1) Confluence, 3) Sediment, 5) Bull Run, 6) Brackish
 Down - 2) Aquifers, 4) Estuary

EXPLORERS of *The POTOMAC RIVER*

PEDRO MENENDEZ: Spanish explorer who in 1565 became the first European to sail up the Potomac River.

JOHN SMITH: European explorer who first explored the region in 1608.

PLACES OF THE POTOMAC RIVER BASIN:

WASHINGTON D.C.: Located along the east bank of the Potomac River it is the Capital of the U.S. and Center of Government operations; Sites include: Library of Congress, Lincoln Memorial, National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington Monument, White House.

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA: Located along the west bank of the Potomac River across from Washington, D.C. Sites include: Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, eternal flame grave site of John F. Kennedy, Arlington National Cemetery and Pentagon Headquarters.

MASON NECK STATE PARK: A national wildlife preserve located in Virginia about 20 miles south of Washington, D.C. Species include: songbirds, migrating birds, water-fowl, bald eagle, and osprey.

CHESAPEAKE AND OHIO CANAL HISTORIC PARK: Here you can take a boat trip down the canal and witness the shipping routes taken to transport coal and farm products from the upper Potomac Valley.
<http://www.fred.net/kathy/canal.html>

Q & A for *The POTOMAC RIVER*

1. Headwaters are created from melting snow and rain. Eventually this water forms into creeks and streams which become the headwaters for rivers. Name the mountain range from where the headwaters of the Potomac River originate?
2. Name the term for the point at which two rivers join together?
3. The Potomac River ends its journey by emptying into what body of water?
4. One of the Potomac's most famous natives was George Washington. Who was he and what did he accomplish?
5. The Potomac River played a major role during both the Civil and Revolutionary wars. Explain what its role was and how it influenced these two wars?
6. One of the most important areas along the Potomac River is Washington D.C. What is Washington D.C. and define the three branches of government located there?
7. Arlington, Virginia and Washington, D.C. have many historic sites. Name and define some of these sites?
8. About 280 million years ago the Potomac region was covered by a shallow marshy sea. What fossil fuel was produced from this ecological environment and how did this affect the region?

Fill in the blank by selecting the words from the answers list:

ANSWERS LIST :

Tributary • Washington D.C. • Anti-Dentites
Headwaters • Boston • Abolitionists • Water Mill Run
Libutary • Breakwaters • Fall Line

9. A) The U.S. President lives in the White House located in _____ .

B) _____ were a group of people prior to the Civil War who believed that slavery was evil and should be eliminated in America.

C) While sailing the Potomac many early settlers encountered the _____ which was the first of many waterfalls, making it too difficult to explore with their large boat.

D) The Shenandoah River is the largest _____ flowing into the Potomac River.

E) The Allegheny Mountains produce the _____ or small streams which eventually form into the Potomac River.