



Natural & Political Boundaries Answer Key

Political Boundaries Worksheet

1. Which state or district encompasses the greatest percentage of area within the Potomac River watershed?

Washington, D.C.

2. In what county do you live?

Ensure that students' answers are correct.

3. How many states are in the Potomac River watershed? How many counties?

- Four states (Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia), plus Washington, D.C.
- 37 counties

Natural Boundaries Worksheet

1. Major cities are usually located near waterways. Explain why.

Water is a natural resource that is essential to humans. Cities especially need access to fresh water to sustain their large populations. Until recent years, technology did not allow for water to be as easily diverted, so most cities (particularly older ones) are located close to major water sources.

2. The natural boundary of the Potomac River also provides a political boundary between which states?

Maryland and Virginia; Maryland and West Virginia; Maryland and Washington, D.C.

The answers to Questions #3-6 will depend on where students live. Check their answers for accuracy.

7. Is there a correlation between areas with higher elevation and thickly forested areas? (Compare the Forest Cover and Natural Boundaries maps.)

Yes, areas are more forested in high elevation areas, particularly the Appalachian Plateau and Blue Ridge Mountains. (Refer to the Natural Boundaries map for elevation information.)

8. Are major cities mainly located in areas that are thickly forested? (Compare the Political Boundaries and the Forest Cover maps.)

No, major cities tend to be located in areas that are not thickly forested.

9. How might thickly forested and mountainous areas influence development? (Compare all three maps.)

Rough terrain has traditionally acted as a natural barrier to development. Compared to valleys and areas of lower elevation, it is much more challenging to develop houses, roads, or even agriculture in mountainous and forested areas. It is difficult to clear areas with rough terrain, including places that are rocky or have large trees or steep mountains. However, with advances in technology these areas are becoming more susceptible to development.

10. Name three kinds of natural features that influence political boundaries. (Compare all three maps.)

Three kinds of features include waterways/rivers, forests, and mountains.