



Discovering Estuaries Answer Key

Name: _____

Date: _____

Fill out the following table while locating your six estuaries:

Estuary	Name of major river(s) flowing into estuary	Name of body of water the estuary flows into (Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico or Atlantic Ocean)
Example	Sacramento River	Pacific Ocean
1	Mississippi River	Gulf of Mexico
2	Missouri River	Gulf of Mexico
3	Columbia River	Pacific Ocean
4	Rio Grande	Gulf of Mexico
5	Colorado River	Pacific Ocean
6	Hudson River	Atlantic Ocean

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After completing the lab activity, please answer the following questions:

1. What geographical features did you look for on the map to locate an estuary?

Freshwater river, ocean, coastline, and bays.

2. On which coast is the largest estuary in the United States (by water volume) located?

West Coast (Puget Sound!)

Using the information from the lecture, answer the following questions:

1. What are the two most important identifying features of an estuary?

a. Freshwater from river/stream

b. Saltwater from ocean

2. Why are estuaries important to migrating birds?

Provide a resting area for them to replenish their energy.

3. Think about all the ways humans use estuaries. Do you personally benefit from our local estuary ecosystem? If so, how?

Eat shellfish and salmon that us the estuaries. Know someone who works for the shellfish or salmon industry. Recreational uses like swimming, boating, fishing, and beachcombing.