

Name: _____ Date: _____

YOUR MISSION: EARN THE RANGER BADGE. The National Park Service is hiring—and a ranger has to know the whole country: two oceans, two mighty rivers, fifty states, the territories beyond, and the capital that runs it all. Watch the episode, then execute the tasks as you take on more responsibility.

Level 1 | JUNIOR RANGER—Learn the Land

No badge without the basics. As you watch, match each item to its meaning—write the letter in the blank.

1. ____ The Atlantic Ocean	A. The ocean on the West Coast of the United States
2. ____ The Pacific Ocean	B. The capital of the United States—home of the White House, Congress, and the Supreme Court
3. ____ Alaska	C. The ocean on the East Coast of the United States
4. ____ The “contiguous United States”	D. The two longest rivers in the United States
5. ____ A U.S. territory	E. Purchased from Russia in 1867 for \$7.2 million—and it borders Canada
6. ____ Washington, D.C.	F. The 48 states that sit together between the northern and southern borders
7. ____ The Missouri and the Mississippi	G. A tropical state situated apart from the continental United States, in the Pacific
8. ____ Hawaii	H. An area under U.S. control but not fully represented in the federal government—like Puerto Rico or Guam

Level 2 | FIELD RANGER—The Map Assignment

Rangers work from maps. On a blank U.S. map (or sketch your own), mark and label every item on the checklist. Use arrows for anything offshore.



- ☐ The Atlantic and the Pacific
- ☐ One state that borders Canada
- ☐ One state that borders Mexico
- ☐ Washington, D.C.
- ☐ The Missouri River
- ☐ The Mississippi River
- ☐ Alaska and Hawaii
- ☐ One U.S. territory



Level 3 | RANGER SPECIALIST—State or Territory?

Visitors always ask: What's the difference between a state and a territory? Place each statement's letter in the correct column. Careful—two statements belong to **both**.

- A. A full member of the U.S. union
- B. Under U.S. control
- C. May have a local government and constitution
- D. Fully represented in the federal government
- E. The U.S. Congress has final authority over it
- F. Examples: Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands

STATE	BOTH	TERRITORY
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Ranger's log: List any state or territory that...

Borders Canada: _____ Borders Mexico: _____ Is a territory: _____

Level 4 | HEAD RANGER—The Great American Expedition

Design the expedition of a lifetime—five stops, sea to shining sea without backtracking. Check off each requirement as your route earns it:

- ☐ Ocean to ocean
- ☐ Crosses a great river
- ☐ Canada-border state
- ☐ Mexico-border state
- ☐ Washington, D.C.

Stop	Why this stop counts (which box it helps you check off)
Stop 1 (start): _____	_____
Stop 2: _____	_____
Stop 3: _____	_____
Stop 4: _____	_____
Stop 5 (end): _____	_____

Name your trail: _____

Rank achieved: ☐ Junior ☐ Field ☐ Specialist ☐ Head Ranger

Answer Key | U.S. Geography

Level 1 | Junior Ranger

1-C, 2-A, 3-E, 4-F, 5-H, 6-B, 7-D, 8-G

Level 2 | Field Ranger—The Map Assignment

Teacher-check: Atlantic on the east, Pacific on the west; Canada-border states are Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Vermont, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Idaho, Montana, Washington—and Alaska; Mexico-border states are California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas; Washington, D.C. sits on the East Coast between Maryland and Virginia; the Missouri and Mississippi run through the middle of the country; the territories are Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam. Grade for correct placement and labeling, not artistry.

Level 3 | Ranger Specialist—State or Territory?

STATE: A, D. BOTH: B, C. TERRITORY: E, F. The trap is C—territories may have a local government and constitution, just as states do; what separates them is representation (D) and that Congress holds final authority (E). Look for students placing B and C in BOTH rather than forcing every letter into one side.

Ranger's log: Students may list any state that borders Canada, any state that borders Mexico, and any of the five territories. See Level 2 list above for a complete list of acceptable answers.

Level 4 | Head Ranger—The Great American Expedition

Routes will vary. Mark student responses correct if the five stops satisfy every checked requirement and each “why this stop counts” is geographically accurate—e.g., “Stop 2: St. Louis—crosses the Mississippi,” and “Stop 4: Texas—borders Mexico.” A single stop may satisfy more than one requirement. Look for routes that actually travel ocean to ocean in order, not a scattered list of places.

Note: This worksheet can be completed with the episode alone or as part of the full lesson—see the accompanying lesson plan.