



# El Rio Bravo del Norte – The Fierce River of the North

## Fill-In-The-Blank Worksheet

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### Overview of the Rio Grande

- At nearly \_\_\_\_\_ miles in length, the Rio Grande is the \_\_\_\_\_ longest river in North America.
  - About 80 miles southeast of El Paso, the river, depleted, reaches Fort Quitman and enters into what is often called \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Waters that once gave the former farming community of Ruidosa its name, \_\_\_\_\_ in Spanish, are now quiet.
  - The \_\_\_\_\_, with its headwaters in Mexico’s Sierra Madres, is the largest tributary to the Rio Grande.
  - From Ojinaga, the Rio Grande traverses desert canyons; carves an arc near the Chisos Mountains forming the iconic \_\_\_\_\_.
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### Impacts of the Rio Grande

- List some of the positive impacts that the Rio Grande has on South Texas & Northern Mexico.

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## Sharing Water Resources

- Rivers don't adhere to \_\_\_\_\_ boundaries.
  - The watershed of the Rio Grande covers approximately \_\_\_\_\_ square miles. Because the river's basin is arid and semiarid, only \_\_\_\_\_ of the watershed contributes to the river's flow.
  - Also noteworthy, Mexico is \_\_\_\_\_ of the United States at Juarez, but, below Fort Quitman, the relationship is \_\_\_\_\_, and the United States is largely a downstream user of Mexico's supply.
  - Upstream of Fort Quitman, the waters are divided internationally under the \_\_\_\_\_ Boundary Waters Convention and they are apportioned among Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas under the \_\_\_\_\_ Rio Grande Compact.
  - The United States and Mexico joined in the Utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande, the agreement commonly known as the "\_\_\_\_\_ Water Treaty." The Treaty establishes \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of the nations' shared rivers, including over 1,000 stream miles of the Rio Grande from Fort Quitman to the Gulf.
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## The 1944 Water Treaty

- The 1944 Treaty allocates to the United States \_\_\_\_\_ of the flow of the two main U.S. tributaries, the Pecos and Devils Rivers, as well as numerous springs and creeks originating in the United States.
  - Since the 1944 Water Treaty was signed, Mexico has seen significant development within the Rio Conchos' watershed. \_\_\_\_\_ has flourished there, from the river's reliable supply as well as from the use of groundwater.
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## Big Bend National Park

- Entering Big Bend National Park, the hydrology of the Rio Grande changes. In its 69 miles within the Park, the Rio Grande has carved three dramatic canyons from the ancient \_\_\_\_\_. Santa Elena, Mariscal, and Boquillas Canyons inscribe the unmistakable "big bend." River flows are restricted by majestic canyon walls reaching \_\_\_\_\_ feet above the water... walls which share their welcomed shade internationally.
- The portion of the Rio Grande within the National Park constitutes the upper section of a nearly \_\_\_\_\_ -mile corridor designated as a National Wild and Scenic River.

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## Amistad Reservoir

- The Rio Grande meets Texas' Pecos River just upstream of the reservoir, near a \_\_\_\_\_-year-old rock paintings depicting a leaping panther, which is now accessible by boat via the reservoir.
- The Pecos rises in New Mexico and its flows are allocated between New Mexico and Texas under the Pecos River Compact, which was signed in \_\_\_\_\_.
- Amistad Dam and Reservoir sits just above Del Rio, Texas. Completed in 1969, the dam impounds more than \_\_\_\_\_ acre feet of water. It is operated by the U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission and its Mexican counterpart, \_\_\_\_\_.
- Texas' releases from the dam are relatively consistent and primarily vary by season. Releases are generally higher during peak \_\_\_\_\_ season.
- Amistad Reservoir is an important demarcation under Texas law for the management of \_\_\_\_\_.

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## Reservoir Water Uses

- \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ use, and \_\_\_\_\_ consume the bulk of the water between Amistad and Falcon. The largest municipal user is the City of \_\_\_\_\_ and the largest agricultural user is the Maverick County Irrigation District.
- Maximizing their resource, the District also generates \_\_\_\_\_ power and receives accounting credit for their return flows to the Rio Grande.
- Here and elsewhere, the Rio Grande faces challenges related to invasive species, including Elephant Ear and Hydrilla. The most widespread invasive, however, is the \_\_\_\_\_, which accelerates water losses due to its significant water uptake.

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## Falcon Reservoir

- Falcon International Dam and Reservoir is located on the Rio Grande downstream of Laredo, Texas. With a capacity of more than \_\_\_\_\_ acre feet, Falcon is also jointly operated by the I.B.W.C. and C.I.L.A.

- Most of Texas’s water use on the Rio Grande occurs \_\_\_\_\_ Falcon Reservoir. The more densely populated “Rio Grande Valley” is a narrow corridor of communities, industry, and farms, which have grown up along and depend heavily on the river.
  - The Rio San Juan, a Mexican tributary, flows into the Rio Grande below Falcon Reservoir. Under the 1944 Treaty, 100-percent of its waters are allocated to \_\_\_\_\_.
  - High \_\_\_\_\_ runoff from agricultural fields in Mexico threaten this reach, particularly during periods of low flow.
  - Seventy-five percent of the Rio Grande is currently allocated for \_\_\_\_\_.
  - Governmental agencies, including the TCEQ, and other stakeholders monitor the amount and type of \_\_\_\_\_ to ensure Rio Grande water is meeting state and federal requirements.
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## Anzalduas Dam

- The U.S. has demand for water \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ the Anzalduas dam, therefore; Texas’s Rio Grande Watermaster program coordinates daily with the I.B.W.C to request releases from Falcon and Anzalduas dams to satisfy users. While the dam is not designed for storage, it can store approximately \_\_\_\_\_ acre feet for uses downstream.
  - “\_\_\_\_\_” from Anzalduas result in more water going to the Gulf. But “\_\_\_\_\_” can result in the U.S. not releasing sufficient water for its users. Any negative amounts are returned to Mexico at Falcon Reservoir.
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## Entering the Gulf

- At its outlet, the river discharges into the Rio Grande \_\_\_\_\_, a small tidal river \_\_\_\_\_, and then into the Gulf of Mexico — at least it does some of the time.
  - With echoes of the changing flows past Ruidosa, the flows here are also not what they once were and \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes close the Rio Grande at its mouth. And they do, it imperils estuarine and marine ecosystems.
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