

# Reflections on a River: The Saale

## Guiding Questions



Pick a spot where you are alone, comfortable, and where you can mindfully reflect on the river. You can either approach the river descriptively and then reflect on what it evokes in you—as a nature writer would—or opt for any other creative response. Anything from a poem, a vignette, a comic, a drawing, a podcast, a song, a composition is fine.

Take a moment to focus on what you see. What does the landscape surrounding the river look like? What does the water look like? Does the river have a specific color? What does the water reflect? Does it have a specific shape, movement, ripples?

Focus on the river's soundscape. What can you hear? Perceive the flow and the rhythm of the water as well as the animate and inanimate agents that contribute to sound.

Can you taste the river? Get immersed in it? Test buoyancy or floating?

Think about the river's journey. Where is the water coming from and where is it going? Imagine a journey down the river. Would you swim or boat down the stream? What would happen?

How has the river evolved over time? How does it change with the seasons? What traces of human activity and climate change can you make out? What other traces might remain out of sight?

What do you know about the river's history? Are there any events and stories associated with it? What about local history and local practices attached to this body of water?

How does the river affect you? Do you have special memories of this river or other flowing bodies of water? In which other ways are you connected to the river's water? How do people interact with the river? What emotions does the river evoke? What is the effect of spending time close to the water on your body and mind?

How would this place be different if there were no river—if there had never been one—if it suddenly or gradually ceased to flow?