

What are rivers and how are they used? | Geography | Years 3 & 4 | Summer Term 1 2025

National Curriculum – Geography

Locational knowledge

Name and locate countries and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (including hills, mountains, coasts and rivers), and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time.

Human and physical geography

Human: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water.

Physical: climate zone, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes, earthquakes and the water cycle.

Geographical skills and fieldwork

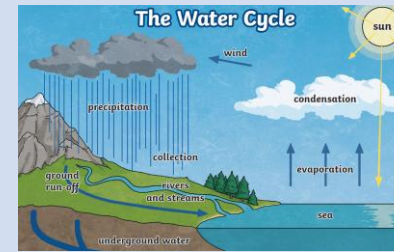
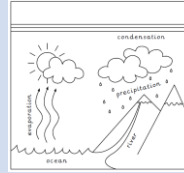
Use maps, atlases, globes and digital / computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied.

Use fieldwork to observe, measure, records and present the human and physical features in the local areas using a range of methods.

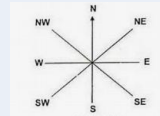
Use the eight points of a compass, four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world.

Lines of enquiry

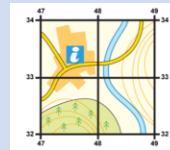
What is the water cycle?



Where can we find rivers?



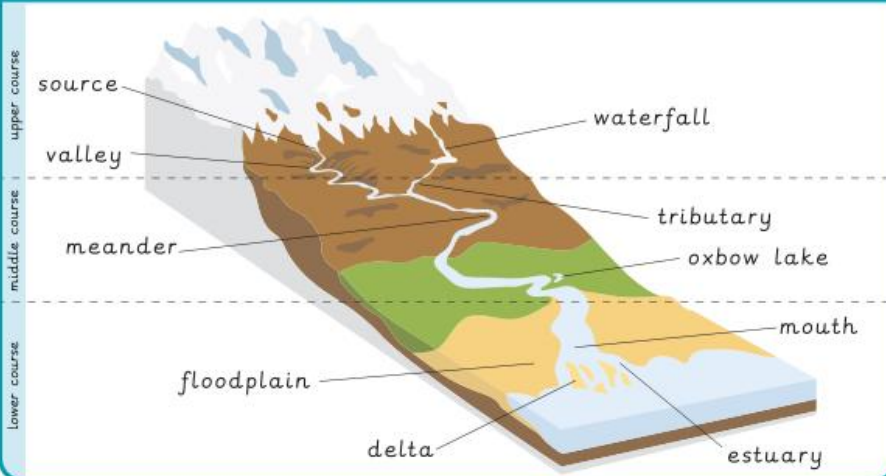
What can we find out about our local river ?



Vocabulary

Condensation
 Evaporation
 Groundwater
 Meander
 Precipitation
 Transpiration
 Water cycle
 Delta
 Flooding
 Irrigation
 Oxbow lake
 River mouth
 Tributary
 Waterfall
 Estuary
 Floodplain
 Leisure
 Percolation
 Source
 Valley
 Likert Scale
 Habitat
 Environment
 Grid square
 Human features
 Physical features
 Compass direction
 Renewable energy
 Leisure
 Pollution

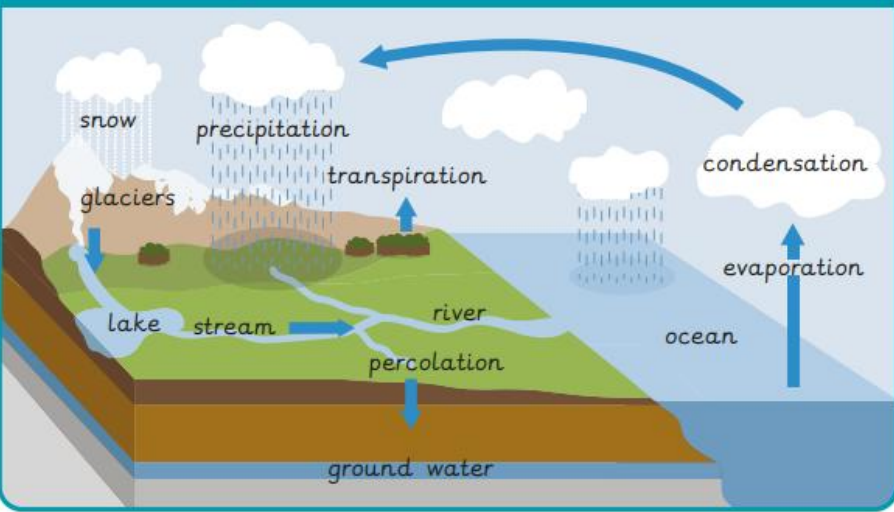
River courses and features



How are rivers used?

- Rivers are important habitats for plants and animals.
- They provide a supply of food and drink for humans and animals.
- Rivers can help crops grow by dispersing nutrients and making soil more fertile.
- Rivers contain valuable minerals such as gold and diamonds which people can find and sell.
- They offer transport routes for people and goods.
- Rivers can be used for leisure activities such as boating, swimming, fishing and many other fun activities.
- Many settlements and communities are built along rivers.
- Some people live on rivers in houseboats.
- Water from rivers can be used for irrigation on farmland.
- Renewable energy, called hydroelectric power, can be generated by moving water.

The water cycle



Key Learning: To understand and explain

- 1 What is the water cycle?**
Why is water important? Where can it be found? Exploring the water cycle and how water is moved. Vocabulary matching game. The Water cycle in a bag activity – monitor over time.
- 2 How is a river formed?**
Recap: How does water get to a river? What is the water cycle?
Courses and features activity. Building a river model and sentence work.
- 3 Where can we find rivers?**
Using atlases to find great UK rivers and rivers across the world. Recap from last term's history unit.
- 4 How are rivers used?**
Exploring how rivers are used and how they are beneficial to humans and animals – 10 key uses. Identify river issues and complete carton caption activity. Share geography in action video.
- 5 What can we find out about our local river?**
Continuing on previous knowledge of local area and local maps, recap human and physical features. Using OS of Clipston and Market Harborough. River features activity. Review of vocabulary through bingo game. Looking at grid references and using them to locate features.
- 6 What features does our local river have? Field work opportunity**
Likert scale.
Discussion of local rivers: River Ise and Alledge Brook, River Welland and Upper Nene. Look at river websites to discuss features and flooding risk.