

Rivers Knowledge Organiser

Vocabulary		Overview	Important Facts
Source	The beginning of the river, usually found in the hills or mountains. A river can have more than one source.	→ A river is a path that water takes as it flows downhill, normally towards another river, a lake, sea or ocean. → Rivers come in many different shapes and sizes and often join together to make larger rivers. → As rivers are a ready source of water, lots of plants and animals live near them. → Most inland human settlements were originally formed around rivers. In addition to drinking and bathing, rivers were also important waterways for trade. → Rivers can flood, at which point they become exceptionally dangerous and can cause widespread damage in the local communities.	→ Water always flows downhill. This is important for understanding how rivers form and how they contribute to the water cycle. → Rivers are fresh water – oceans are salt water. → When rivers are flowing quickly, they take bits of earth (sediment) off banks, downstream called erosion. → When there has been too much rainfall, rivers may overflow or ‘burst their banks’, causing significant flooding. → Silt and sediment are materials carried by running water. → Sometimes rivers carry so much silt and sediment, they can form new land, called a Delta.
Mouth	Here, the river flows into another body of water. The mouth could be where the river meets the sea, a lake or a larger body of water.		
Tributary	This is a stream or river flowing into a larger river. This helps the river to grow in size.		
Estuary	If a river has a wide mouth, it is called an ‘Estuary’.		
Delta	What is formed when the river deposits materials (sediment), at the mouth of a river.	Notable Rivers	
Channel	This is the path a river takes.	Nile	The Nile is considered the longest river in the world. It runs through north-eastern Africa, travelling through 11 countries, including Egypt, Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia and Burundi.
Confluence	The junction of two rivers.	Amazon	The Amazon holds the most volume of water of any other river in the world and is responsible for one fifth of the world’s freshwater. The Amazon supports the vast Amazon Rainforest and is located South America.
Erosion	Erosion is the gradual destruction or wearing away of something. It is where the force of the water rubs away at the banks of the river and on the river bed.	Yangtze	This is the longest river in Asia, fed by glaciers in the Tanggula Mountains of China. The river runs through China and empties into the East China Sea. Nearly 500 million people live in its watershed.
Reservoir	This is a man-made, artificial lake, created by flooding the land.	Mississippi	The Mississippi River is one of the most famous rivers in North America and runs through several major cities. The Mississippi joins with the Missouri River to form the largest river system in North America.
Dam	A man-made structure that helps to restrict and control the flow of water in a river.	Thames	The Thames is one of the longest rivers in the UK, but it is short compared to other rivers in the world. It flows through London and has an estuary which feeds into the North Sea. It has frozen in winter in the past.
Meander	A meander is a bend in the river.		
Oxbow Lake	When a part of a river gets cut off through erosion		
Deposition	Materials transported by the river are deposited (dropped off) usually at the mouth or estuary of a river.		