

Rivers and the Water Cycle

Key Vocabulary

confluence - when two rivers, usually of equal width, meet and join becoming one main channel.

condensation - the process by which a gas (water vapour) turns back into a liquid due to the reduction on the energy of its particles.

estuary - an area where a **fresh water** stream or river meets the sea or ocean.

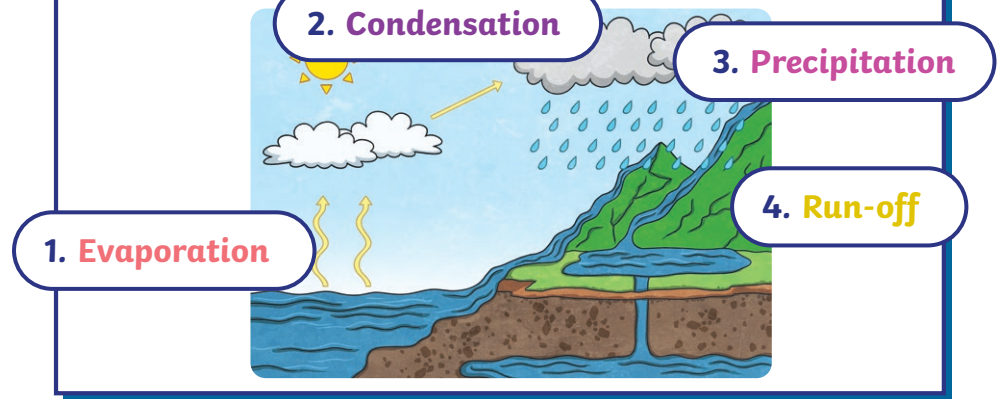
erosion - the natural process where land is worn away (by wind, water or ice) and transported to another location.

evaporation - the process by which a liquid turns into gas after it has been heated.

floodplain - land next to a river that floods if it rains too much or the river overflows.

fresh water - water that has a low concentration of salt. It is found in rivers, lakes, ponds, glaciers, icebergs and caps.

The Water Cycle

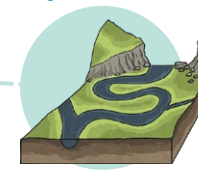


Stages of a River's Journey



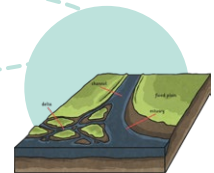
Upper Course

Here is where the **source** of the river is located. As rain falling on high ground collects, it forms streams that grow in size, eventually forming a river. The river cuts through the landscape, creating a V-shaped valley.



Middle Course

The river is fast flowing, which makes it bend and curve (meander) due to **erosion**. It's deeper and wider here, with water being added from **confluences** and **tributaries**.



Lower Course

This is where the river meets the sea/ocean or lake - the **mouth** of the river. The land is very flat and the river is at its widest here. The land floods when the river overflows. The river deposits sand and sediments here, creating deltas.

mouth - (of the river) the place where a river enters a lake, larger river or ocean.

oxbow lake - a lake formed when a meander is separated from the river.

precipitation - water droplets, which have formed in the sky that have become too heavy to be suspended. They fall to Earth as rain, hail, snow or sleet.

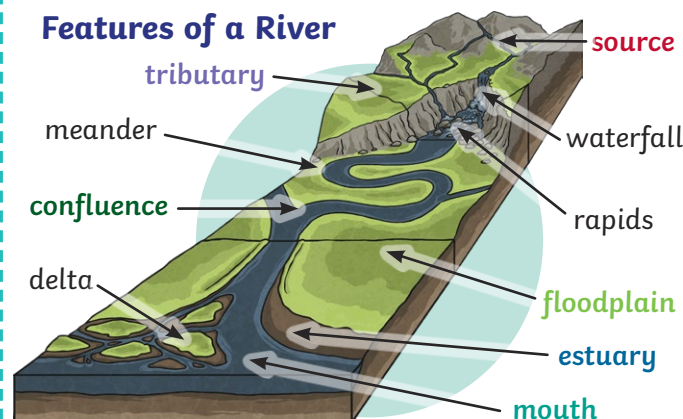
run-off - when water is forced by gravity to move across the Earth's surface towards larger bodies of water.

source - where a river begins, often found in upland areas.

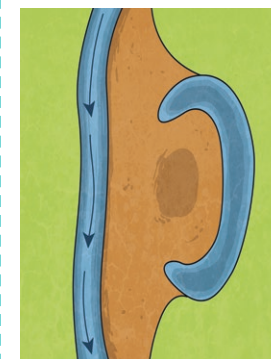
sustainable - the use of natural resources in a way that makes sure that there will be enough resources left for future generations.

tributary - a small stream that connects to a larger body of water, e.g. a river or lake.

Features of a River



oxbow lake



Water

Only 2.5% of the Earth's water is **fresh water**. The majority of this **fresh water** is frozen in glaciers, ice and snow, which means less than 1% of the Earth's water is drinkable. This water is found in places such as rivers and lakes.



Water Footprint

Every single thing we buy, use, wear and eat takes water to make. **Water footprint** is the amount of water that is used, from start to finish, to produce something.

Using Water Sustainably

Here are some examples of how people are using water more **sustainably**:

- reducing food waste;
- taking showers instead of baths;
- using a water butt to water plants.