

# What does a river see on its journey?

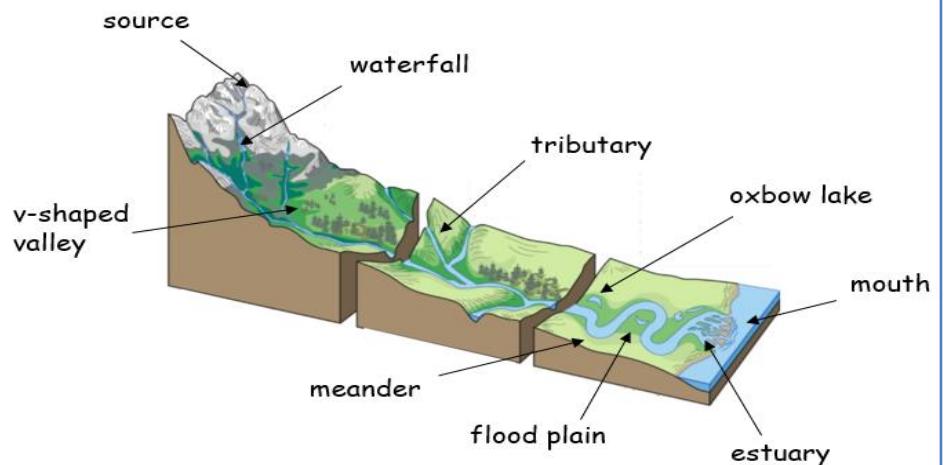
## The course of a river

Rivers are bodies of water that move across land. The **course** is the journey the river takes.

All rivers can be split into three sections:

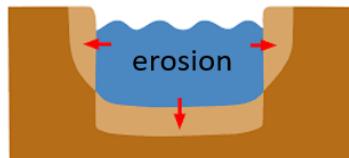
**Upper course**  
**Middle course**  
**Lower course**

## The key features of a river



### Erosion

As a river reaches its middle course, the fast flowing water causes **erosion**. This makes the channel deeper and wider.



### Deposition

As river slows down in the lower course, it **deposits** or drops rocks, mud and other material. This is called **sediment**.



## What benefits can a river bring?



survival



food



energy



transport



fun

## What can make flooding worse?



Storms and heavy rain



Steep hills



Very wet ground



Hard dry ground



Deforestation



Buildings and hard surfaces

## Key Vocabulary

### source

the start of a river. It can come from runoff rain water, snow, a spring or a lake.

### v shaped valley

the shape of the valley for most upper course, young rivers.

### tributary

where a stream or river joins the main river.

### waterfall

where the river flows over a vertical drop.

### channel

the width of a river. Its bottom is the bed and the sides are the banks.

### meander

a bend in a river.

### oxbow lake

a lake formed when a meander is cut off from the river.

### floodplain

usually a low flat area of land around a river which becomes flooded

### mouth

where a river meets the sea.

### estuary

where freshwater from a river mixes with salt water from the sea.