



An introduction to Rivers

All rivers start at the highest point in an area. As the river flows downstream, it gains more water from other streams, rivers, springs, added rainfall, and other water sources.

What is a river? - A river is freshwater flowing across the land, usually to the sea.

The River Channel - Rivers flow in channels. The bottom of the channel is the bed and the sides of the channel are the banks.

Where do rivers begin? - Rivers begin at their source in higher ground such as mountains or hills, where rainwater or melting snow forms tiny streams..

How are rivers formed? - When one stream meets another and they merge together, the smaller stream is known as a tributary. It takes many tributary streams to form a river.

Key vocabulary

Bank - the land at the side of a river

Brackish - a mix of saltwater and freshwater

Channel - the path a river takes over the land

Current - the movement or flow of water

Deposition - the process where material is laid down in another area

Erosion - the process where material is moved from one area and transported to another.

Estuary - The area where the river meets the ocean, mixing fresh and saltwater together.

Floodplain - The flat area next to a river that floods

Meander - The bend or curve in a river.

Mouth - Where the river ends - either at a sea, ocean or lake,

Ox-bow lake - A meander that was cut off from a river

River bed - The bottom of a river.

Sediment - A mixture of soil and rock (all small particles)

Source - The start of a river

Transportation - Where eroded material is moved downstream by the flowing water

Tributary - A smaller river that flows into a main river

