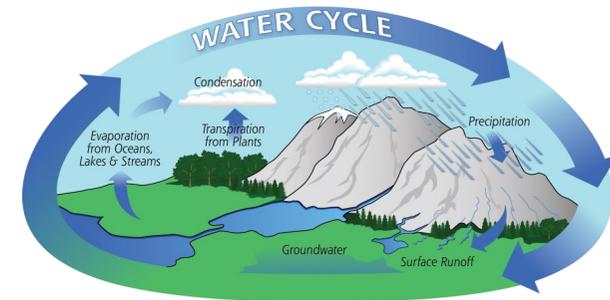


Key Vocabulary

Channel	The path in the ground that water flows through.
Condensation	When gas/vapour cools and returns to a liquid.
Confluence	The point where one or more rivers meet up with another river.
Dam	A man made barrier, build to hold back water.
Delta	Land that is formed in the lower course of a river, when the water slows down and material that has been carried along is dropped.
Deposit	Rocks and materials that have been eroded by the river, which are dropped as the river changes course or speed.
Discharge	The amount of water flowing along a river per second.
Erosion	Erosion is the process that wears away the river bed and banks.
Estuary	Where the river meets the sea and freshwater mixes with saltwater.
Evaporation	When a liquid changes into a vapour/gas.
Floodplain	An area of land next to a river that often floods.
Human features	Features of the landscape that are man-made.
Mouth	The point where the river meets the sea.
Physical features	Features of the landscape that are naturally occurring.
Precipitation	Rain, hail, sleet or snow.
Source	The start of a river.
Topographical map	Maps which represent the physical features of the landscape—also referred to as 'contour maps'
Transpiration	The evaporation of water from plants.
Tributaries	Where one or more small rivers or streams flow into a river.
Valley	A long ditch in the earth's surface between hills or mountains.



The Course of a River

The Upper Course: Rain falls onto high ground and collects in channels, flowing downwards to form a stream. The stream continues to flow downhill and joins other streams. This streams increase in size and speed until they eventually form a river. The flow of the river is very fast—you often find waterfalls, rapids and valleys in this part of the river.

The Middle Course: As the river flow continues to move quickly, it causes erosion against the banks (land either side of the river) which makes the river become wider and deeper. Often, rivers begin to meander as they cut a course through the land. Sometimes, parts of the river are cut off from the main course of the river—this part of the river is called an Oxbow lake.

The Lower Course: The river begins to slow down and deposits (drops) any materials it has eroded and carried in the current. Here, the river banks are smaller and there are floodplains (land either side of the river that take on water when the river is full), deltas (small islands of deposited soil or sand) and estuaries (where the river meets the sea).

