

Year 3, Summer 1, Geography



Waterways

Previous Learning

- In KS1, we learnt about seasonal and daily weather patterns in the UK
- In KS1, we explored London in depth including learning about the importance of the River Thames

Key Vocabulary

river - a large natural stream of water that empties into another body of water
canal - a man-made waterway to allow boats and ships to pass from one body of water to another
water cycle - the process of water moving between the air and land through evaporation and condensation.
flood plain- an area of flat land alongside a river that gets covered in water when the river floods
Irrigation - supplying water to land or crops to help them to grow

1

A river flows along a channel with banks on both sides and a bed at the bottom.

If there is lots of rainfall, or snow or ice melting, rivers often rise over the top of their banks and begin to flow onto the floodplains at either side.



2

Rivers usually begin in upland areas, when rain falls on high ground and begins to flow downhill. They always flow downhill because of gravity.

They then flow across the land - meandering - or going around objects such as hills or large rocks. They flow until they reach another body of water.

3

As rivers flow, they erode - or wear away - the land. Over a long period of time rivers create valleys, or gorges and canyons if the river is strong enough to erode rock. They take the sediment - bits of soil and rock - and carry it along with them. Small rivers are usually known as streams, brooks or creeks.

4

A flood occurs when a river bursts its banks and the water spills onto the floodplain.

Flooding is caused by heavy rain: the faster the rainwater reaches the river channel, the more likely it is to flood.



5

Rivers are often identified on maps as blue meandering lines.



6

The Thames Barrier has 10 steel gates that can be raised into position across the River Thames to stop the river from flooding into London.



7

The people of Ancient Egypt chose to settle by the River Nile. It was very important to them as it provided water for food, transportation, mud for building and fertile land. This means that the soil is rich and perfect for growing crops.



8

Canals are waterways that are built by people and used for shipping, travel, and **irrigation**.

They usually rely on features like locks and dams to control the water level.

They are also useful for letting out excess water after heavy rainfall.

9

To make a canal, builders dig a long channel in the ground and fill it with water. The water usually comes from a connecting river, lake, or ocean. Builders often line the canal with stone, concrete, or steel to make it stronger.



Future Learning

- In Year 4, we will learn about how rivers were an important part of settlements.
- In Year 5, we will learn about the importance of rivers and canals in global trade.

Test your knowledge!

- Which rivers do you know?
- How do floods occur?
- What is the purpose of the Thames Barrier?
- What is the difference between a river and a canal?
- How are rivers represented on maps?