

## Year 4 – Spring Term Geography - How do rivers work?

### Vocabulary and Glossary

Delta	A triangular piece of land at the mouth of a river that has formed because of a build up sediment
Floodplain	An area of flat land next to a river that floods when the river bursts its banks
Interlocking spurs	Ridges that are formed when a river meanders around areas of harder rock
Meander	A bend in a river or stream
Oxbow lake	A curved lake that was once a meander in a river
V-shaped valley	A deep, straight channel that has been cut into the rock by erosion.
Waterfall	A cascade of water that falls from a higher level to a lower level
Tributary	A small river or stream which flows into a larger one.

### What is a river?

A river is a body of water that flows downhill, usually to the sea. They start in upland areas and flow downstream, collecting water from small, narrow streams, springs, rainfall or other water sources on the way to the sea.



Our local rivers are the Trent, the Derwent and the Soar.

#### **The upper course**

The upper course of a river is narrow. Water flows over the riverbed, carrying rocks that erode the land and create steep-sided, V-shaped valleys.



#### **The middle course**

The middle course of a river grows wider and deeper as the land becomes flatter. Bends called meanders form.



#### **The lower course**

The lower course is the widest part of a river. The land is flat, and the water flows into the sea at the river's mouth.



### How do rivers form and change over time?



**Erosion**  
The wearing away and removal of rock and soil by means of wind and water



**Transportation**  
When rocks and soil that have been dislodged and worn away by erosion are transported in flowing water



**Deposition**  
When flowing water slows down and eroded rock and soil that have been transported are left behind

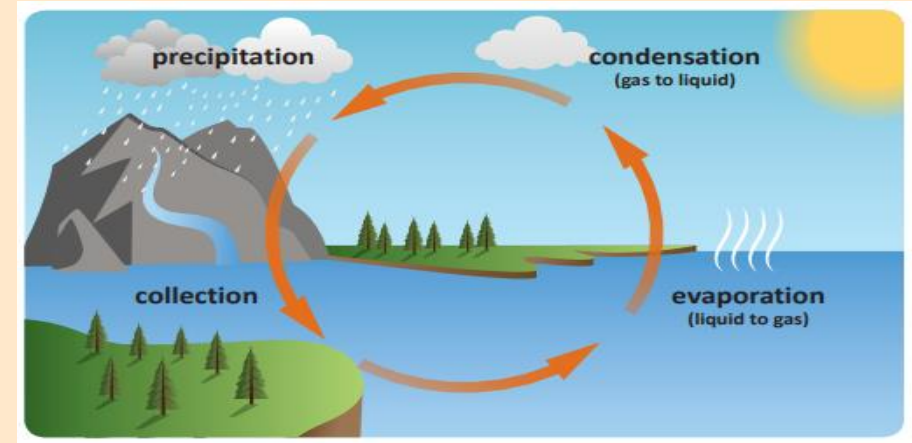
## How do rivers work?

### Why are rivers important?

Settlements have been built next to rivers for thousands of years because rivers provided essential water, food and power for people in the past. Today, rivers provide habitats for wildlife, hydroelectric power and water for crops. Rivers are also used for leisure activities, such as canoeing and fishing and for transporting goods and people.

Nottingham is situated next to the River Trent and Leicester is situated next to the River Soar.

### What is the water cycle?



### What happens in a flood?

Flooding can happen for a wide variety of natural and human reasons, including excessive rainfall, lack of river dredging, land use and the topography of the land. Flooding can cause problems, including damaging property and equipment, contaminating farmland and cutting people off from vital services and supplies of food and water.

