

20/01/21

T: What are the features  
of a river system?

# The Life of a River

## **Starter Activity**

Tell your partner the life story of a river.

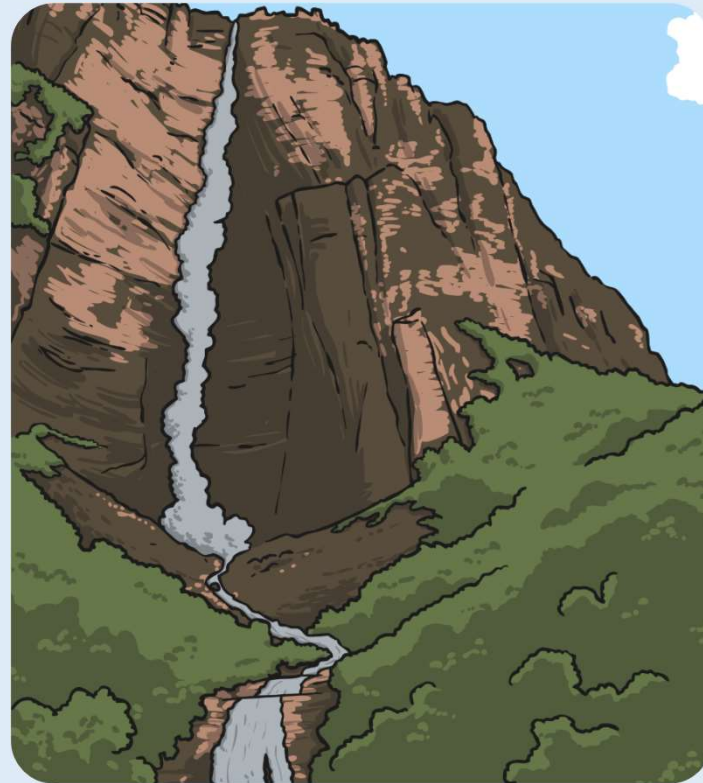
- Where might it be born?
- What kinds of places and events might it see along its life journey?
- Where does its life end?



# The Life of a River

Do you know what any of these words mean?

- upper course
- middle course
- lower course
- valley
- channel
- waterfall
- rapids
- gorge
- meander
- tributary
- confluence
- floodplain
- levee
- delta
- estuary



# The Life of a River



Rivers can be divided into three stages:

## The Upper Course

Rain falling in highland areas flows downwards and collects in channels, forming a stream. As the stream continues to run downhill, it is joined by other streams and increases in size and speed. The point where two rivers join is called a confluence.

## The Middle Course

As a river reaches its middle course, the fast flowing water causes erosion, which makes it deeper and wider. The river erodes left and right, forming horse-shoe like loops called meanders.

## The Lower Course

In the lower course, a river is in flatland and flows slowly. The force of the water is lower than in the other stages, so the river deposits all the bits of eroded land it has been carrying with it.

# The Upper Course



What is the river like along its upper course?

- Speed
- Features
- Valley shape
- Cl

A cross-section diagram of a river valley in its upper course. It shows a V-shaped valley with steep, rocky sides. A river flows down the center, with a waterfall on the right side. The riverbed is rocky and uneven.

# The Middle Course



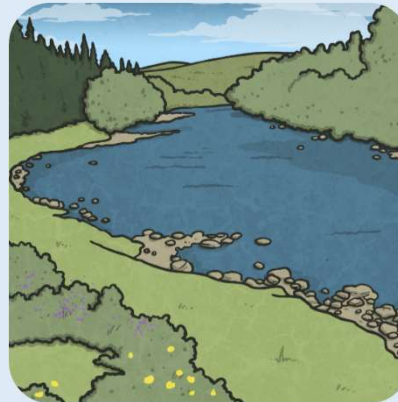
What is the river like along its middle course?

- Speed
- Features
- Valley shape



width

A 3D cutaway diagram of a river valley. The river is shown as a dark blue channel winding through a green valley floor. The valley walls are brown and rocky. The word "width" is written in white text on the right side of the diagram.



# The Lower Course



What is the river like along its lower course?

- Speed
- Features
- Valley shape

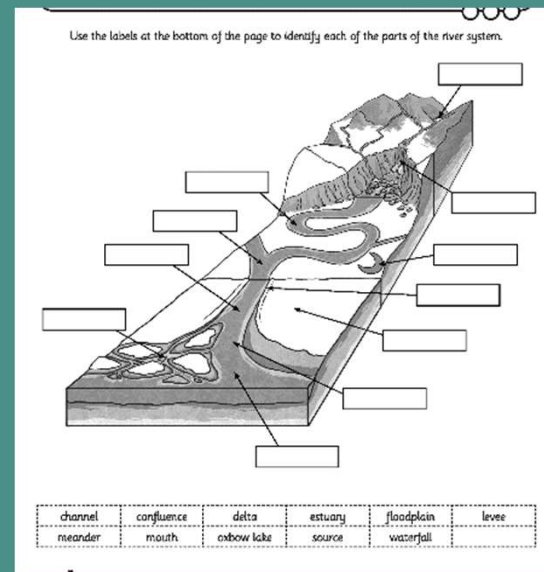


# TASK

## Activity

Use the worksheet on a separate link to label the features of a river.

**Challenge:** can you describe the river during the upper, middle and lower courses? How does it change?





# What's the River like There?

Where along a river's course might you find each feature? Add the words at the bottom into the correct column.

Some words might go in more than one column!

Upper Course	Middle Course	Lower Course

- valley
- waterfall
- gorge
- tributary
- floodplain
- delta
- channel
- rapids
- meander
- confluence
- levee
- estuary

# What's the River like There?

Where along a river's course might you find  
each feature?

Some words might go in more than one column!

ANSWERS

Upper Course	Middle Course	Lower Course
valley channel waterfall rapids gorge tributary confluence	valley channel tributary confluence meander	valley channel floodplain levee delta estuary

- valley
- channel
- waterfall
- rapids
- gorge
- meander
- tributary
- confluence
- floodplain
- levee
- delta
- estuary