

# Raging Rivers

Many rivers start life as a tiny stream high up a mountain. The river begins at the source, which could be a natural spring, melted ice and snow, or rainwater running down the land. Most rivers meet the sea at the mouth of the river.

## Glossary

**confluence** - where two rivers join to become one.

**conservation** - saving and protecting the environment.

**dam** - a wall that is built across a river in order to stop water flow.

**deposition** - a process in which layers of substance are formed.

**erosion** - gradual destruction and removal of rock or soil.

**estuary** - a wide part of the river where it joins the sea.

**floodplain** - a flat area of land bordering a river.

**levee** - a raised bank alongside a river.

**meander** - a large bend in a river.

**mouth** - where a river empties into the sea or a lake.

**delta** - landforms created by deposited sediment near the mouth.

**reservoir** - a lake used for storing water supplied to people.

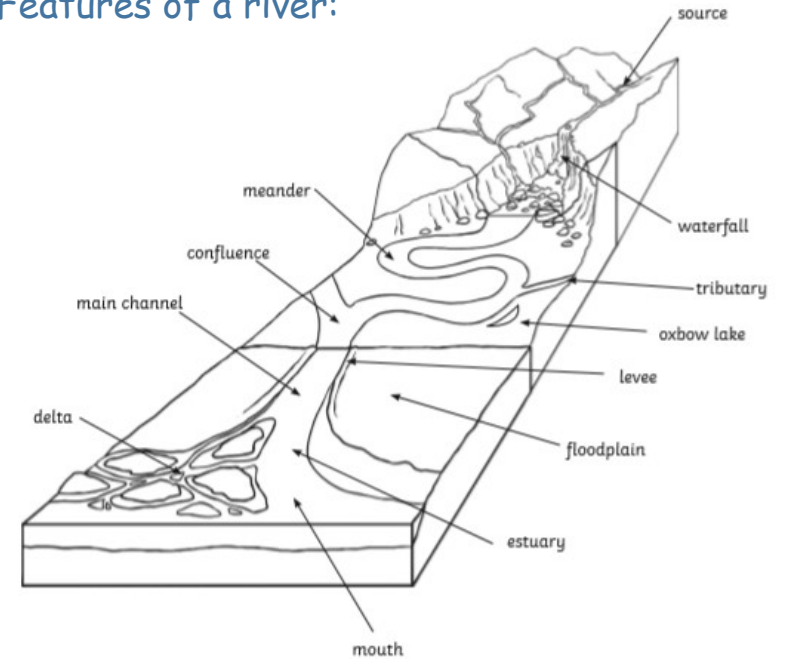
**source** - the beginning of a river, usually on high ground.

**tributary** - a stream or river which flows into a larger one.

**valley** - a low stretch of land between hills, especially one that has a river flowing through it.

**waterfall** - a place where water flows over a steep edge or cliff in hills or mountains and falls into a pool below.

## Features of a river:



## River Life

Rivers carry water and important nutrients all around the world and they are habitats for lots of plants and animals. The River Wensum is particularly important, as many special plants and animals live in it. Without rivers, many of our forests, lakes, cities and lives would not be the same.

Humans use rivers for many different things, such as:

- Drinking water
- Washing
- Cleaning clothes
- Fishing
- Transport



## Water Pollution

River pollution from chemicals and waste is bad for humans and the environment. Some helpful ways to protect your local river are:

- Keep oil and grease out of the sink. Instead, try your best to throw it away with solid waste.
- Put rubbish in the correct bins and don't flush anything down the toilet except for toilet paper.
- Always save water. Turn off taps when you are not using them as this means that less water has to be cleaned again.

## Rivers and Dams

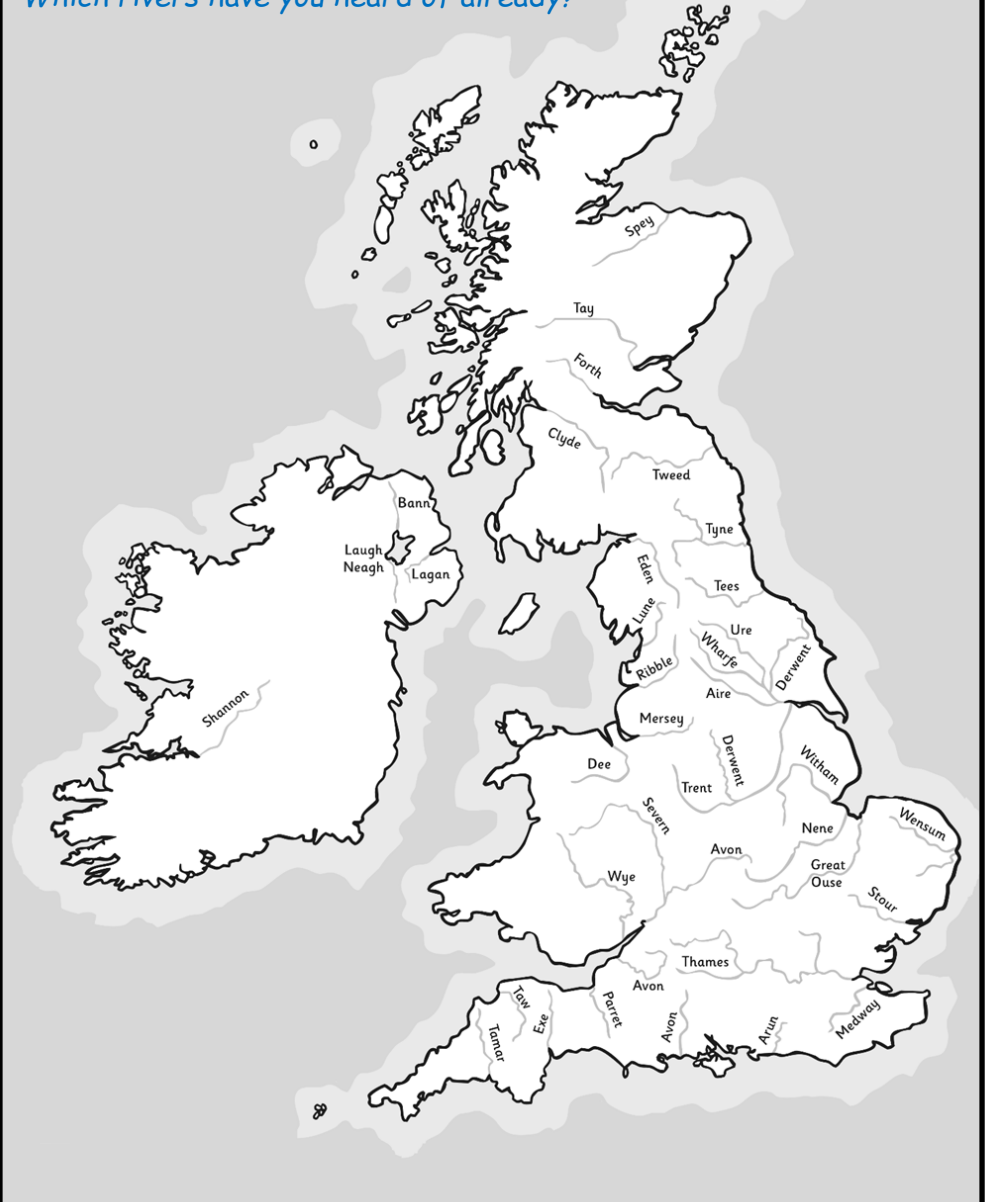
A dam is any barrier built to hold back water. Water held behind the dam is usually held in a reservoir. They are used to control flow of the water to prevent flooding and to generate power. However, the use of dams is a controversial topic because they can breach and cause severe flooding, damage to properties and loss of life.



## Rivers of the United Kingdom

Can you spot the River Wensum?

Which rivers have you heard of already?



# The River Wensum



**Source:** The River Wensum begins in northwest Norfolk between the villages of Colkirk and Whissonsett.

**Important Locations Along the River:** The River Wensum flows through Fakenham, the Pensthorpe nature reserve and then on to Swanton, Morley, Taverham and Norwich. Finally, it joins the river Yare as a tributary.

Several rivers join onto it, these tributaries are the River Tat, the River Tud and the River Ainse. It also has a number of watermills along the river.

**Bridges:** There are 5 medieval bridges that span the River Wensum that were built as early as 1300AD. These are Bishops Bridge, Whitefriars, Fye, St George's and St. Miles Coslany.

## Other interesting facts:

- The city of Norwich was founded on the river Wensum.
- The river passes Norwich City F.C. and one end of the grounds was originally named "The River End".
- The river is a biological site of special scientific interest and is a focus of conservation. It is recognised as one of the most important chalk river habitats in the country, with over 100 species of plants and many different types of animal.

# The River Rhine



**Source:** The River Rhine starts in lake Tomaseemaarten in Switzerland where it begins its journey across much of Europe.

**Upper Course:** It flows down the mountains of Switzerland, creating the most powerful waterfall in Europe, the Rhine Falls.

**Middle Course:** In Germany and France many smaller rivers join the Rhine as tributaries. It also passes through the Rhine Gorge, a steep valley created by erosion which is known for its many castles and vineyards.

**Lower Course:** As the Rhine reaches the Netherlands, it forms the largest delta in Europe as it flows into the North Sea at its mouth.

**Cities:** Among the largest and most important cities on the Rhine are Cologne, Dusseldorf, Rotterdam, Strasbourg and Basel.

**Countries:** Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany, France and the Netherlands

## Other interesting facts:

- It runs for over 1232km or 766 miles across 6 countries.
- It is called the "Rhein" in Germany, the "Rhine" in France and the "Rijn" in the Netherlands.
- In 1986, a chemical factory fire severely polluted the Rhine and killed off many species along the river. However, people have worked it restore it and many types of animal, such as the local salmon, have returned.