

# Rivers

## How Are Rivers Made?

Rivers are large, natural streams which flow to the sea or to a lake. Rivers begin life at the **source**, which could be a natural spring, melted ice and snow, or rainwater running down the land. Most rivers start as a tiny stream, high up a mountain. Smaller streams merge into one larger **channel** and **erode** the land until a river is formed. Most rivers end up in the sea at the **mouth** of the river.

## The World's Greatest Rivers

Some rivers around the world are famous for being long, wide or fast-flowing. The Nile river in Africa is the longest river in the world. It is 6,650km long. The Nile river **basin** covers eleven countries and flows into the Mediterranean Sea.

The Amazon river in South America is the world's widest river. At its widest point, the river is about 11km wide. This river feeds the famous Amazon rainforest and is also the fastest-flowing river in the world.



The Nile river has so many people living alongside it that the lights of the houses and streets can be seen from space.

## River Life

Rivers are essential for life as we know it. They carry water and important nutrients all around the earth and provide habitats for millions of species of plants and animals.

Humans use rivers for many different things, such as:

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



Millions of people around the world rely on rivers to make their living.

"Fishing boats on Lymington River" by Ian Capper is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

## Water Pollution

Just like oceans and the air, rivers can become **polluted** in various ways. River pollution is damaging to humans and to the environment because it **contaminates** the fresh water.

Types of river pollution include:

- Rubbish and solids (plastic, metal and other objects)
- Sediment (sand, grit etc.)
- Chemicals (factory waste, fertilisers, oils)
- Bacteria from animal and human waste

The best way to prevent river pollution is to stop the **pollutants** before they reach the river. Some helpful ways to protect your local river are:

- Keep oil and grease out of the sink. Instead, collect it in a jar and then throw it away with solid waste.
- Don't flush anything down the toilet except for toilet paper. Anything else might end up in oceans, lakes or rivers.
- Always save water. Turn off taps when you are not using them as this means that less water has to be cleaned again for use.



## Glossary

<b>basin</b>	a rounded bowl in a landscape where water, such as a river, may collect
<b>channel</b>	a path through the landscape formed by the movement of water
<b>contaminate</b>	to make something impure or dirty by adding a new poisonous or damaging substance
<b>erode</b>	to gradually wear away the land
<b>mouth</b>	where a river empties into the sea or a lake
<b>pollutants</b>	substances which make water impure or unclean
<b>polluted</b>	made impure or unclean by adding poisonous or damaging substances
<b>source</b>	the beginning of a river, usually on high ground

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Fiction Reading – Reading Response

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Three** interesting things I have learnt from reading this text are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Draw a diagram of something mentioned in the text. **Label** it and explain what it is:

This is

---

---

---

---

---