

Rivers: From Source to Sea with Finn the Dolphin

Learning objective: To understand the stages of a river's journey and identify key geographical features such as the source, meander, and mouth.

Use your knowledge of the water cycle and river systems to answer the following questions. Provide detailed explanations where requested.

Finn the dolphin has been mapping the journey of a river. He starts high in the mountains where the water begins its journey, flows through winding curves in the land, and finally reaches the vast ocean where the fresh water meets the salt water.

Word bank: source · tributary · confluence · meander · mouth · estuary · erosion · deposition

1. Define the term 'source' and explain why rivers often begin in elevated, mountainous areas. (2 marks)

2. Describe the process of a 'meander'. Why does a river's path become more curved as it reaches the middle course? (2 marks)

3. Compare and contrast a 'tributary' and a 'confluence'. Use a diagrammatic description in your answer. (2 marks)

4. Explain why the water at the 'mouth' of a river might contain more sediment than the water at the 'source'. (2 marks)

5. Justify why human settlements have historically been built near river banks. Consider both transport and agriculture. (2 marks)

6. What might happen to the surrounding landscape if a river were to flood its banks frequently? Describe the impact on the soil. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a labelled diagram of a river's journey from the mountains to the sea. Include and label the following: source, tributary, meander, and mouth. Use arrows to show the direction of water flow.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are an environmental scientist. Write a short paragraph explaining how human pollution at the source of a river could negatively impact the wildlife living in the estuary at the mouth. Use rich geographical vocabulary.