

Finn's River Expedition: A Journey from Source to Sea

Learning objective: To describe and understand the key physical processes and features of a river's journey from the source to the mouth.

Use this writing frame to document the life cycle of a river. Refer to Finn the dolphin's notes on geography to ensure you use technical vocabulary correctly. Ensure your descriptions are detailed and flow logically from the upper course to the lower course.

The journey begins high in the mountainous highlands, where a tiny trickle of water emerges from the ground to form the source of the river.

Word bank: source · meander · tributary · confluence · estuary · deposition · erosion · sediment · downstream · consequently · furthermore · in contrast · as a result

1. The Upper Course: Describe the characteristics of the river near its source. How does the steep gradient influence the speed and power of the water? (3 marks)

2. Middle Course Features: Explain the formation of a meander. What happens to the river's path as it travels across flatter land? (3 marks)

3. The Role of Tributaries: Compare and contrast a river's flow before and after it joins a major tributary. Why does the volume of water increase? (4 marks)

4. Lower Course and Deposition: Justify why a river deposits more sediment as it approaches the sea. What might happen to the river channel at this stage? (3 marks)

5. Human Impact: What might happen if a town was built on the floodplain of a river? Explain the potential risks and benefits. (4 marks)

6. Reflective Conclusion: Summarise the importance of rivers to the surrounding ecosystem and human civilisation. (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are a drop of water travelling the length of a river. Write a creative diary entry describing the changing landscape, the speed of the current, and the different creatures you encounter from the cold, rocky source to the salty, expansive estuary.