

TOPIC PACKS · GRADES 3–6

Rivers!

A cross-curricular themed week

Suggested timetable

Day	Subject	Activity
Monday	Geography	Anatomy of a river — from source to mouth
Tuesday	Science	The water cycle — where rivers come from
Wednesday	Geography	World rivers — Nile, Amazon, Thames, Mississippi
Thursday	English	River journey poem — descriptive writing
Friday	Art	Build a class river model with watercolour

Day 1 — Anatomy of a river

<p>Source</p> <p>Where the river starts. Often a spring, lake, or melting glacier high up in mountains or hills.</p>	<p>Upper course</p> <p>Fast, narrow, with waterfalls and rapids. The river is cutting downward through rock.</p>
<p>Middle course</p> <p>Wider, slower. Starts to bend in big curves called MEANDERS. The river drops sand and stones it carried.</p>	<p>Lower course</p> <p>Wide, slow, deep. Carries lots of fine silt. Often joined by tributaries.</p>



<p>Mouth</p> <p>Where the river meets the sea. Forms an ESTUARY (wide opening) or a DELTA (triangle of land where river splits).</p>	
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Day 2 — The water cycle (45 min)

Draw and label the four stages on the board: 1. EVAPORATION — Sun heats sea water. Water turns to vapour and rises. 2. CONDENSATION — Water vapour rises, cools, becomes droplets. Forms CLOUDS. 3. PRECIPITATION — Clouds get heavy. Water falls as RAIN, SNOW or HAIL. 4. COLLECTION — Water drains down hills as streams, joins to form rivers, flows back to the sea. The cycle never stops — it's been running for 4.5 billion years. ACTIVITY: Children draw their own labelled water cycle diagram. EXTENSION: What about water that falls on land far from the sea? (Soaks into the ground — becomes groundwater — eventually flows back.)

Day 3 — World's great rivers

River	Where	Length	Famous for
Nile	North Africa	6,650 km	World's longest. Ancient Egypt grew along it
Amazon	South America	6,400 km	Carries the most water — a fifth of Earth's freshwater flow
Yangtze	China	6,300 km	Longest in Asia. Home to 400 million people
Mississippi	USA	3,730 km	America's main waterway, drains 31 states
Ganges	India/Bangladesh	2,500 km	Sacred to Hindus, supports 400 million people
Danube	Central Europe	2,850 km	Flows through 10 countries
Thames	England	346 km	London's river — once polluted, now clean again

Day 3 mapping



Children mark each river on a world map, labelling its source and mouth. Notice how rivers shape WHERE people live — most ancient civilisations grew up along major rivers (Egypt + Nile, Mesopotamia + Tigris/Euphrates, India + Indus/Ganges, China + Yellow River). DISCUSS: Why? (Water for drinking, for crops, for transport, for fish.)

Day 4 — River journey poem (60 min)

WRITING TASK: A poem from the perspective of the river itself, travelling from source to sea.

STRUCTURE: Five short verses, one for each stage: 1. SOURCE — quiet, small, just beginning

2. UPPER COURSE — wild, fast, leaping over rocks 3. MIDDLE COURSE — slowing,

meandering, peaceful 4. LOWER COURSE — wide, deep, important 5. MOUTH — meeting the

sea, becoming something bigger MODEL OPENING: 'I was born in a quiet pool / High on a

mountainside / Just a trickle, just a thought / Of what I might one day be...' USE: First person ('I'),

changing pace (short lines for fast water, long lines for slow), and at least one piece of personification per verse.

Day 5 — Class river model (60 min)

MATERIALS: Long roll of paper (3m+), watercolours, blue and brown paint, sponges, small

cardboard houses/trees. 1. Spread paper out on classroom floor or two tables pushed together.

2. Each child takes a section. Together you paint a river from one end to the other. 3. Source

end: small trickle, mountains, snow. 4. Upper course: rapids, white frothy water (sponge

dabbing). 5. Middle: meanders, fields beside the river. 6. Lower: wide blue, towns and cities

along the bank. 7. Mouth: river spreads out into the sea. ADD: Small paper houses, trees,

animals, boats. Display in the corridor. Becomes a memorable end-of-topic showpiece.

