



source

the beginning of a river  
**headwater**

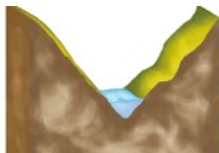
melting snow  
rainwater runoff  
groundwater overflowing

**spring**



**Upper course**

**start - source**  
becomes very  
fast-flowing water  
narrow river  
**channel**  
path water takes



V-shaped valleys

rivers cut through rock  
**erode riverbank**  
and **riverbed**

**waterfalls**



**rapids**



hard rocks stick out of  
the river  
cause fast-flowing and  
dangerous water

**riverbed**

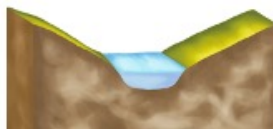


pebbles and rocks



**Middle course**

flatter, middle section of  
a river  
river **channel** widens and  
deepens



**meanders**

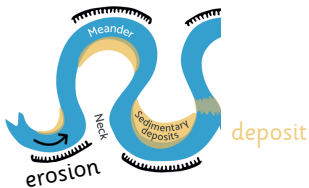
shaped bends in the river  
caused by  
**deposition**

new sand and mud settle  
on the riverbed / bank

**erosion**



wearing away of  
riverbed and riverbank



**riverbed**

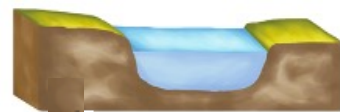


sand and mud



**Lower course**

lower, flatter ground  
with river flowing into  
and meeting a lake or  
the sea - **river mouth**



rivers widen

deposit **sediment**

mud and sand

**floodplains**



area around river  
covered in times of  
flood

**riverbed**



mostly mud

rivers of the  
United Kingdom

**River Thames**

London

**River Taff**

Cardiff

**Water of Leith**

Edinburgh

**River Lagan**

Belfast

Local  
River Knowledge

River

**your river stage**

upper, middle, lower?

**features**

**source**

**mouth**

**source**  
(headwater)

**waterfall**

**rapids** - rocks poking out of a river  
cause dangerous, fast-flowing water

**river channel** wide  
and deep

**Middle course**

**Upper course**

**tributary** - smaller streams that flow  
into the river

**meander** - large river bend

**Lower course**

**mouth**

**floodplain**  
low flat ground at  
risk of flooding