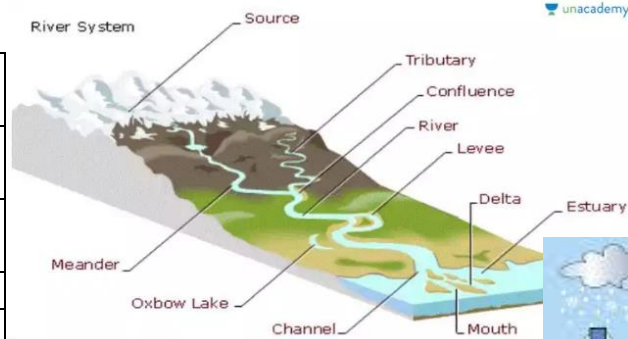


Rivers and the water cycle: How does water go round and round?

Important vocabulary for understanding rivers

Bank	The sides of a river channel. A river channel has two banks.
Bed	The bottom of a river channel
Confluence	When two or more bodies of water meet
Delta	A deposit of sand or mud
Erosion	The wearing away of the Earth's surface.
Estuary	The wide mouth of the river where it meets the sea
Floodplain	An area of flat land either side, likely to flood
Gorge	A narrow valley with steep, rocky walls located between hills or mountains
Groundwater	The rain that soaks into the ground
Meander	A bend or winding curve in a river
Mouth	The end of a river, where it enters a lake, sea or ocean.
Rapids	A fast-flowing and turbulent part of the course of a river
Reservoir	A lake created by humans for storing water
River	A flow of fresh water across the land into a lake, sea or ocean.
Sea	An area of salty water that covers much of the Earth's surface
Source	The beginning of a river
Spring	Groundwater that comes up to the surface
Stream	A small river
Tributary	A smaller river or stream that flows into a larger river.
Valley	A low area of land between hills or mountains, typically with a river or stream flowing through it
Waterfall	A cascade of water falling from a height, formed when a river or stream flows over a steep incline



Rivers run through every continent of the world. Here are some of the world's major rivers.

Europe	Thames, Trent, Severn, Volga Rhine, Seine and Danube
Asia	Ganges and Yangtze
Africa	Nile and Congo
South America	Amazon and Panama
North America	Mississippi and Rio Grande
Australasia	Murray-Darling

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Important Vocabulary for The Water Cycle

- **Evaporation** – when water changes from liquid to gas due to heat.
- **Condensation** – when water vapour cools and turns into clouds.
- **Precipitation** – rain, hail, sleet and snow that falls from the clouds.
- **Collection** - when water that falls from the clouds, collects in the oceans, rivers, lakes, streams. Most will infiltrate soak into the ground and will collect as underground water.