

Links to prior learning
– Water cycle (Year 4),
Egyptians (Year 3)

Year 5 – Rivers

Links to other subjects
English – London Eye
Mystery

Subject Specific Vocabulary	
source	The start of a river, often a natural spring, lake or glacier run-off
meanders	A feature of the middle and lower courses of a river, where, over long periods, the river bends and bows
estuary	The lower part of the river, where it meets the sea and is affected by tides
floodplains	A feature of the lower course, created as the river drops sediment as it slows during flooding
ox-bow lake	A 'C' shaped lake created as the meander of a river becomes cut off from the flow.
tributary	A river or stream flowing into a larger river; the joining point is the confluence
water cycle	The cycle of water back to the sea through processes of evaporation, transport and precipitation
plastic pollution	Harmful accumulation of discarded plastic products in the environment, rivers and seas
upper course, middle-course, lower course	The different layers of a river from source to mouth, each flowing at different speeds and with different geographical features

Key facts and sticky knowledge
Rivers are a function of the water cycle in which water evaporates from the sea and lakes and is deposited on the land as precipitation . Much of the precipitation ends up in rivers as it flows back to the sea.
Rivers are divided into three key parts: the upper course , the middle course and the lower course . Each part has different characteristics and features reflecting the different velocities of water flows in each
In the upper course, gradients are steep and the velocity of the water is high. Key features of the upper course are the source, waterfalls, gorges and rapids .
The lower and middle courses are less steep and the water travels at slower velocity. Key features of the middle and lower courses are meanders, ox-bow lakes, floodplains, levees, deltas and estuaries .
All of the classic features of a river can be seen in The Thames, which flows from Thames Head in Gloucestershire all the way through London to the Thames Estuary and mouth in the North Sea .
Rivers are increasingly blighted by plastic pollution which causes huge problems for wildlife. Responsibility for reducing plastic pollution must come from all of us.
By the end of this period of learning , the pupils should be able to use geographical vocabulary to describe a river, explain the water cycle and consider environmental issues affecting rivers presently.

