

A RIVER SYSTEM

RIVER SOURCE

Where the river begins, perhaps fed by an underground spring, or runoff from a glacier or precipitation.

WATERSHED

The higher land that surrounds a drainage basin.

DRAINAGE BASIN

The area of land drained by a river and its tributaries.

FLOODPLAIN

The flat land surrounding a river that may be covered in water if the river floods. The rich soil here is usually excellent for agriculture.

DISCHARGE

The volume of water flowing through a river channel.

DELTA

Land formed at a river mouth when the river deposits material quicker than the sea can remove it.

OXBOW LAKE

A lake formed when the main stream of a river cuts across the narrow end of a horseshoe bend.



MEANDER

A bend in the river's course.

TRIBUTARY

A smaller stream or river that joins the main river.

CONFLUENCE

Where two rivers meet.

ALLUVIUM

The deposit of silt, sand and clay that is left behind by floodwaters - usually rich in minerals, producing fertile soil.

RIVER MOUTH

Where the river meets a larger body of water - typically a lake, sea or ocean.