

Year 4 Spring 2 - Geography Medium-Term Plan: Rivers and the Water Cycle

Enquiry question: Where does water come from and is it running out?

Writing outcome: Poetry - The Day the Rivers Ran Dry Schema focus: Earth Processes and People & Places (main); Maps & Fieldwork (supporting)	What we already know, remember and can do: Children know basic physical and human features, have studied settlements and land use and can use maps to locate places. They have experience of comparing regions and discussing how environments affect people.
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Topic overview / rationale

In this Rivers and the Water Cycle unit, children will develop their scientific knowledge of the water cycle, discussing the processes that occur in each stage. They will explore the different stages of a river, describing the changes that occur as a river flows along its course, looking specifically at the River Severn. Children will also have an opportunity to follow the river's journey from source to mouth, identifying and describing features along the way. They will discuss the reasons why people live near rivers and the impact humans have on rivers, comparing the River Severn and the Amazon River. The sequence builds towards the enquiry question and gives pupils the geographical knowledge and vocabulary needed for the end-of-unit writing outcome: Poetry - The Day the Rivers Ran Dry.

Key vocabulary for this topic

water cycle, evaporation, condensation, precipitation, collection, source, tributary, meander, mouth, upper course, lower course, River Severn, Amazon River, compare, scale, river basin, floodplain, settlement, transport, flood, fertile, water scarcity, access, inequality, sanitation, drought, conservation, sustainable, reservoir, water management, consumption

Christ Church values and spirituality links

Values: Curiosity, Respect, Hope, Community.

Spirituality: Children wonder at the continuous journey of water through landscapes and lives. They reflect on unequal access to clean water and the consequences of human choices. They respond by considering ways to use water responsibly and sustainably.

Wonder: What does this topic make us curious about? Reflection: What does it teach us about people, places and our world? Response: How might this learning help us live well together and care for our world?

Inclusion and adaptive teaching

Suggested inclusive practice: pre-teach core vocabulary using visuals and oral rehearsal; provide word banks, sentence stems and modelled responses; enlarge maps, diagrams or data where needed; use supportive pairs, adult-guided discussion and alternative recording such as drawing, labelling, voice notes or practical sorting. Use process diagrams, physical models and repeated sequencing to support the water cycle and river journey. Provide labelled maps and vocabulary mats; handle discussion of water scarcity sensitively and offer concrete examples before global comparisons.

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Kindness • Respect • Perseverance • Curiosity • Hope • Community



Lesson	Learning Intention / Activity	What will be known and remembered	Revisited vocabulary	New vocabulary	Adaptations / Inclusion	Deeper thinking
1	Is Water Running Out? LI: To be able to describe and sequence the processes in the water cycle. Activity: Water Cycle Cartoon Strip: Children to use the Cartoon Strip Template to tell the story of the water cycle.	✓ I can describe and sequence the processes in the water cycle. ✓ I can use geographical vocabulary and evidence to explain my thinking.	settlement, physical feature, human feature, map	water cycle, evaporation, condensation, precipitation, collection	✓ Use enlarged/visual resources, pre-teach key vocabulary and model the task in small steps. Provide sentence stems, word banks or supportive pairing where needed. ✓ Extend pupils by asking them to justify patterns, compare evidence and explain links between physical and human geography.	What evidence would you use to justify your judgement?
2	What Are the Stages of a River's Journey Like? LI: To be able to understand the three stages of a river's journey and to be able to describe the changes in a river as it flows along its course. Activity: The Journey of a River Story: Children will need to write a story of the River Severn's journey, describing the stages. It could be written in the first person from the perspective of the water.	✓ I can understand the three stages of a river's journey. ✓ I can describe the changes in a river as it flows along its course.	water cycle, evaporation, condensation, precipitation, collection	source, tributary, meander, mouth, upper course, lower course	✓ Use enlarged/visual resources, pre-teach key vocabulary and model the task in small steps. Provide sentence stems, word banks or supportive pairing where needed. ✓ Extend pupils by asking them to justify patterns, compare evidence and explain links between physical and human geography.	How does this new knowledge help us explain the unit enquiry?
3	Are All Rivers the Same? LI: To be able to explain the features of a river and to be able to give examples of human and physical features near rivers. Activity: Reading Opportunity: Features of a River Matching Cards: Children work in pairs to read the river features definitions and match each to its feature name, photo example and OS Map.	✓ I can explain the features of a river. ✓ I can give examples of human and physical features near rivers.	tributary, meander, mouth, upper course, lower course	River Severn, Amazon River, compare, scale, river basin	✓ Use enlarged/visual resources, pre-teach key vocabulary and model the task in small steps. Provide sentence stems, word banks or supportive pairing where needed. ✓ Extend pupils by asking them to justify patterns, compare evidence and explain links between physical and human geography.	What evidence would you use to justify your judgement?

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4	What Is It Like to Live Near a River? LI: To be able to give reasons why people live near rivers and to be able to understand the impact humans have on rivers. Activity: How Rivers are Used Around Me: Children to use the Regional Fact Files to find out information about how a major river is used in their region. They will then need to create an information leaflet about how the river is used.	✓ I can give reasons why people live near rivers. ✓ I can understand the impact humans have on rivers.	River Severn, Amazon River, compare, scale, river basin	floodplain, settlement, transport, flood, fertile	✓ Use enlarged/visual resources, pre-teach key vocabulary and model the task in small steps. Provide sentence stems, word banks or supportive pairing where needed. ✓ Extend pupils by asking them to justify patterns, compare evidence and explain links between physical and human geography.	How does this new knowledge help us explain the unit enquiry?
5	Does Everyone Have Water? Is Access to Water Fair? LI: To be able to understand that access to water is not equal and to identify causes and consequences of not being able to access water. Activity: Water Usage Data Collection: Children complete the How Much Water Do You Use? Activity Sheet.	✓ I can understand that access to water is not equal. ✓ I can identify causes and consequences of not being able to access water.	floodplain, settlement, transport, flood, fertile	water scarcity, access, inequality, sanitation, drought	✓ Use enlarged/visual resources, pre-teach key vocabulary and model the task in small steps. Provide sentence stems, word banks or supportive pairing where needed. ✓ Extend pupils by asking them to justify patterns, compare evidence and explain links between physical and human geography.	What evidence would you use to justify your judgement?

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6	How Can We Use Water More Sustainably? LI: To be able to understand why we should use water more sustainably and to be able to discuss strategies to use water more sustainably. Activity: Audit how water is used at home and school using scenario cards. Rank water-saving strategies by impact and practicality, then create a water-wise action plan explaining how sustainable choices can reduce demand. Use the accumulated knowledge, evidence and vocabulary from the unit to prepare for the end-of-unit writing outcome.	✓ I can understand why we should use water more sustainably. ✓ I can discuss strategies to use water more sustainably.	water scarcity, access, inequality, sanitation, drought	conservation, sustainable, reservoir, water management, consumption	✓ Use enlarged/visual resources, pre-teach key vocabulary and model the task in small steps. Provide sentence stems, word banks or supportive pairing where needed. ✓ Extend pupils by asking them to justify patterns, compare evidence and explain links between physical and human geography.	What is your strongest evidence-based answer to the unit enquiry: Where does water come from and is it running out?