



### Year 3

### Rivers

**Key end points** of this unit, Rivers, are:

- To recognise rivers of the world and how humans are connected to them.
- To name, locate and describe key rivers in; Europe, Asia, North America, South America, Africa

This unit builds on children's understanding and looks closely at **rivers**. In the previous unit; settlements, children learned that **rivers** were an important **resource** for **travelling and transporting goods** in the past and that many cities grew around a river. In History, children learned about the importance of the River Nile to Ancient Egyptians. In this unit children will develop their understanding of how people **interact** with the world around them. They will explore how people use rivers, for example for irrigation for farmland, for transport and as a water supply. They will consider the impact of less than normal rainfall on rivers, specifically the Mississippi River, and then in turn the impact that a **drought** can have on the people who rely on the river. As the National Curriculum requires, children will be using maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate the rivers, the countries they journey through and to describe their features, particularly their shape and direction of travel.

Prior to this unit children will have learned the seven continents and will have been building their knowledge of the world. In this unit children will use **atlases** to locate continents and countries. They will identify rivers and locate the countries the rivers run through. It is important to check children's **prior knowledge of the continents** is secure before teaching this unit.

Conceptual understanding of **interconnection** between humans and rivers will be developed throughout this unit and then built on in forthcoming units e.g. when children study the Mississippi again in Year 5 North America. Children will learn that humans can **use and change rivers** in several ways including through the construction of dams. They will learn that dams are a way for humans to control the flow of water in a river, for water supply and for producing hydroelectric power.



### Lesson Sequencing:

The sequence of lessons in this unit has been designed to build on prior knowledge and introduce new material in small manageable steps. In lesson 1 children will learn that throughout time people have lived by rivers and used them for food and transport. They will explore the **path of rivers** as they journey to the sea, learning that every river begins as a stream and starts at a 'source', and ends with an estuary.

They will learn that when streams merge together they form a river. Children will learn that rivers can be used by traders who transport goods by boat. This builds on children's understanding of transport from EYFS. Children will draw a diagram of a river, modelled by the teacher, and will label key features of a river.

In lesson 2 children will explore rivers of Europe, including a river from their local area. This gives children an opportunity to build on their local geography knowledge and think about the features of a local river. Children will then use an atlas to locate the river Danube and will identify the countries it runs through. Comparing a local British river with the Danube will help children to develop their **understanding of scale**. British rivers cannot be long like many European rivers, as we are an island.

In lesson 3 children look at rivers of Africa including the Nile and the Niger. Children should have prior knowledge of the Nile from History. They will learn more about the Nile when they study the Ethiopian Highlands in the Year 5 unit on Mountains and learn how the rainfall there flows into the Nile. The Niger is an interestingly shaped river as it flows in a boomerang shape and at points, flows away from not towards the sea. In lesson 4 children continue to build their knowledge by looking at rivers of Asia. They identify the Yellow River, the Yangtze, the Ob, the Ganges and the Indus. The lesson then focuses on the Indus River and explains that the Indus Valley civilisation grew around the Indus River and its fertile farmland created by flooding, drawing parallels with the Nile. Children will think about the difficulties there are in managing a river that flows through more than one country and how changes to a river in one location can impact the river in other locations.

In lesson 5 children learn about the Mississippi in North America and the Amazon river in South America. They will learn that many people rely on the rivers for food, transport and water supply. They learn that the Mississippi River has suffered in recent droughts and that the flow of water in rivers can change drastically. In Year 6 children learn more about the Mississippi River and human impact on it.



**The key substantive concepts** focused on in this unit include interconnection, trade and transport.

**The key disciplinary understanding** in this unit is that geographers study rivers to find out more about what lives in them, how they behave and the impact of human activities on them.