

# The River Thames Today

This week we will identify and explain some of the different ways people use the River Thames today.

Before we begin it is important to understand how rivers are formed, the key vocabulary we use to describe rivers, and finally, how The River Thames use differ from the Victorian era.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/zb39jxs>

RECAP



Clouds release their rain over the hills.

Most of this soaks into the ground to become **groundwater**.

Some groundwater comes to the surface to form **springs**.

Springs join together to make **streams**.

As the streams trickle down the hillside they join together, getting bigger as they go, until they become **rivers**.



# Key Words



- **Source** - the beginning of a river.
- **Groundwater** - rain that soaks into the ground.
- **Spring** - groundwater that comes up to the surface.
- **Stream** - a small river.
- **River** - a large natural stream of water.
- **Floodplain** - area of flat land either side, likely to flood.
- **Tributary** - a stream or river that joins another river.
- **Meander** - a bend in a river.
- **Mouth** - the place where a river meets the sea.
- **Delta** - a small island created by deposited material (soil).

This picture shows the complete journey of a river, from the source to the sea. Let's have a look at this journey more closely.

The **source** can be in hills or mountains. Sometimes a river has more than one source.

Sometimes, as the water travels down, it hits a layer of rock. This makes a **waterfall**.

Small streams that join the river are called **tributaries**.

Large 's' shaped bends and curves in the river are called **meanders**.

Sometimes, as the river flows down, **lakes** can form in hollows in the ground. This river does not have a lake, but there is some marshy ground near the meanders.

This is called the **mouth** of the river. If the mouth of the river is very wide it is called an **estuary**.





I wonder where is the River Thames source?



# Abingdon Lock

This is the oldest lock in England.



Locks are like stairs - they let boats go up and down the river easily.







# Renewable energy



A new machine called an "Archimedes Screw" has just been built near Oxford.

This uses the river to generate electricity for thousands of homes.







# Henley Regatta

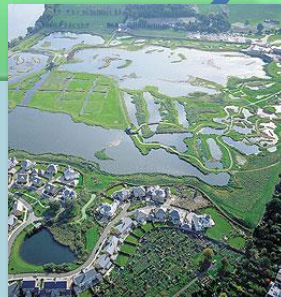


This is a rowing race held every July on the River Thames.

Thousands of people come out to watch the boats go by - and have a party!







# London Wetlands Centre

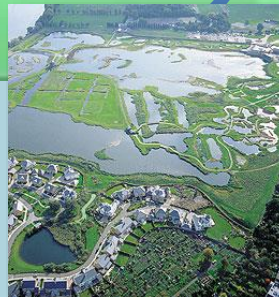


Here the River is used for conservation.

This is a protected area and is home to lots of wildlife, including hundreds of birds, frogs, newts and bats.







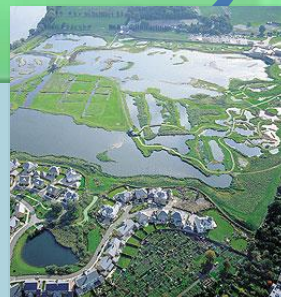
# Tower Bridge



The gates open at set times to allow ships in and out of London.







# The London Docks

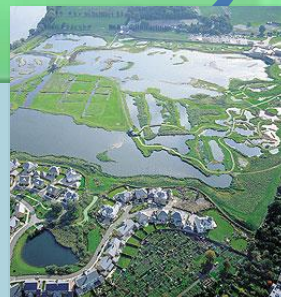


This used to be where expensive goods like spices and cloth were shipped in from across the world.

Now, the docks have been made into marinas for people to keep their yachts, and luxury flats.







# Sewage treatment



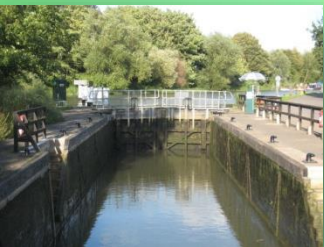
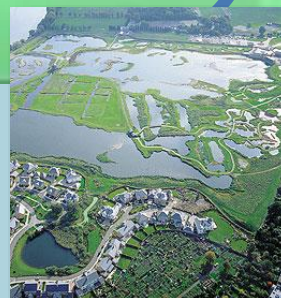
In Victorian times, the Thames was used to get rid of London's sewage.

We still pump 39 million tonnes of untreated sewage into the river each year!

The pollution in the river is so bad that a new tunnel is being built to carry sewage more safely.





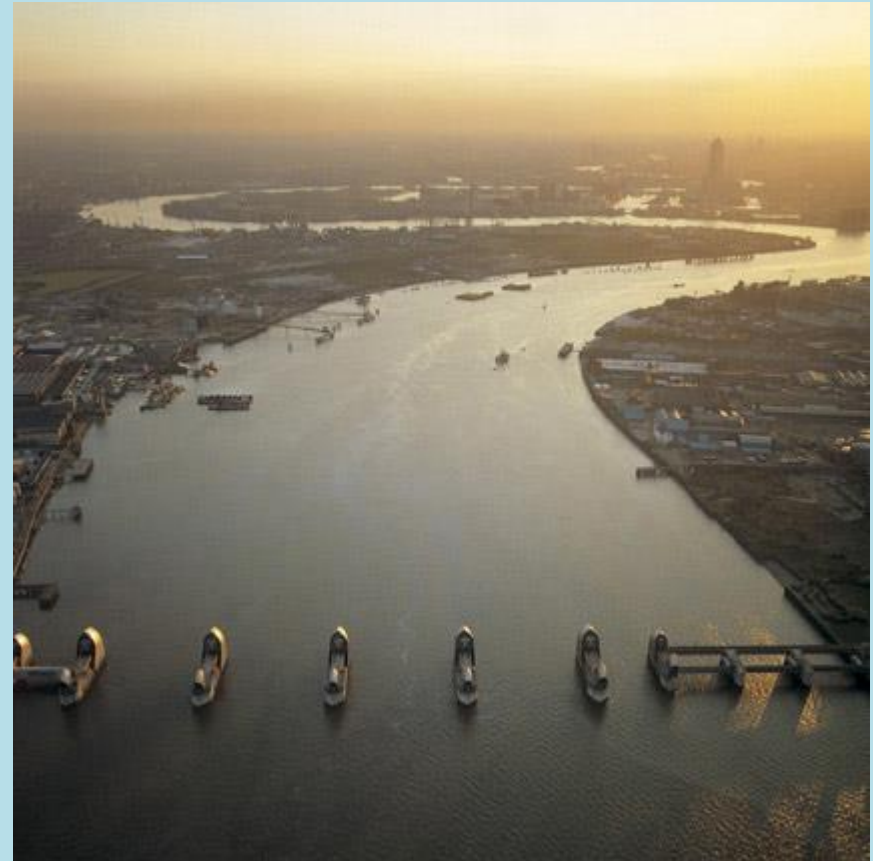


# The Thames Barrier

This was built to protect the River Thames from flooding from the sea.



It is a set of gates that lie in the water across the river, which stop the tides from the sea affecting the river.





# Main Activity

**Describe the environment of the River Thames now.**

You may present your work in a way you feel most comfortable with. Remember it must include some details about the environment (how it is used now) of the River Thames.

Websites to spark your curiosity:

<https://www.google.com/maps/@51.511296,0.0098304,14z>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFCN-RgmLSM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hzw80n-tJdE>

No clue what to do? Why not try this instead? Look at the next slide!

How have the Docklands changed? What are the similarities and differences?



1. How has transport in the pictures changed since 1845?
2. How have buildings altered since Victorian times?
3. There are still many boats and ships that use the Docklands and the River Thames, but how have they changed?
4. What can you say about the change in availability of green land, fields and open space in the pictures?
5. What differences in businesses and employment do you notice? Use can also use your own knowledge of the Docklands to answer the question.