

Investigating Rivers

Learning Objective:

To find out why rivers are important.



Why are rivers
important?

What uses do
they have?

Think, pair, share

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Next

Rivers are used for many different reasons and by many different people.



Farming

Transport

Energy

Leisure

Water

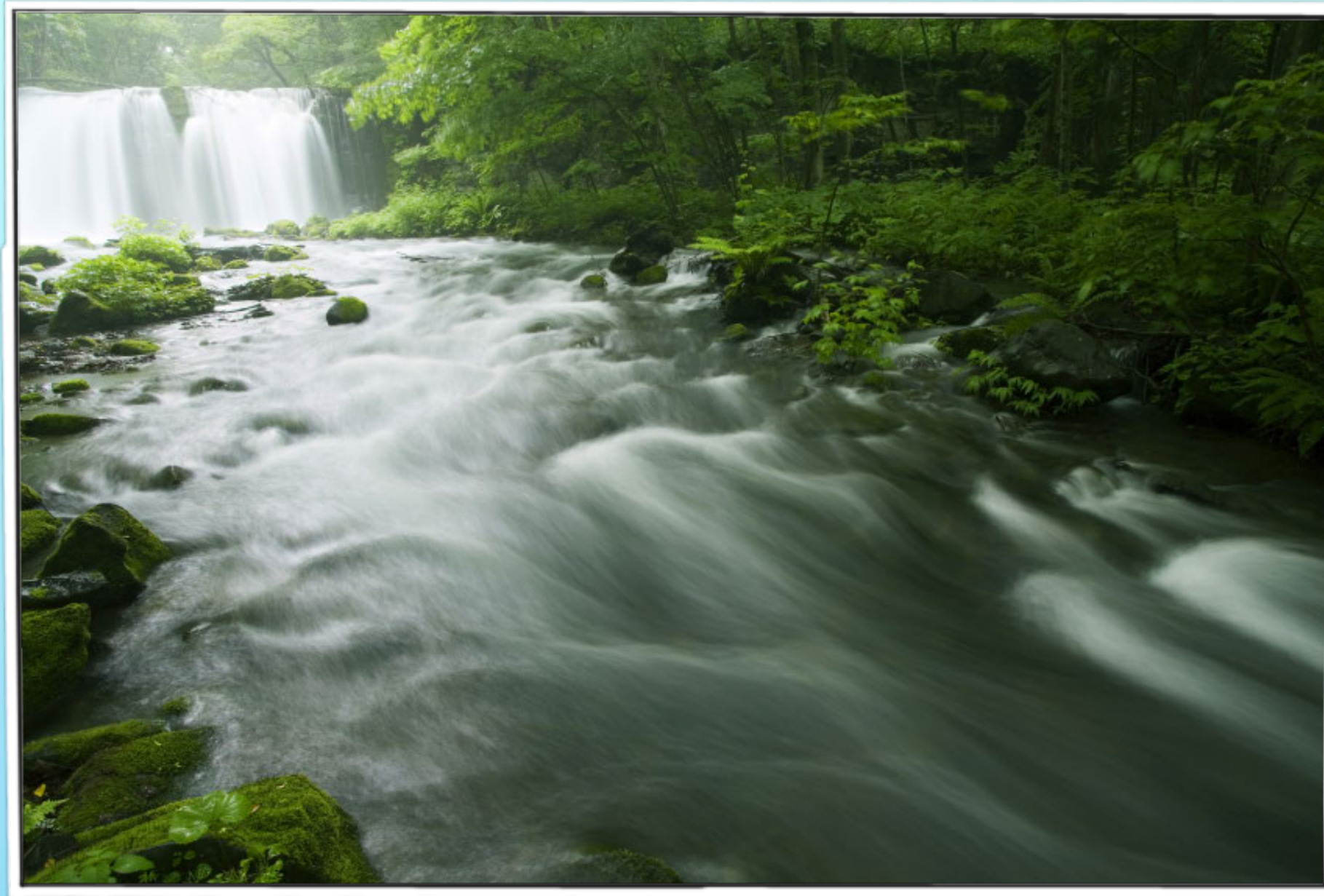
Habitat

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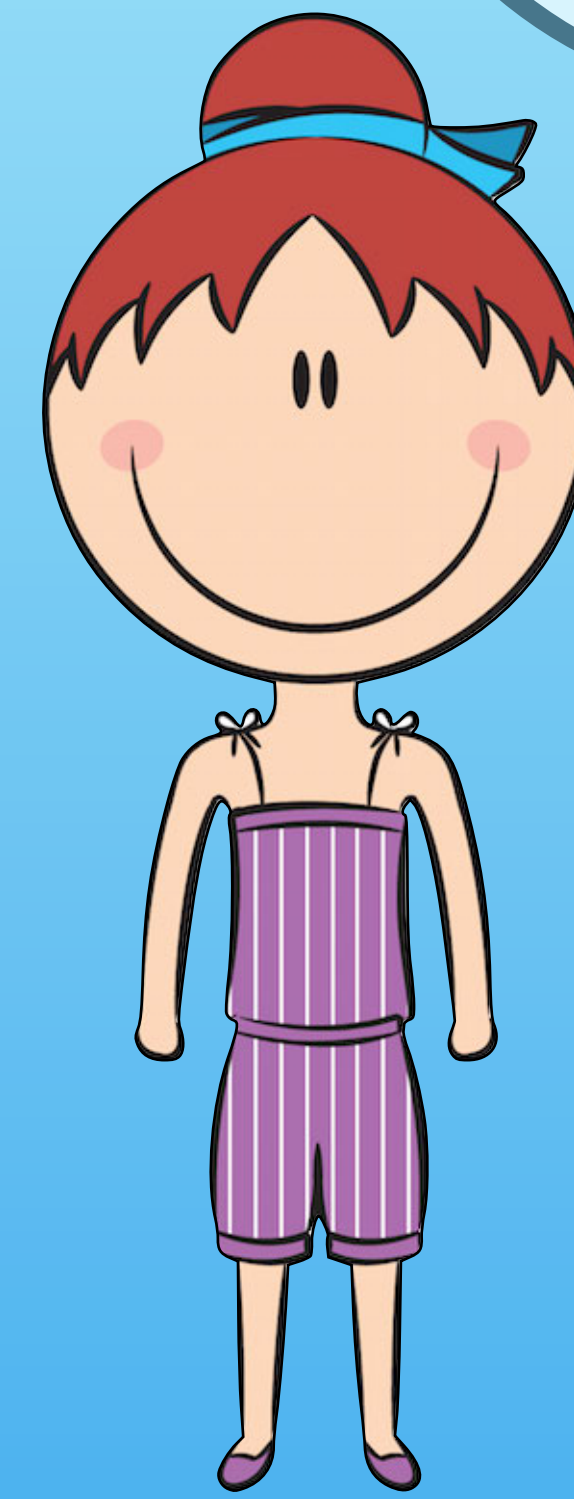
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Water

Rivers are important carriers of fresh water. They take the precipitation from the tops of the mountains and transport it through the land. Some rivers can be dammed to provide drinking water. Rivers play a very important part in the water cycle.



I wonder how many rivers there are on our planet. Could you make a guess?



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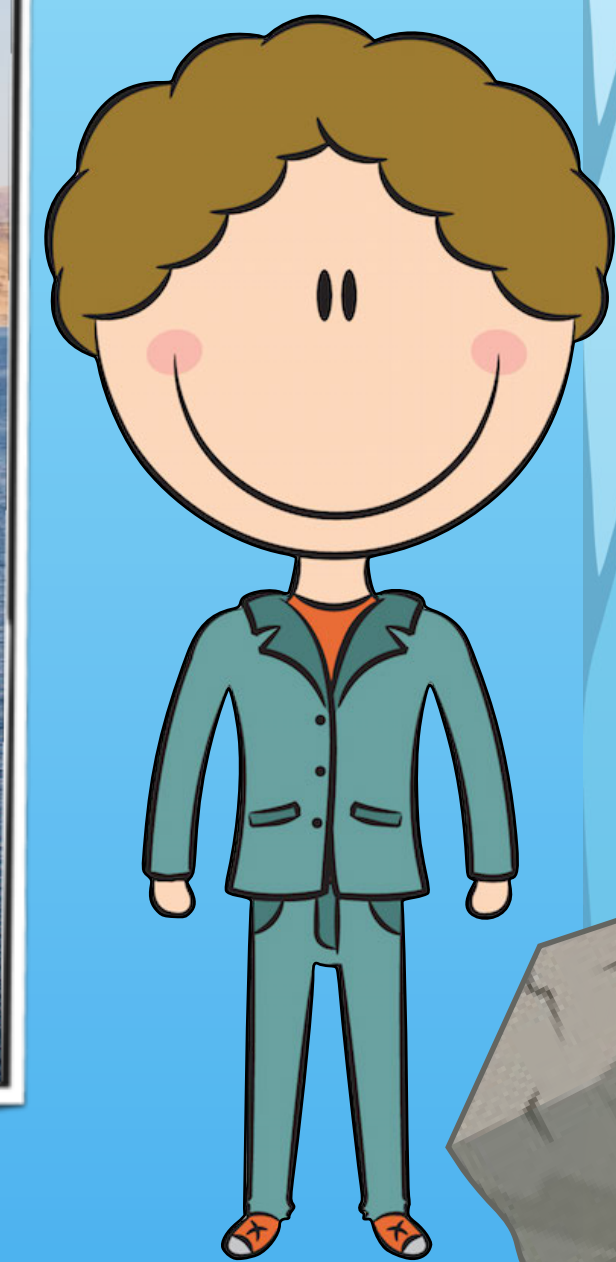
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Transport

Rivers have been used throughout history as a means of transportation. Before the days of cars and lorries, rivers were used for trade and the transportation of goods, and as a means of exploration. In some places in the world, rivers are still a vital part of life for merchants and traders.

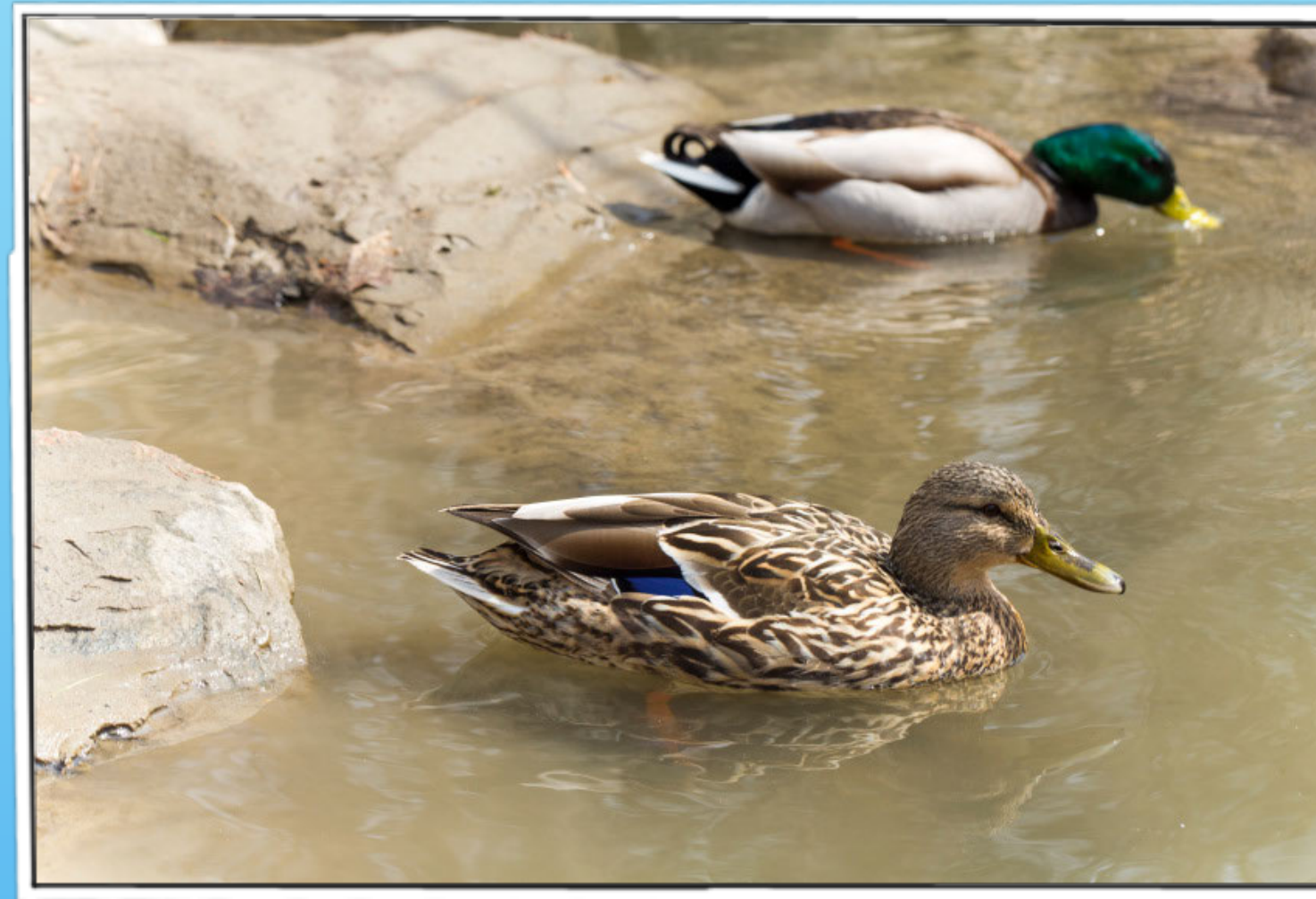


What is being transported here?



Habitats

Without rivers, there are many species of wildlife and plant life that simply would not be able to exist. Rivers provide homes for many different animals such as otters, fish and ducks, and many other species rely on rivers to provide water and food. How many different animals can you think of that depend on rivers for their survival?



What do you think these animals eat?



Energy

Water energy is one of the oldest forms of renewable energy. It was used thousands of years ago for turning water mills. The fast-flowing water turned the mills which enabled machines to grind flour, for example.

Today, water energy is generally used on a larger scale but still in the same way. Hydro-power plants can create a great deal of electricity.



How do
water
turbines
work?



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Farming

In areas where there is little rain, rivers are crucial to farms. Water from the rivers can be directed to the fields where it is needed using irrigation systems. These systems channel water to the crops. Without this water, crops would not grow and farmers would not be able to make their living. Farmers have been using irrigation systems for thousands of years.



Leisure

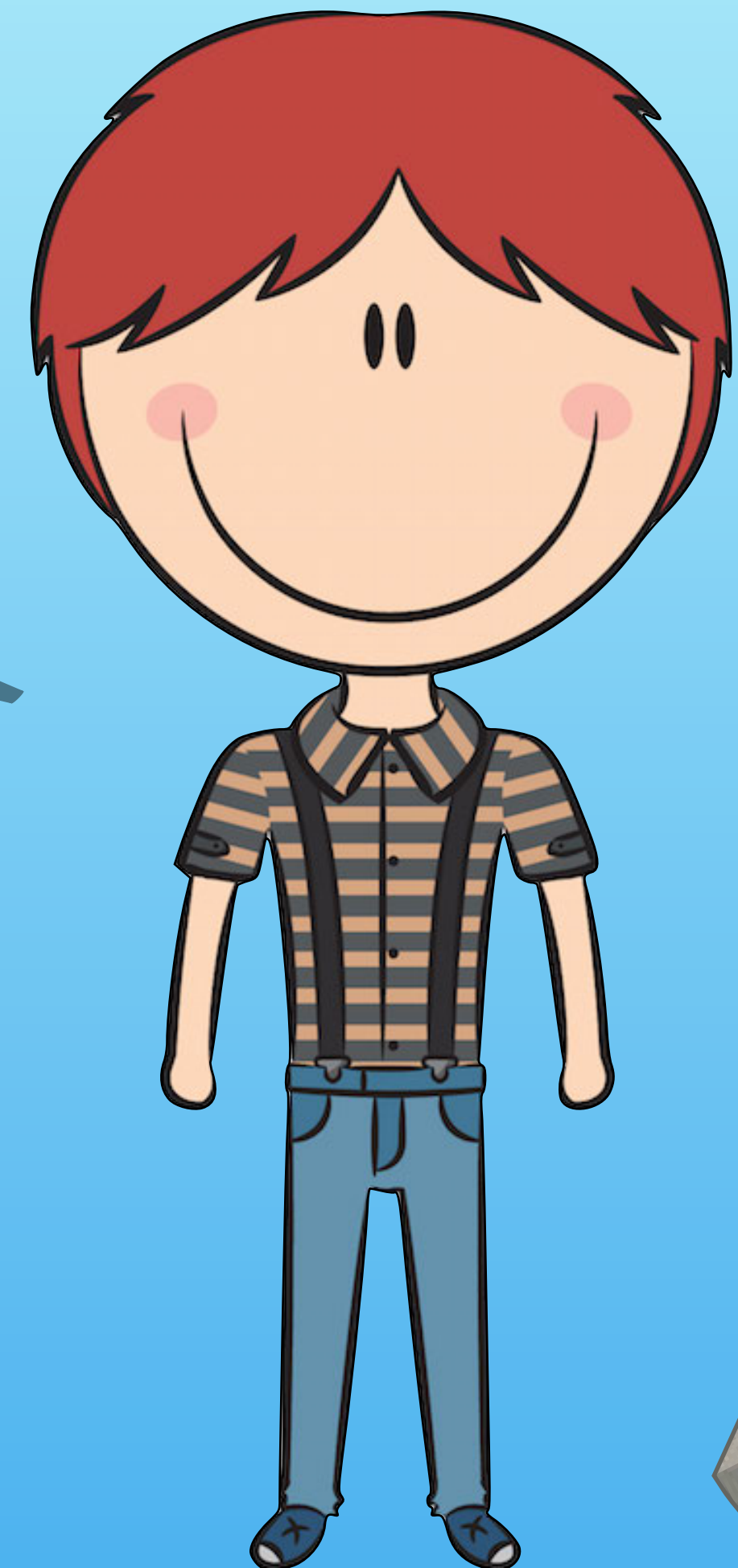
Rivers are used across the world for all kinds of water sports and other fun activities. People enjoy sailing, water-skiing and swimming in rivers, as well as activities such as fishing. Often, the countryside around rivers in rural areas can be very beautiful and many people enjoy painting river scenes or just taking in the view!



Have you participated in any river activities?



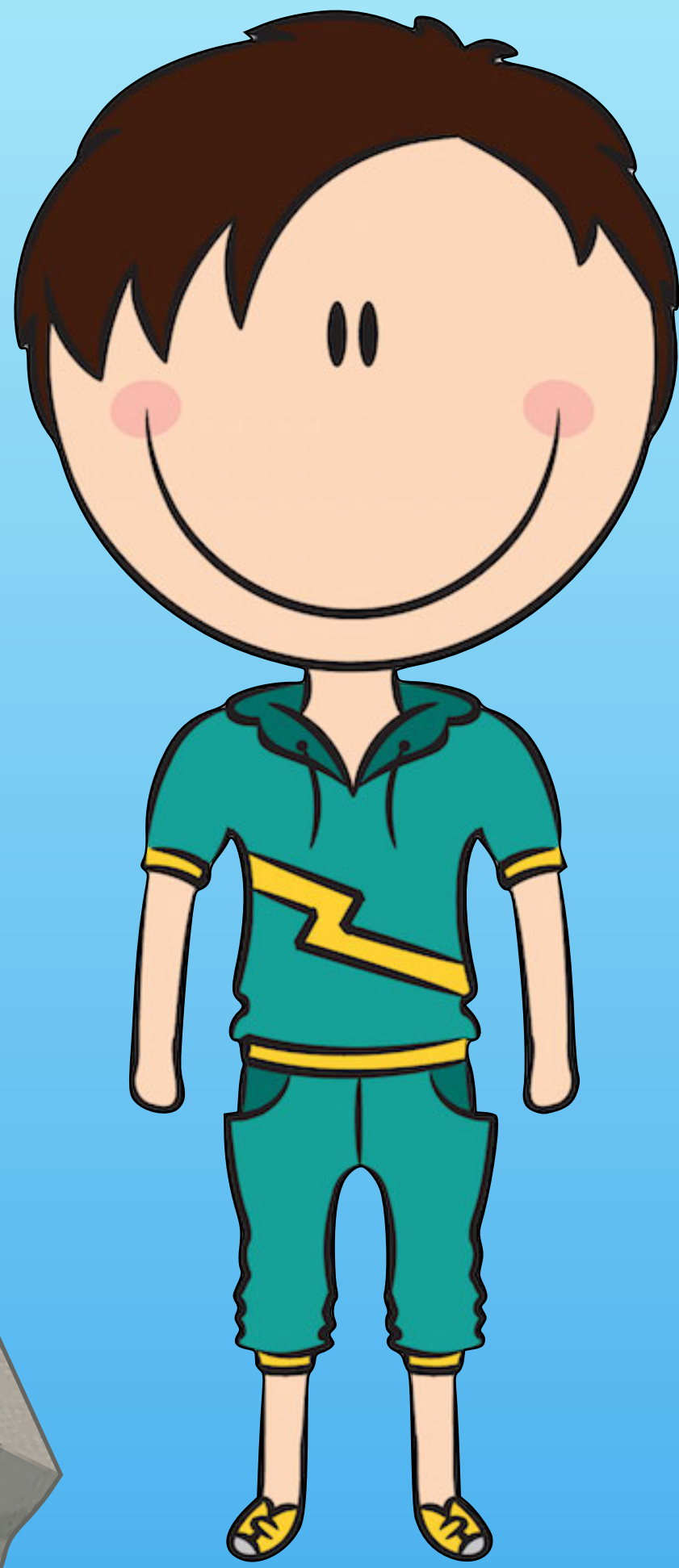
What
river is close to
where you live?
What is it used
for?



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Did you know that the River Thames is an important river in England. Do you live near this river?



The River Thames is used to transport over five million tonnes of materials every year.

The river is often used for leisure activities such as rowing races (Oxford vs Cambridge boat race), sailing and canoeing.

Many different bird and fish species live in and along the river. The muddy banks provide a great habitat for particular birds.

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What
would happen if we didn't
have rivers?

Which of these
uses do you think is most
important?

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Today, you will be researching some of these river uses discussed on the slides. How will you find out more information?

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