

Looking at North America and water

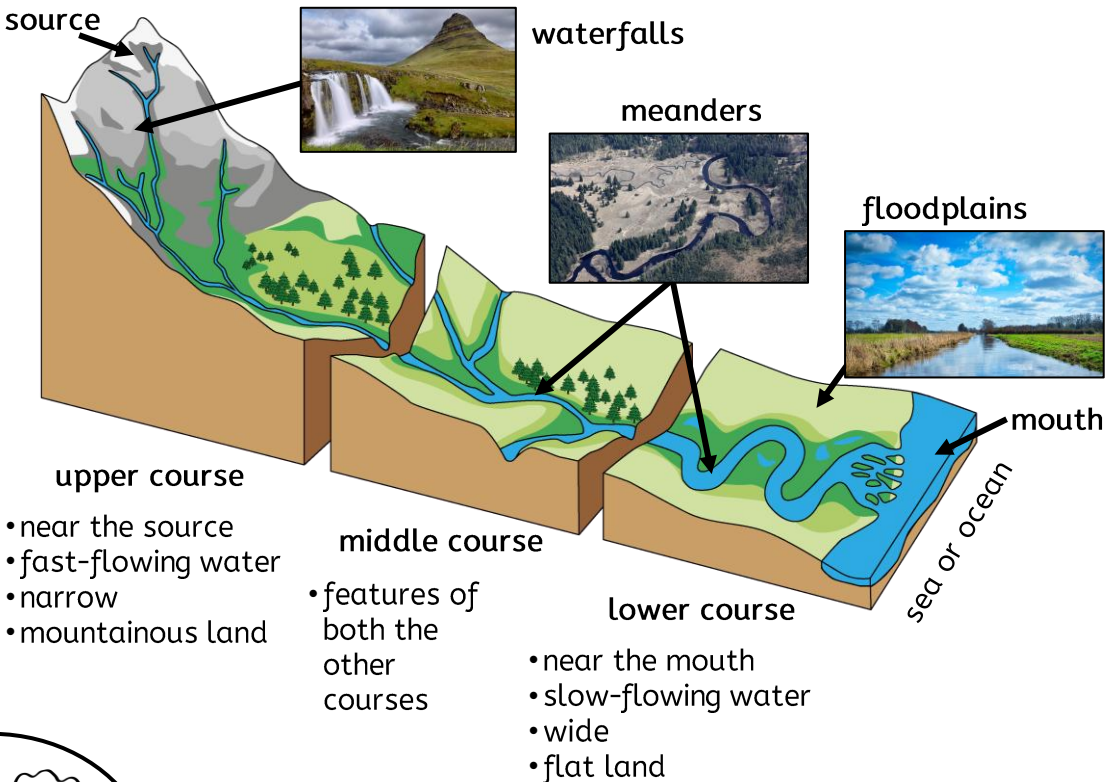
The importance of water

There is a fixed amount of water on our planet and we use it for lots of things, from drinking and washing to producing foods and goods.

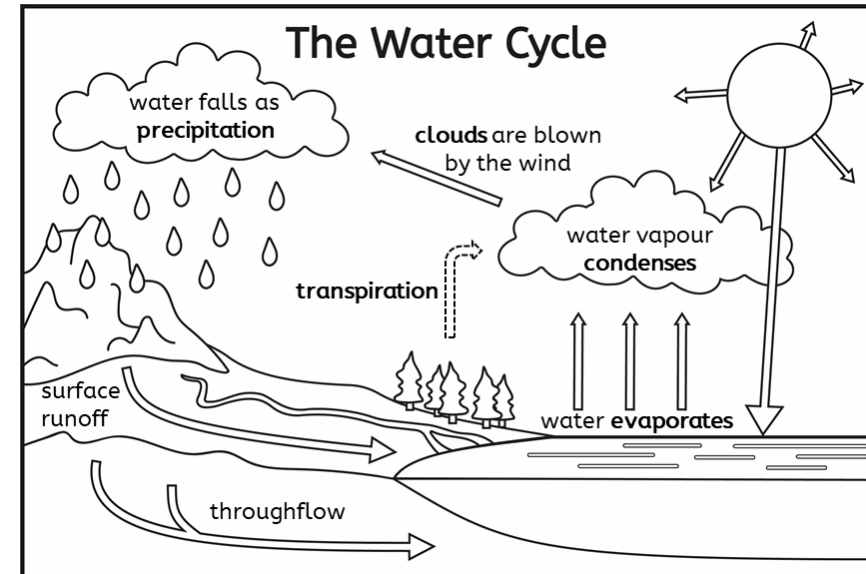
Most of the water on the Earth is **saltwater**, stored in oceans and seas.

The **freshwater** that we have is mostly stored as ice or underground.

Rivers



The water cycle



Key vocabulary

- **erode** (verb): to gradually wear away
- **floodplain** (noun): the flat land either side of a river in the lower course. When the river floods, it deposits nutrients, so this is land that is very good for agriculture
- **meander** (noun): bend in a river, usually in the middle and lower courses, caused by gradual erosion
- **surface runoff** (noun): the flow of water on the Earth's surface. It is faster than throughflow
- **throughflow** (noun): the flow of water underground, beneath the Earth's surface. It is slower than surface runoff
- **transpiration** (noun): the evaporation of water from the soil through plants' and trees' leaves