



River Landscapes: Upper, Middle & Lower Course Part 1. Lesson Plan and Teachers Notes

This GCSE / Key Stage 4 River Landscapes package is designed to support all major examination boards, including OCR, Edexcel, and AQA. However, some content included may not apply to every specification. **Teachers must ensure they follow the requirements of their own exam board's specification when delivering lessons.**

The lessons can be worked through at any pace, and can be split into multiple lessons if needed. This flexibility allows you to adjust the flow based on the class's understanding and time constraints. If some sections require more in-depth exploration, feel free to extend them over additional lessons to ensure students fully grasp the concepts before moving on.

The worksheets can be used in-class or as homework, depending on the pace of the lesson.

Lesson Objectives:

- Understand the physical characteristics of the upper, middle and lower course of a river
- Describe the fluvial (river) landforms found in the upper course
- Explain how fluvial (river) landforms are formed in the upper course

Assumed Prior Knowledge:

At GCSE level, students may have already explored the upper, middle and lower course of a river. Some students may have existing knowledge about fluvial (river) landforms and may be able to state which point in the course they could be found. This lesson will explore these landforms and the formation of them. This lesson has been split into two parts, with part 1 covering landforms in the upper course and part 2 covering landforms in the middle and lower course.

Resources:

- Worksheets
- YouTube videos

Notes for each slide:

Teachers should decide what information students record into their workbooks.

Slide 1:

- Read through the learning objectives so students are aware of what they will be learning through this lesson.

Slides 2 - 4

- The cross profiles for the upper, middle and lower course are shown again here, alongside additional information about the characteristics of each one. Characteristics include: gradient, valley shape, discharge, load and shape of channel. If any of these terms are unfamiliar to the class, take extra time on these slides.



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Slide 5:

- The Bradshaw model is a visual way of showing how the features of a river change upstream (the source) to downstream (the mouth). It shows several features which either increase or decrease. This model can be an effective way to understand how different features interact with each other throughout the course.

Slide 6:

- Play the YouTube video (https://www.youtube.com/shorts/oB7pl_rQ7S4) which discusses the features of the Bradshaw model.

Slide 7:

- The following slides explore landforms found in the upper course. Talk through this slide with the class so they understand that landforms are created due to erosion and deposition, however it is the type of erosion which creates the different landforms.

Slides 8-17:

- These slides talk through the process which v-shaped valleys, interlocking spurs, waterfalls and gorges are formed. Written on each slide is how they're formed, a diagram showing the formation and example images.

Slide 18:

- Play the YouTube video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1u4Tgf6wATQ>) which recaps the formation of each of these landforms.

Slide 19:

- As a final activity, this slide shows images of all four landforms covered this lesson. Ask students if they can correctly name each one.

Slide 20:

- These practice questions can be completed in class time or as homework, depending on the class ability. If required, a discussion can be held about each question to generate some guidance.