

River Great Ouse: field trip hints

We recommend the Royal Geographical Society resources which include “What are the features of a local river?” and can be found here:

<https://www.rgs.org/schools/resources-for-schools/primary-fieldwork->

1. Much of the River Great Ouse does not have access to its banks and flows through privately owned land. It is important to check access and seek permission from landowners if appropriate. Public footpaths and bridle paths can be used but they do not give the right to occupy the land adjacent to the right of way. For example, it may not be appropriate to sit large groups down for a packed lunch next to a footpath.
2. As with all educational visits, clarity about the purpose of the visit is essential. This will help organisers to select a suitable stretch of the river and prepare resources.
3. A thorough risk assessment is, of course, essential. Ratios for adult to learner supervision must be more generous for activities near water. A recent site visit is also important because conditions near the river can change significantly.
4. Pre-teaching of key vocabulary, terminology and language structures is very valuable. Using photographs of what the learners will see, as well as sentence frames, can help. Studying maps and any available GIS, Streetview (where roads cross or run adjacent to the river) is also useful. Important language structures might include those of description, comparison, explanation or other functions depending on the focus of the learning experience. Speaking and writing frames can be helpful for this. Examples hosted by The Bell Foundation can be found here <https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/resources/great-ideas/speaking-and-writing-frames/> By registering for a free account with the Bell Foundation, and searching in “Learning resources” for “Rivers,” material for learning about river landscapes in the UK can be downloaded.
5. Through Earth Watch <https://earthwatch.org.uk/> organisations and individuals may choose to become part of their Citizen Science initiative. Toolkits can be provided and testing water samples for in various ways can be part of a river field trip <https://earthwatch.org.uk/program/freshwater-watch-in-the-uk/> Other learning resources relating to rivers are available <https://earthwatch.org.uk/project/probleu/> <https://probleu.pml.space/en/bundle/103/>