

Riverkeeper activity 2 **Help a river**

**Age
range:**
7-11

Duration:
Approx
80 minutes

Aim

For pupils to learn about conservation projects that benefit wildlife of rivers.

Learning objectives

Pupils should learn:

- Why rivers need conservation
- About the kind of conservation work carried out on UK rivers
- How volunteer groups attract members



Curriculum links

England

- National Curriculum Science: Sc2 5a, 5b
- Geography: 2a, 3a, 6c
- Citizenship: 2h

Wales

- Science: Skills – 'Communication' 2;
Range – 'Interdependence of organisms' 4, 5, 6, 7,
'The sustainable earth' 6

Materials and equipment

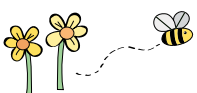
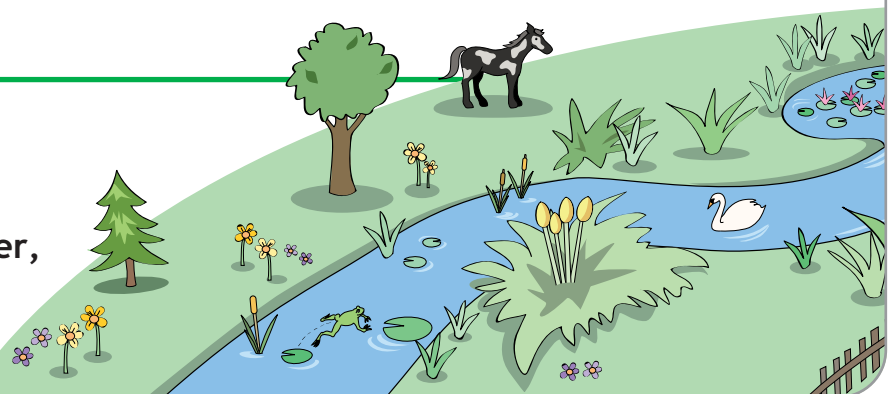
- Rough books or jotters
- A4 paper
- Computers
- Copies of Worksheet Ri2 (one per pupil if required – see below)

Preparation

Pupils should have watched the Riverkeeper video on the Countryside Investigators website and seen how to access the facts page about riverkeepers.

Key vocabulary

riverkeeper, wildlife,
conservation, volunteer, poster,
monitor, stabilise, gravel



Running the activity

a) Introduction:

Go to **Country estate > Riverkeeper** and show pupils the **Riverkeeper video**. Direct pupils to **Country estate > Riverkeeper** to read some of the information about riverkeepers. Talk briefly about some of the conservation jobs that riverkeepers do. Why do rivers need looking after? Riverkeepers make sure that fish and other wildlife can thrive, but what are the threats to these things? Make a list, which might include:

- Pollution
- Floods
- Drought
- Erosion
- Water being removed by water companies
- Man-made structures such as weirs and bridges

b) Explain:

Riverkeepers can help to keep rivers healthy, but who else might do it? Explain that there are volunteer conservation groups around the country that help to look after rivers, creating better conditions for wildlife. Discuss how these groups recruit volunteers. One way is through posters. **The task for pupils is to make a poster asking for volunteers for a river conservation project.**

c) Worksheet:

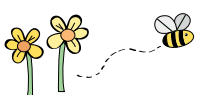
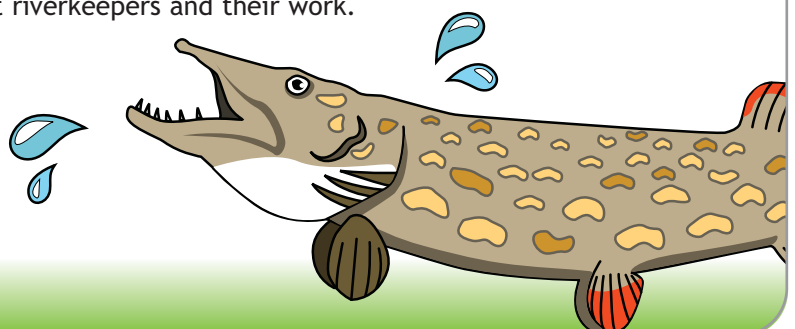
Worksheet Ri2 will help the pupils to learn about some of the work that these groups do. Briefly ensure that the pupils understand these tasks and then give them each a piece of A4 paper to make a poster. If computers are available then the posters will have a more 'professional' look.

Extension activities

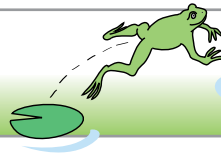
- 1 If possible, study a local river (visiting it if possible), finding out what kind of conservation work is carried out to protect it.
- 2 The posters can be displayed along with pupils' drawings or paintings of colourful river wildlife, such as kingfishers, otters, herons and dragonflies.
- 3 Read an extract from Henry Williamson's classic book *Tarka the Otter*, based on a Devon river.

Background information for teachers

Go to **Teachers > Useful links** to find out more about riverkeepers and their work.



Ri2: Help a river



You are going to make a poster for a country river conservation group. The group is made up of volunteers who look after the River Dove. The work they do is to encourage wildlife, particularly fish and plants.

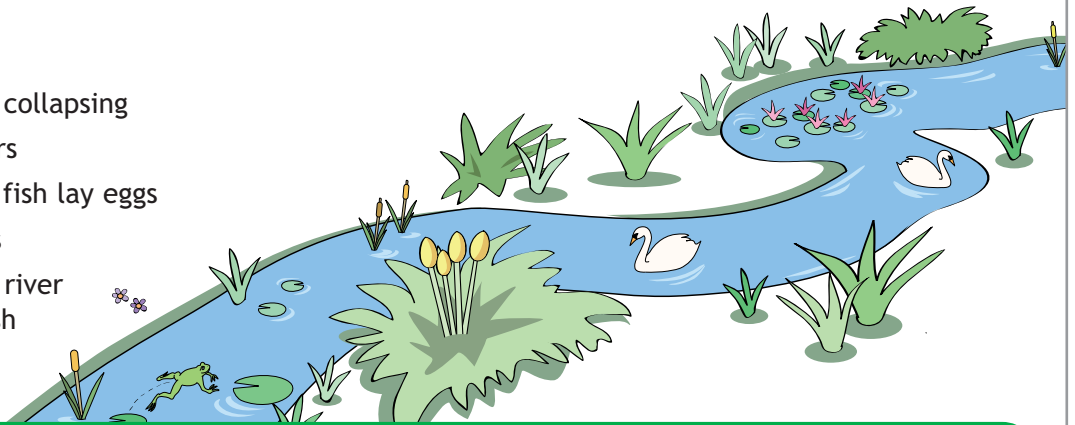
The poster is aimed at trying to find more volunteers for the group. It will need to include the following things:

- The name of the group (e.g. Dove Conservation Volunteers)
- A message to say that volunteers are wanted
- Some details about what the group does and why
- Some illustrations

Keep the message clear and use as little text as possible.

Here is a list of jobs that river conservation volunteers do:

- Remove rubbish
- Plant water weeds
- Stop river banks from collapsing
- Check wildlife numbers
- Loosen gravel to help fish lay eggs
- Check animal habitats
- Put branches into the river to help insects and fish



Answer these questions:

1. What will your group be called?

2. Will your poster have a catch phrase?

3. What illustrations will you use?

4. Which three or four tasks will you mention?

On the back

Sketch out your poster design in rough.

