

The River Mersey



Aim

- To learn about the River Mersey.

Success Criteria

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- I can describe the route of the River Mersey.
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River Mersey Facts

The River Mersey is 112km long (70 miles).

Mersey means 'boundary river' in Anglo-Saxon. For centuries, the river formed part of the boundary between Lancashire and Cheshire.

Many British Hindus consider the river to be sacred.



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Where Is the River Mersey?



The Course of the River Mersey

The river is formed from three tributaries: the River Etherow (a tributary of the River Goyt), the River Goyt and the River Tame, which flows through Greater Manchester.

The river starts at the confluence of the [River Tame](#) and [River Goyt](#) in [Stockport](#), flowing through south Manchester, between [Urmston](#) and [Sale](#), towards [Warrington](#). Here it widens, before narrowing, as it passes by [Runcorn](#) and [Widnes](#).

From Runcorn, the river widens into a large estuary near [Ellesmere Port](#). The Mersey finishes at [Liverpool Bay](#), flowing into the [Irish Sea](#).

The Course



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Stockport

The River Goyt, which begins as a trickle high up in the Derbyshire hills, and the River Tame, which begins in Denshaw, Greater Manchester, merge together in Stockport to form the River Mersey. Stockport is a large town in Greater Manchester.

Stockport's first silk mill was opened on the River Mersey in the 1730s. This was the first water-powered textile mill in the north-west of the country.

Around 100 years later, the Stockport Viaduct was built. Made up of 27 arches, it carries the mainline railways over the River Mersey.

The main shopping street in Stockport has been built above the river.

Stockport

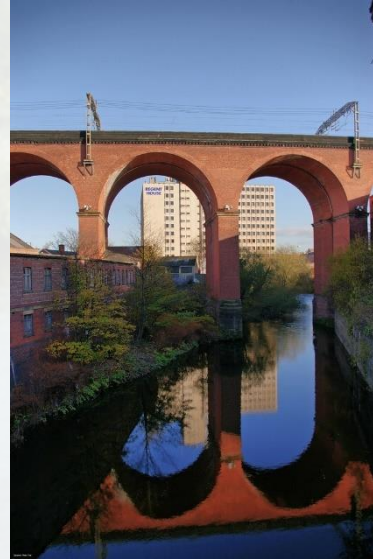


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Urmston and Sale

Urmston and Sale are towns in Trafford, Greater Manchester.

The southern boundary of Urmston is the River Mersey, which sits within a flood plain.

The River Mersey runs north of Sale. Sale Water Park is an emergency flood basin.



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Sale Water Park

Sale Water Park is an area of countryside and parkland with an artificial lake. It provides wildlife reserves as well as forming part of the flood defences for the surrounding area. If the River Mersey was to rise too high, the weir can be opened, allowing water to flow into the park.



Until 2013, Trafford Water Sports Centre was located at the edge of the lake, providing facilities for sporting activities, as well as restaurants. The lake is currently used by the local water skiing club.

Anglers also use the lake as it contains a wide variety of fresh water fish.

Irlam

Irlam, Greater Manchester, is located on the north bank of the Manchester Ship Canal.

The canal was finished in 1893 and gave direct access to Manchester from the Irish Sea. Today, the canal isn't big enough for many modern day vessels and is used less.

Irlam is where the River Mersey and Manchester Ship Canal meet, before flowing alongside each other. The two meet again at Eastham Locks, near Liverpool.



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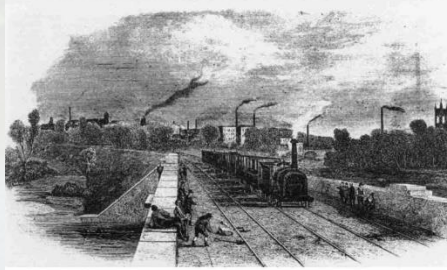
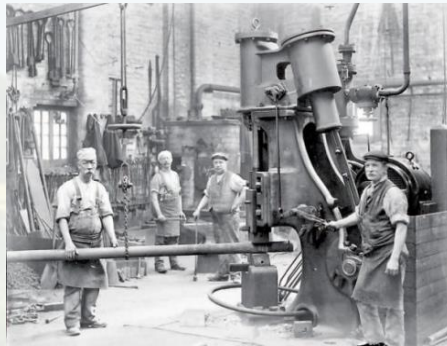
Warrington

Warrington is a town in Cheshire. It is situated on the banks of the River Mersey, almost 30km from Liverpool. The river runs through the centre of the town and has a long history.

Warrington was first founded by the Romans as an important crossing place on the River Mersey. Archaeologists have also found evidence of Bronze Age settlement here.

The Battle of Warrington Bridge took place here in 1651, between the invading Royalist Scottish Army of Charles II and the parliamentary forces.

Warrington



WARRINGTON.

During the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th century, Warrington was an industrial centre. The navigational properties of the River Mersey were improved and canals were built, helping the town grow in prosperity.

Today, old manufacturing industries, such as textiles and pin manufacturing, have declined, but retail flourishes.

Warrington Rowing Club makes full use of the river.

Runcorn and Widnes

Located in Cheshire, Runcorn is a cargo port and industrial town next to the River Mersey. The narrow gap between Widnes and Runcorn is known as The Runcorn Gap, which is crossed by the Runcorn Railway Bridge and the Silver Jubilee Bridge.

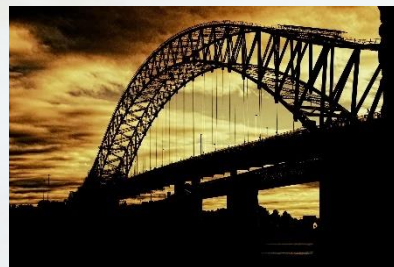


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Widnes

Widnes is a major chemical manufacturing town on the bank of the River Mersey, located directly across from Runcorn.

In 2014, work began on the new Mersey Gateway, a new toll bridge over the River Mersey which will help with congestion.

In Widnes, there is a walk way alongside a section of the river.



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River Recreation

Liverpool Sailing Club is located on the north bank of the River Mersey, near Liverpool.

Angling is popular at certain stretches along the river.

The river is rich in carp, trout, bream and dace.



carp



bream



dace

Liverpool

The Mersey Ferry

This is a ferry service running on the River Mersey which has become a major tourist attraction. It runs between Liverpool and Birkenhead/Wallasey. Ferries have been used here since the 12th century.

‘Ferry Cross the Mersey’ is a famous song from 1964.



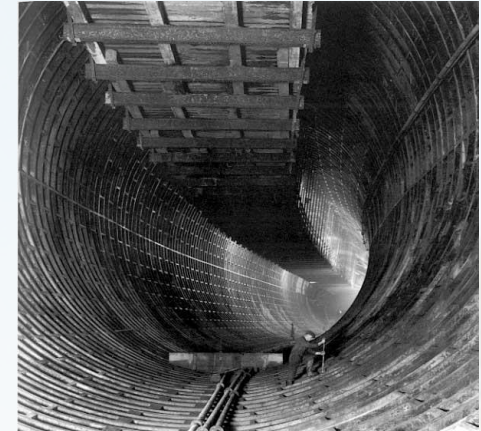
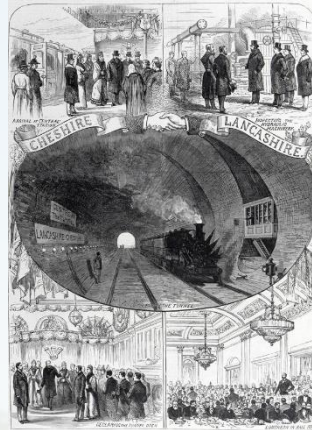
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Liverpool

The Mersey Railway Tunnel

In order to connect Liverpool and Birkenhead at opposite banks of the River Mersey, the Mersey Railway Tunnel was opened 1886 but went bankrupt in 1900.

The line adopted electric traction a few years later, which allowed it to remain working until 1948 when Mersey Railway was nationalised. The tunnels are still used today as part of the Wirral Line.



Liverpool

The Queensway and Kingsway Tunnels

These two road tunnels pass under the estuary. The Queensway Tunnel, also known as the Birkenhead Tunnel, opened in 1934 connecting Liverpool to Birkenhead. The Kingsway opened in 1971, connecting the city with Wallasey.



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Liverpool Bay

The River Mersey flows past Liverpool and empties into Liverpool Bay, on the Irish Sea. Four other rivers drain into the bay: the Alt, Ribble, Dee and Clwyd.



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Pollution and the River Mersey

The Industrial Revolution severely affected the quality of the water in the River Mersey. In the 1980s, a campaign began to improve the water quality.

In 2009, it was announced that the river was the cleanest it had been since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution.

Salmon have returned to the river and Atlantic grey seals, bottlenose dolphins and harbour porpoise have all been seen in the estuary.

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