


# What is a River?

**A** RIVER IS A MOVING BODY OF WATER that flows toward an ocean, lake, or another river. The place where a river starts is called a **source**. Rivers usually flow out from a spring, snow melt or lake. Rivers flow, sometimes for miles, until they reach their **mouth**, or the place where it joins another body of water. The land surrounding a river is called a **bank**, and the bottom of it is called a **bed**. A **channel** is an area that contains flowing water confined by banks, usually a groove in the land that a river flows along. At the mouth of a river there is usually a **delta**, or a flat area of silt surrounding the area where the river branches off. Most rivers have **tributaries**, or other rivers that branch off from it. The place where two rivers meet is called a **confluence**.

Rivers are important to us. They give us food and water, and make it easier for us to transport goods. Rivers can provide easy borders for states and territories, and provide protection.

 Label the different parts of a river on the two illustrations.

