

# River speed

30-45 mins



## Activity guide:

### Equipment required:

- Clipboards
- Stopwatches
- Biodegradable paint (optional)
- Water safety equipment - throw line and buoyancy aid

### **Before arriving at the river:**

1. Introduce rivers as a means of spreading invasive species throughout countries. This activity demonstrates how fast that can happen.
2. Scout out a location that offers good safe positions to start and end the race where the river is easily seen. Bridges make this a lot easier.

### **At the river:**

1. River safety explained. Class search the area to collect sticks of similar shapes and sizes. The children measure a distance of 10m or 20m downstream. This is the recording point.
2. Spilt the class into two groups. One half of the children start upstream (preferably on a bridge).
3. The other half of the children go to the downstream recording point with stopwatches. Teacher does a countdown, the sticks are dropped into the water and the stopwatches started.
4. The stopwatches are stopped as soon as the sticks pass the children. The groups keep swapping and the experiment is repeated several times. Biodegradable paints could be used to colour code the sticks and the class divided into teams with each team only measuring their colour.
5. **This can be done in the classroom:** The average times are worked out from all the runs. The children could then use this information to work out how long things would take to travel from certain towns down to the sea or from one town to the next etc. The distances could either be supplied to the class or groups could use maps to measure the distances for themselves.