

# River-Nama



*IETS Publications*



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## 1 Chapter

The Geography teacher of Fun Learn School walked into Std. VIIC waving a cutting from the Creative Chronicle and announced, "Your class has been selected by the Principal to participate in a Geography competition. Here, read this."



### CREATIVE CHRONICLE THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER FOR STUDENTS ANNOUNCES ITS ANNUAL GEOGRAPHY PROJECT COMPETITION RULES FOR PARTICIPATION

- The school that decides to participate should inform the CC of the number of participating groups
- Each group must comprise five students of the same class
- The CC will send its representative to the school on a fixed day with:
  - Sealed envelopes with clues and instructions for each group
  - Research material that is for the students to use to complete their work (Note: No other material is permissible)
- Three hours should be given to the groups to complete their project
- School teachers are not to be present in the work area
- Each group will have ten minutes to present their work
- The results of the best school will be announced in the CC next month

Very soon the class was divided into enthusiastic groups. The children were participating in an inter-school geography competition for the first time and were extremely excited. A week later, the CC representative assembled the groups in the school hall. She handed each group a sealed envelope and a pile of reference material.

On the dot of ten, the children opened their envelopes. The envelopes contained some clues. The children had to use the clues to guess the name of a river! Then, within three hours they were to make presentations on their river. Soon, the hall was buzzing. Students discussed, read, wrote, rehearsed and were finally ready to present.

**Three hours later...**



With the help of their atlas and reference material, the first group soon figured out that their Riddle River was... can you guess? Yes, the Nile in Africa. This group decided to make their project an autobiography. This is what they drew, wrote and presented.

## My Autobiography



Usually autobiographies are written by people who want to share their wisdom and learning with others. Well! I am neither a person (though I am a living system that supports and makes life possible for many people) nor am I going to share my wisdom with you. I am writing in order to correct some wrong ideas about me that seem to be floating around.

Much has already been written about me. Most people who know anything about the Nile (that is me) know the following: I am the longest river on Earth (6,671 km long). Egypt is known as the Gift of the Nile, as I have made this dry land so fertile that a civilisation came up here along my banks as far back as 3000 B.C. Even today, 95% of Egyptians live along my banks.

Now, I want people to know about things not known to many. Take, for instance, my family tree. Not many know that the Nile is really a coming together of many rivers.

I start as Kyoga river in Burundi, close to Lake Tanganyika, which becomes the White Nile as it flows through Lake Victoria in Uganda. I am then joined by the Blue Nile at Khartoum. The Blue Nile provides about 60% of my waters.



There are many other smaller rivers like River Atbareh that feed into me and I would be much drier if it were not for them. Like all families, every member is important and my family would not be the same without any one of my members. I feel bad when I hear people blaming me for my habit of flooding. What they do not realise is that every flood increases the fertility of the soil. Each summer, I swell as the rain pours down and the snow melts on the mountains. I overflow my banks and flood the land with fresh water and deposit a thick layer of rich, alluvial soil. Ancient Egyptians valued my moods and their calendar had three seasons: *akhet* or inundation, *peret* or the growing season and *shemu*, the drought or harvest season. The *fellahin* (Egyptian farmers) can now yield two harvests before winter. Without the floods there would be little or no cultivation in this otherwise dry and desert-like place. I do not flood as much as before and this may not be such a good thing, as it means I do not have as much water as before.

I flow from the mountains in the south to the Mediterranean in the north. Like all rivers, I flow downhill till I reach the sea. I know you think that since I am the longest river, with such a great history, I should not feel bad about these small errors, but I do think it is my duty to correct wrong notions, that is why I wrote this for you.

*Everybody gave the Nile group a rousing applause. Some even started dreaming of taking a cruise on the Nile.*



Map of Africa displaying the course of the River Nile

Khartoum is the place where the Blue Nile and White Nile meet.

# 3

Chapter

The second group figured out their Riddle River in a flash and chorused, "Of course, it is the Amazon River!" They made their project a lyrical presentation which they recited with gusto. Colourful posters added to the charm.

## The Amazon Song

From the Andes to the Atlantic Ocean  
It flows 6,437 kilometres long  
The second longest river on Earth  
It is the Amazon

Its discharge into the ocean  
In just a minute is so strong  
It could give New York City water for  
60 years  
It is the Amazon

Man has not been able to build  
A bridge that is so long  
A river too wide for a man made bridge  
It is the Amazon

With its 1100 tributaries  
The water flow is so strong  
It contains a fifth of the Earth's fresh water  
It is the Amazon

The world's largest rainforest it supports  
Where varied plants and creatures throng  
Many plants heal our sick and ailing  
We have to save the Amazon



Known as the heart and lungs of Mother Earth  
This place has been around  
For centuries together  
We have to save the Amazon

Today the rainforests are being cut  
And the habitat is fast being shorn  
Posing a danger to the Planet itself  
We have to save the Amazon

An old legend of this area says  
Rainforests hold up the sky, cut down  
The trees and disaster will follow  
We have to save the Amazon

The river and the forests help  
Each other stay upright and strong  
It is a cry for survival  
We have to save the Amazon



### SAVE THE RAINFORESTS

The Rainforests are under constant threat from man, yet they continue to safeguard our existence on this planet. The Rainforests are critical for maintaining the environmental balance within the ecosystem, to avert global warming and climatic changes. Our planet's future depends upon the balance of the elements on the earth. Man must stop upsetting this balance! Let's save them and us! SIGN NOW!!!!

The group followed up this recitation with a petition, hoping that they would be able to help in averting the earth shattering disaster that awaits us, if the rainforests are destroyed. They gathered over 100 signatures in ten minutes! The CC representative assured the children that she would send the petition to organisations that are striving to save the rainforests. Suddenly, geography was coming alive for the class. They had never imagined that knowledge about geography could make such a difference to their own lives!



Map of South Africa showing the River Amazon and its Tributaries.

Two important branches of the Amazon meet near Manaus. They are River Negro from the north and Madeira from the south.