EAL activities

Jigsaw reading

Jigsaw cards

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| **Oxbow lakes**  Oxbow lakes are the result of erosion and deposition. Lateral erosion, caused by the fast flow in the meanders, is concentrated on the outer, deeper bank. During times of flooding, erosion increases. The river breaks through and creates a new steeper channel. In time, the old meander is closed off by deposition to form an oxbow lake. |
| **River terraces**  The area covered by water when a river floods is known as its floodplain. When a river’s discharge exceeds the capacity of the channel, water rises over the river banks and floods the surrounding low-lying area. Sometimes a floodplain will itself be eroded following a fall in sea level. When this happens, the remnants of the old floodplain are left behind as river terraces. These are useful for settlement as they are above the level of the floodplain and are free from flooding. |
| **Levées**  When a river floods its speed is reduced, slowed down by friction caused by contact with the floodplain. As its velocity is reduced, the river has to deposit some of its load. It drops the coarser, heavier material first to form raised banks, or levées, at the edge of the river. This means that over centuries the levées are built up of coarse material, such as sand and gravel, while the floodplain consists of fine silt and clay. |
| **Braided channels**  Braiding occurs when a river transports a very heavy load in relation to its velocity. If a river’s discharge falls, its competence and capacity are reduced. This forces the river to deposit large amounts of its load and multi-channels, or braided channels, are formed. Braiding is common in rivers that experience seasonal variations in discharge. For example, in proglacial and periglacial areas, such as southern Iceland, most of the discharge occurs in late spring and early summer, as snow and ice melts. This enables rivers to carry very large loads which are quickly deposited as discharge decreases. |