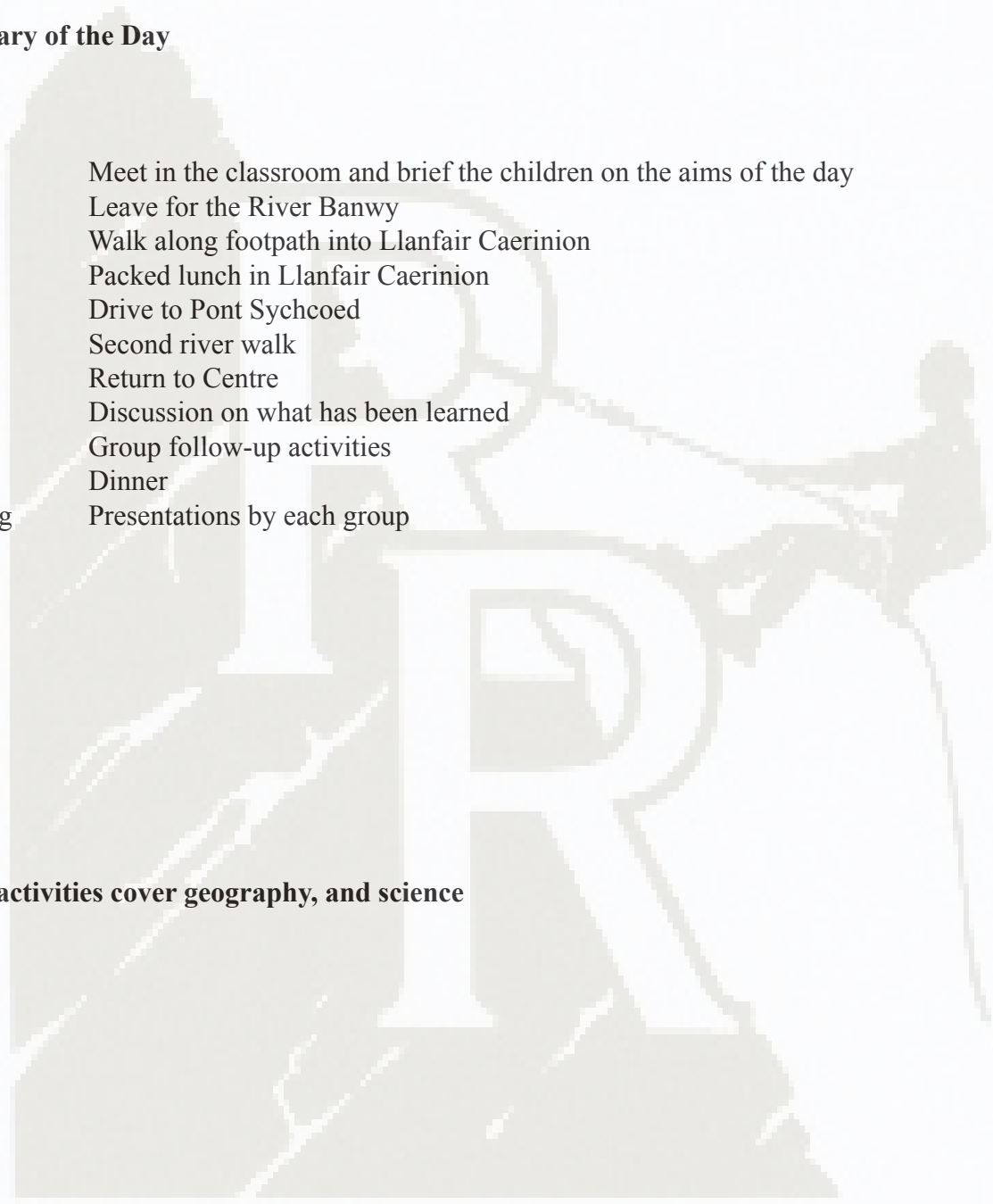


This is a one-day study of a 'middle-aged' river valley.

**Summary of the Day**



0900	Meet in the classroom and brief the children on the aims of the day
0930	Leave for the River Banwy Walk along footpath into Llanfair Caerinion
1230	Packed lunch in Llanfair Caerinion
1330	Drive to Pont Sychcoed Second river walk
1530	Return to Centre
1600	Discussion on what has been learned Group follow-up activities
1800	Dinner
Evening	Presentations by each group

**These activities cover geography, and science**

RED RIDGE

---

**Introduction**

This study could also be used as a contrast locality study and be taken as an additional to Unit 2 and/or an investigation into the locality of the school. The notes in Unit 2 should be read.

**Overview***The river*

The Afon Banwy (Mountain river) rises in the peat bogs of the hills to the west, flows into the Vyrnwy about two miles below Cyfronydd bridge, which in turn flows into the Severn.

The river contains trout, but is private fishing only. The distinctive red colour of the water is due to the peat that is in the water, carried from the hills.

*The plant and animal life*

The valley has Welsh poppy, dog roses, wild honeysuckle, yellow pimpernel and oak trees.

Game birds, especially pheasants, are easily spotted. Some are the tamer birds from the Powis Estate and some are wild ones from the wooded areas. If you stand still, the tamer birds may come quite close to you. You can easily identify the cock birds with their long tail feathers, from the smaller, lighter brown hen bird. You may also see buzzards, especially over the wooded areas, quite a few rabbits and squirrels. In the open fields and meadows you will hear the sound of curlews.

The curlew is Europe's largest wading bird and a common sight on moors and marshes (it's preferred nesting site). Easily identified by its long curved bill. Listen for its distinctive voice, a pure ringing 'cour-li' or 'crwee'.

*The history*

An old pack road follows the river. It is likely that Henry Tudor (later Henry VII) used this road on his way to Bosworth field in 1485 as this was the main east-west link. The A458 follows the direction of the Roman road and has been used for over 200 years, probably because it follows the contours and has fewer steep climbs. Roman horse harness made it impossible to pull carts up steep gradients,

There have been people in this area for thousands of years, as Iron and Bronze age settlements show. There are many black and white timber framed houses. Near Castle Caerinion a decisive battle between the Welsh and English took place, in 1295. The Earl of Warwick, fighting for the English King (Edward I) defeated the Welsh Prince Madoc at the battle of Maes Moydog. There was a castle at Castle Caerinion in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, but it no longer exists.

Llanfair Caerinion developed because it was a crossing/ford point on the Banwy and was a trading centre.

The Welshpool – Llanfair Light Railway was started in 1899 and the last train ran in 1956. The railway is now run on a charitable status and has been preserved. The railway receives over 27,000 visitors each year.

*The geography of the river*

The Afon Banwy is a middle-aged river. It is widening the valley by wearing back the sides. It does this by scouring and steepening the channel sides of the river itself, rain-wash and gullying, soil-creep, slumping, land-slides and avalanches, chemical weathering and leaching by ground water, removal of loose material by wind, and the general co-operation of incoming tributaries, which widen the main valley where they enter it.

The valley is being changed from a V shape to a U shape. The river is carving out and digging down into the floor of the valley.

Rivers and the landscape are constantly changing.

- Aims:**
- To study the main physical and human feature of the river valley;
  - To consider how localities may be similar and how they may differ;
  - To learn that rivers have sources, channels, tributaries and mouths;
  - To learn that rivers erode, transport and deposit materials producing particular landscape features;
  - To understand how the weather can affect the valley;
  - To understand about the way the valley is used and its effects upon man and mans' effect on the valley.

**Organisation** This is a one-day investigation, entailing two distinct walks. Transport will be required. The children should be split into small groups and should be aware that they need to gather data on the valley as they will have to make a five-minute presentation at the end of the day. The mini-bus will need to drop off at Point 1 and collect the group in Llanfair before driving them to Port Sychcoed on the A458.

**Resources**

- Copies of Pathfinder 887 Map
- Tape measures
- Stop watches
- Identification books
- Clip boards and paper/writing utensils
- Paper for rubbings and pressing/wax crayons
- Collecting bags

**Time** Whole day fieldwork

RED RIDGE

---

## Method:

1 In the classroom, a basic overview of the day is given. Children need to be informed about the geography and history of the valley and the tasks for the day. They should consider using:

- Simple sketch maps/drawings
- Observing and note taking;
- Rubbings;
- Pressings;
- Collecting;
- Measuring;
- Using tape measure to set up quadrants.

Organise children into groups of three or four to produce a joint report and presentation.

2 Drive along road to Llanfair Caerinion. Start to walk at (map ref.: 054088) Glyn. Follow the footpath to Coed-bychan, Tylissa to the picnic site in Deri Woods.

3 As the children walk down the hill to Llanfair Caeinion, observe the valley below and point out the main features. Consider why Llanfair Caerinion grew into a village and then a market town. Collect information.

4 When you meet the road (Llanerfyl to Llanfair) turn left and after a short distance turn right onto the footpath that goes parallel to the river.

Examine river valley and collect information.

5 Rejoin the mini-bus and drive to Pont Sychcoed on A458 (towards Welshpool) (map ref.: 078137)

6 Take lunch.

7 Take the gate by the lodge and follow the tarmac path, which parallels the river. Follow this footpath. The river develops a strong meander and this could be a good site for further work/information collecting, including timing the flow of the river, (see Unit 1 for guidance on how to do this) looking at quadrants of grass next to the river, etc.

8 At Brwyn there is a choice:

- a) return to mini-bus if group is tired;
- b) take right hand footpath up to Maesglyn. Turn right along road to the Glyn. Take footpath back down to the river. This route gives wonderful views over the valley and takes the children through woodland;
- c) continue ahead to Dewis-gwyn, take footpath to right. At fork, turn to right until you meet the road. Turn right along the road. Take footpath at Maesglyn back to Brwyn and river. This walk is quite steep but gives excellent views.

9 Return to Centre.

10 Debriefing on the day. Children prepare their joint report and presentation.

## National Curriculum References

Geography		1a, b 2a, b, c 3a, b 5c, d, e 9b 10a, b
Science	AT1	1b, c 2d 3c

Redridge8



RED RIDGE

---