



Watershed Lesson



In this lesson, children will learn about watersheds and the water cycle.

BACKGROUND:

A watershed is an area of land where precipitation (ex: rain or snow) collects and drains off into a common outlet, such as a river, bay, or ocean. Some of that water infiltrates into the ground and becomes groundwater. The water cycle describes how water evaporates (ex: goes from liquid to gas) from the surface of the Earth, rises into the atmosphere, cools and condenses into clouds, and then falls again to the surface as precipitation.

MATERIALS:

- Clear casserole dish
- Water
- Foil paper
- Toothpick
- Sponges
- Red washable marker (optional)
- Blue washable marker
- Spray bottle



PROCEDURE:

- Have a discussion as a family about where the water in rivers and streams goes.
- Place sponges in casserole dish. Then gently crumple foil paper and unfold. Make one end of the foil paper higher than the other to represent mountains. Place crumpled foil on top of casserole dish. Poke small holes with toothpick throughout watershed model to allow for infiltration. Use blue washable marker to make lines representing lakes and rivers. Spray water over watershed to mimic rain.
- Observe where water collects. When water settles, lift crumpled foil paper to see sponges below.

CONCLUSION:

Have a conversation to discuss what was observed throughout the experiment. To extend this lesson, add scattered red dots before spraying the water. The red dots will signify litter and then after spraying notice if the red dye got into any water sources. Discuss how you can take care of the Santa Ana Watershed as a family.



The City of San Bernardino Municipal Water Department has partnered with the Inland Empire Resource Conservation District to bring you a series of virtual lessons and activity write ups on water education and conservation.

