

Activity Title: Our Amazing Water Journey!

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to define a watershed in simple terms (the land that drains to a common body of water).
- Students will understand that water flows downhill.
- Students will be able to identify different parts of a watershed (hills, valleys, rivers, lakes/ponds).
- Students will begin to understand how actions on land can affect the water.

Materials:

- Large, shallow pan or plastic tub (representing a land area)
- Various materials to create "landforms": crumpled paper, small blocks, playdough, small rocks, leaves, twigs (representing hills, valleys, etc.)
- Spray bottle filled with water (representing rain)
- Blue food coloring (optional, to make the water more visible)
- Small cups or containers (representing lakes, ponds, or the ocean)
- Copies of a simple watershed drawing/template (see example below)
- Crayons or markers
- The book *All the Water in the World* by George Ella Lyon

Procedure:

Part 1: Reading and Introduction (15-20 minutes)

1. **Gather students:** Have your students sit in a circle.
2. **Introduce the book:** Show them the cover of *All the Water in the World* and briefly talk about what the book is about – the amazing journey of water.
3. **Read the story aloud:** Read the book with enthusiasm, pointing out the illustrations that show water in different places and forms.
4. **Discuss the story:** After reading, ask simple questions like:
 - "Where did the water travel in the story?"
 - "Did the water stay in one place?"
 - "What are some of the places water can be found?"
5. **Introduce the idea of a watershed:** Explain that all the land around a river or lake is like a big bowl, and when it rains, the water flows downhill into that river or lake. Tell them this "bowl" is called a *watershed*. You can use a simple analogy like a playground – all the rain on the playground eventually flows to the lowest spots.

Part 2: Building Our Own Watershed (25-30 minutes)

1. **Set up the "land":** In the large pan, have the students work together to create different landforms using the crumpled paper, blocks, playdough, rocks, leaves, and twigs. Encourage them to make hills and valleys.
2. **Add the "water":** Carefully pour a little bit of plain or slightly blue-tinted water into the pan at the "higher" areas (tops of the crumpled paper or blocks).
3. **Make it "rain":** Use the spray bottle to gently spray water over the landforms.
4. **Observe:** Ask the students to watch carefully where the water flows. Guide their observations with questions like:
 - "Where is the water going?"
 - "Is it flowing uphill or downhill?"
 - "Where does the water collect?" (Guide them to see it collecting in the lower areas, representing lakes or ponds, or flowing towards one side of the pan, representing a river leading to a larger body of water).
5. **Introduce the "collection points":** Place the small cups or containers in the lower areas where the water naturally collects. Explain that these represent lakes, ponds, or even the ocean where the water eventually flows.

Part 3: Drawing Our Watersheds (15-20 minutes)

1. **Distribute templates:** Give each student a copy of the simple watershed drawing/template. (A simple template could show a few rounded hills with arrows pointing downwards towards a central area that can be labeled "River" or "Lake").
2. **Label the parts:** Guide them to label the different parts of their watershed drawing (hills, valleys, river/lake).
3. **Color the water:** Have them use blue crayons or markers to show where the water would flow in their drawing. Encourage them to draw arrows to show the direction of water flow.
4. **Connect to the model:** Ask them to compare their drawing to the watershed they built in the pan. "Can you see the hills in your drawing? Where does the water go from the hills in your drawing? How is it like our model?"

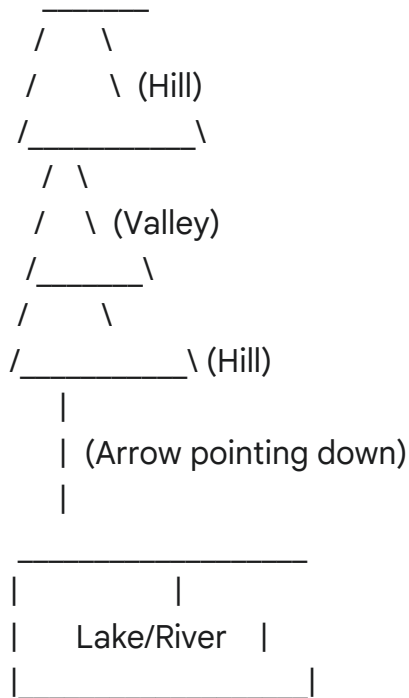
Part 4: Wrap-up and Discussion (10-15 minutes)

1. **Review:** Briefly revisit the book *All the Water in the World* and connect it to their watershed model and drawings.
2. **Discuss human impact (simple level):** Ask simple questions to introduce the idea that what happens on land can affect the water. For example:
 - "What if someone dropped a piece of trash on one of our hills? Where might

it go when it rains?"

- "If we planted lots of trees on our hills, do you think that would change how the water flows?" (Focus on the idea that plants can soak up some water).
3. **Reinforce the definition:** Remind them that the land that drains to a common body of water is called a watershed, and we all live in a watershed!

Simple Watershed Drawing/Template Example:



Differentiation:

- **For students who need more support:** Provide pre-drawn labels for the watershed parts or have them work in pairs for the building activity.
- **For students who are ready for more of a challenge:** Ask them to think about different types of pollution that could enter a watershed or how different land uses (like a farm or a park) might affect the water.

Assessment:

- Observe student participation during the building activity and discussions.
- Review their watershed drawings for understanding of water flow and the different parts of a watershed.
- Listen to their responses during the wrap-up discussion.