

WATER & FORESTS

Teacher Discussion Guide

LEVELS

Grades 4-5

SUBJECTS

Science
Social Studies
Language Arts
Visual Arts

CONCEPTS

In biological systems, materials go through cycles.

Organisms depend on certain habitat conditions in order to survive and thrive.

Elements in an ecosystem are interdependent, and changes to any element could affect the overall ecosystem.

SKILLS

Analyzing
Data Gathering
Discussing
Elaborating
Interpreting
Representing
Researching

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OVERVIEW

A forest plays an important role in maintaining and improving water quality. Forests help recharge underground aquifers, minimize erosion and sustain the water cycle. Forests also play a key role in the life cycle of certain fish and animals that depend on water for food, habitat and protection.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY TOPICS

The relationship between water and forests can be studied in the context of many different areas of learning. Here are some suggestions:

Science

- **Watersheds.** Think of your schoolyard as a watershed. Where does the water flow during a rainstorm? Is it absorbed into the playground or the lawn? Does it run off the parking lot? Does it form pools or puddles of water? What is the topography of your schoolyard? How does it affect the flow of water? (*class activity, research project, art project*)
- **Trees and water.** Do all trees need the same amount of water to survive? What trees can live with very little water? What trees need a lot of water? How does the amount of water a tree gets affect its growth – too much water, too little water? (*research project, class presentation, art project*)

Social Studies

- **Water quality.** Study the water supply system for your community. Where does the water for your community come from? Who does the water system serve – business, industry, individuals, families? Are there any limits on how much water they can use? What kind of rules and regulations does your community water treatment system have to follow? (*field trip, guest speakers, research project, art project*)
- **Water use.** How do you use water every day? What would you do if you were limited in the amount of water you could use every day? (*class presentation, essay topic*)

Language Arts

- **“A day/week in the life of a water drop.”** What would happen to it? (*play, video project, short story, essay topic*)

In addition to providing beauty and recreation, forests supply raw materials to help meet society's needs for housing, paper, containers and thousands of other products used by consumers every day. As one of the country's leading forest products providers, Georgia-Pacific Corporation has a long-term interest in and commitment to the health of our nation's forests.

Educational in Nature® is a series of environmental education curriculum supplements designed to foster understanding and environmental awareness for your students.

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Activity Sheet

DICTIONARY DETECTIVE

Which of the following are *not* bodies of water?

lake	stream	river
pond	ocean	tundra
sea	slough	swamp
plateau	lagoon	reservoir
mere	creek	puddle
channel	pool	mesa
branch	rivulet	canal
bayou	tributary	race

WHAT AM I?

1. I am made up of underground rivers and lakes. Cities and towns use my water for drinking, to run factories and even fill swimming pools. What am I?
2. I breathe, drink water and make it possible for many animals to live comfortably. I'm made up of 70 percent water, and my roots serve as an anchor for soil. What am I?
3. I am named after a common piece of furniture, but don't belong in a house. Instead, I might be just under your house or your yard or your school. I need rain to keep me going, and forests help me to recharge. What am I?