Lesson Plan

Discover Our Water

Grade: 1 & 2

Where Does Our Water Come From?

Students will be able to:

- understand what a water catchment is
- recognise threats to water catchment health
- learn why it's important to look after the catchment

Lesson Details:

1. What is a water catchment?

A water catchment is an area of land that collects rainfall and channels it towards a waterway such as a river or wetland. Sometimes, a water catchment will commence at a high point such as a mountain and direct it to a river that connects with the sea at the lowest point. Most towns draw their drinking water supply from a water catchment.

Do your students know the name of the water body that supplies their school? (river, reservoir or dam)
Do they know where the start of the water catchment is?
How many creeks or rivers connect to the water catchment area?
Use Google Earth to explore your catchment area.

2. What are the potential threats to water catchments?

Land use around the water catchment can significantly impact on water quality. Some of those uses include farming and cropping, industrial factories, urban development (homes, schools, shops etc) and public access areas like parks and reserves.
Ask the students to identify threats from each of the user groups listed above.
Provide them with the TasWater Urban Water Cycle Poster and have the students identify the various land uses and subsequent potential impacts. For example: bacterial (dead animals and faeces), chemical infliltration (fertilisers, phosphates and nitrates), erosion (removal of streamside vegetation).

Curriculum Links

Grade 1

Science

- ACSSU018
- ACSSU019
- ACSHE021
- ACSHE022
- ACSIS024
- ACSIS029

Language & Literacy

- ACELA1451
- ACELY1656
- ACELY1788

Geography

- ACHGK005
- ACHGS007
- ACHGS012

Grade 2

Science

- ACSIS037
- ACSIS042

Literacy

- ACELY1666

Geography

- ACHGK010
- ACHGK013
- ACHGS013

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Lesson Details continued:

3. How can we look after the catchment?

Encourage students to explore the different threats to the health of the water catchment and identify ways we can prevent those threats from occurring. Here are some ideas:

Increase revegetation: Planting native species on river banks is a simple way to stop river banks from crumbling into streams and general soil erosion. Native species also provides habitat for birds and insects and helps to filter water before it flows into the river (kind of like giving it a clean!)

Remove feral species: Reducing weeds or introduced exotic plants along with feral animals can contribute to improving the water catchment's biodiversity.

Reduce rural pollution: Stock should not be able to access waterways and farmers are encouraged to erect fences and provide alternative sources of water. Runoff from pesticides and herbicides should also be contained.

Reduce urban pollution: Some of our rivers run through parklands where people can be careless with rubbish. Stormwater invariably ends up in our rivers and on our beaches. This will mean that grease, oils, fertiliser, pesticides, soaps from washing cars or windows can all end up polluting our waterways.

4. Visit a catchment close by.

Take students on an excursion to a local water catchment. Ask students to observe what is happening around them, what is the land against the river used for? Are there pipes going into the river? What would be in those pipes? Who is using the river?

Lesson Reflection:

1. Describe what a water catchment is.
2. What is the name of the river/dam or reservoir where your tap water is sourced from?
3. Where is the water catchment that feeds your local river and water supply?
4. Do you know how healthy your local catchment is? Contact your local Natural Resource Management Group for more information.

Did you know?

TasWater has a great role play activity that we can deliver in your classroom. It really helps students to understand activities and impacts in the water catchment.

More Information

Contact our Education Officers who can visit your classroom and share some engaging water activities with your students. Alternatively visit our website, complete an online request form and our Education Officers will contact you.

Email: education@taswater.com.au

Website: www.taswater.com.au

Additional Activities

Take students around the school grounds and get them to locate all of the stormwater drains. Next get them to think about what type of pollution from the school ground may end up in those drains. What can they do to get the whole school community thinking about pollution and preventing it?