Me & My Watershed

Program Overview
In our Me & My Watershed: Creekside program, 3rd-5th grade students will investigate the guiding question, “How am I part of my watershed?” The lessons in this program will provide students with a foundational understanding of what a watershed is, and how they are connected to their local watershed. Through nature journaling, students have the chance to explore, observe, and personally reflect on these connections. Students will investigate, monitor, and advocate for the health of local creek ecosystems within our watershed.

Program Outline

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<th>Lesson Name</th>
<th>Guiding Question</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Getting to Know Our Watershed</td>
<td>Where is water stored on Earth?</td>
<td>In this introductory lesson, students will do introductions, review group agreements, learn of the Indigenous stewards of the land they live on, and wrap up with an activity demonstrating the various stores of water on Earth.</td>
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<td>2. What is a Watershed?</td>
<td>What is a watershed? How does water move through a watershed?</td>
<td>Students will make observations and predictions while studying a watershed model of the Bay Area to learn how water travels and what it can pick up along the way. They will gain an understanding of how pollution gets carried into the bay and demonstrate this knowledge by creating a comic strip.</td>
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<td>3. Watershed Mapping</td>
<td>How does the health of water impact me and my watershed?</td>
<td>Students will consider the personal relevance and importance of watershed health by examining a watershed map of their own school neighborhood to see how water travels in their watershed.</td>
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<td>4. Nature Journals</td>
<td>Who else do we share our watershed with?</td>
<td>Students will learn what a nature journal is, how we use it and why it’s an important tool for observation and building a relationship with one’s environment. Students will go outside in their schoolyard and spend the lesson exploring.</td>
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The Watershed Project’s mission is to inspire Bay Area communities to understand, appreciate, and protect our local watersheds.

If you have any questions about this program, please contact us at: education@thewatershedproject.org

5. Who Lives Near Creeks?

| How do the parts of a riparian/creek ecosystem depend on one another? | Students will learn about different plants and animals in local riparian ecosystems and use evidence to decide whether that particular plant/animal lives in a creek ecosystem or not. Students will then wrap up the lesson with a web of life activity to illustrate ecosystem interdependence. |

6. Benthic Macroinvertebrate Lab or Field Trip (Optional)

| How can we tell if a creek is healthy? What benefits do humans receive from creek ecosystems? | Students will dive into a benthic macroinvertebrate lab to study how insects determine the health of creeks. This may be performed in class or on an optional field trip to a local regional park. The field trip will also include games and nature journaling activities to explore the riparian ecosystem. |

7. The Health of the Creek

| How can we tell if a creek is healthy? Why is determining the health of the creek important? | Students will wrap up our benthic macroinvertebrate investigation to determine the health of the local creek, and create a poster to share what they learned about keeping our watershed healthy. The lesson wraps up with a fun song! |

Program Goals

1. Students will strengthen their relationship with our local watershed through hands-on, place-based activities and personal reflection.
2. Students will participate in outdoor activities that strengthen their connection to nearby nature.
3. Students will take meaningful action to protect their local watershed.

Standards Connections

*Me & My Watershed* supports learning and engagement in the following Next Generation Science Standards Disciplinary Core Ideas:

- LS2.A - Interdependent Relationships in Ecosystems
- LS2.C - Ecosystem Dynamics, Functioning, and Resilience
- LS4.D - Biodiversity and Humans
- ESS2.A - Earth Materials and Systems
- ESS2.C - The Roles of Water in Earth’s Surface Processes
- ESS3.C - Human Impacts on Earth Systems

The program also incorporates concepts from the following elementary school Common Core Health Standards:

- Describe how a healthy environment is essential to personal and community health.
- Discuss how reducing, recycling, and reusing products make for a healthier environment.
- Explain that all individuals have a responsibility to protect and preserve the environment.
- Use a decision-making process to determine personal choices that promote personal, environmental, and community health.

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