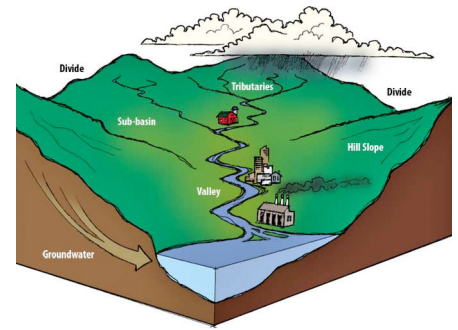


Activity: What is a Watershed? Weather Instruments: Kit 460

Overview: This activity will teach students about watersheds and how the shape of the land determines in which direction water flows. They will also learn about the watershed that they live in and where all of the water will end up- Zumbro River to the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico/Atlantic Ocean.



Benchmarks:

- 4.3.2.3.1** *Identify where water collects on Earth, including atmosphere, ground, and surface water, and describe how water moves through the Earth system using the processes of evaporation, condensation and precipitation.*

Learning Objectives:

1. Students will be able to explain what a watershed is.
2. Students will be able to identify the watershed that they live in.
3. Students will be able to explain where the water from the Zumbro River Watershed goes.

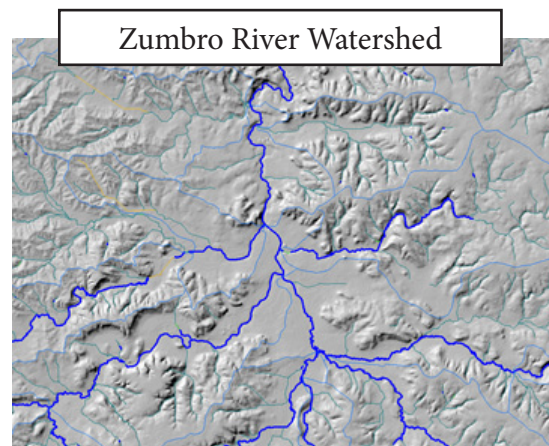
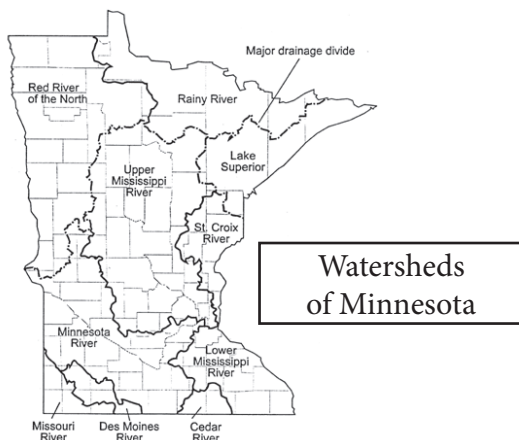
Materials needed:

- Computer
- LCD Projector

Teacher Information:

When rain falls on the Earth, that water flows across the ground on its way to a stream or river, and then on to a larger body of water such as an ocean. The area of land that contributes water to a stream or river is called a watershed, or drainage basin.

Minnesota contains eight major river basins with 92,000 miles of river. Eighty-one major watersheds compose these eight river drainage basins: Red River, Rainy River, Lake Superior, Upper Mississippi, Lower Mississippi, St. Croix, Minnesota, and Missouri. A continental divide in Northeastern Minnesota partitions the surface flows from these eight river drainage basins into three major flow ways that constitute headwaters areas for the Hudson Bay, the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico.



Not all watersheds are the same. A watershed can be in the mountains or where the land is nearly flat regardless of topography. Cities, farms and forests are all in a watershed. How we use the land in a watershed affects the water that flows through it. What we do in our backyard impacts our waterways. We all live in a watershed – even plants and animals – so it is important to protect our waterways. We need clean water for drinking, swimming, fishing, recreation and producing goods.



How to start: Watershed Activity

Have students lightly crumple up a piece of notebook paper and then talk about how water flows from high points to low points. On their paper have them predict where water would flow and then draw a blue line with a highlighter pen to represent what they think. Then go around and lightly spray their paper with a water sprayer. The blue highlighter marker's ink will start to run down the paper in a way that mimics water running across a watershed.

Next, have students work on the "What is your Watershed Address Activity" so they learn where water running off the school's and their home's landscapes goes.

Video Resources:

Watch the YouTube video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJ63xGJY4pM> that explains about watersheds, pollution and how to test for water quality.

