

My Piece of the Stream

Objective: Students will understand that their individual choices affect the environment as a whole. Students will also gain an understanding of why maintaining water quality can be difficult in heavily-populated areas, and that some activities can affect water quality much more than others.

Age: 7+

Time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: as many sheets of paper as there are students, pencils and other drawing implements

Directions:

1. Give each person a piece of paper. Tell them that this paper represents a piece of land that belongs to them. They can have whatever they want on this land, the only rule is that they have to have a stream running through some part of the paper. (It is best if the streams are about the same width.) Give them time to draw. Tell them to be creative, think about how they would use this land.
2. After everyone has completed their drawing pick one person to present their drawing to the group. Keep the drawing and call up the next person and have them present their drawing. The second drawing should connect to the first creating a continuous stream.
3. Continue with the rest of the group. As you go have the group think about what was added to the stream upstream from their property. How do they feel about being downstream from a factory/farm/etc? Would they want to swim or fish in the stream considering what's upstream?

Discussion Questions:

1. When you were deciding what to do with your piece of land, did you think about what was upstream from you? What about downstream?
2. After seeing the whole stream as connected, would you do things differently? What would you do differently?
3. If this were really your land, would you want your neighbors to be able to do whatever they wanted with their property? What would you like them to do differently?
4. Would you want to be told what you could and could not do with your land?
5. Do you think there should be rules/laws about how people affect water quality? What rules might be good to have?

Standards Addressed:

Science: 4.1.2.1.1, 4.3.2.3.1, 4.3.4.1.1, 5.4.2.1.1, 5.4.2.1.2, 5.4.4.1.1, 6.1.2.1.2, 6.1.2.1.3, 6.1.3.1.1, 7.4.2.1.1, 7.4.4.1.2, 7.4.4.2.1, 8.3.2.3.1, 8.3.2.3.2, 8.3.4.1.2, 9.1.3.1.1, 9.3.4.1.1, 9.3.4.1.2, 9.4.4.1.2, 9.4.4.2.4, 9C.1.3.3.1,

Language Arts: