



# WHAT'S A WATERSHED?

## Overview

Watersheds are areas where water on the surface of the earth flows toward a water body including creeks, lakes, rivers, or oceans. A ridge or other area of elevated land, called a divide, separates one watershed from another. Streams on one side of the divide flow a different direction than streams on the other side. Watersheds are important because scientists can study them in order to help determine how much surface water might be available for the needs of a community.

Streams within a watershed are created from rain water, runoff, snowmelt, and springs. As this water flows over a watershed, it recharges (or fills) surface and ground-water supplies.

At the conclusion of this lesson, your students should know what a watershed is and how runoff affects the watershed.

## Objectives

TEKS objectives that will be addressed in this section include: Science 2.A,E, 6.C, 8.C; Social Studies 2.7B

## Completion Time

15 minutes

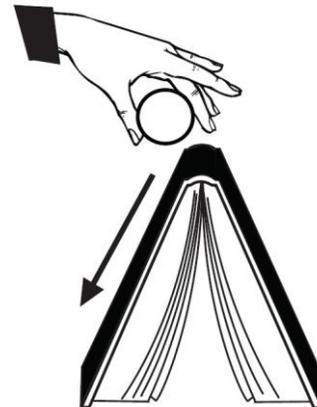
## Materials

1. Hard-cover book
2. Small ball

## ACTIVITY

A. Discuss the definition of a watershed.

1. Demonstrate the concept of a watershed. Take a hard cover book and place it with the spine facing up and the pages opening down. Explain to the students that they should pretend the book is a hill or a mountain.
2. Place a ball on the left downward slope of the book. Ask the students to pretend the ball is rain. Ask the students, "If I drop the rain (ball) on this side of the book, which way will it roll?" Solicit responses. Release the ball and note the results.
3. Place the ball on the right downward slope of the book. Ask the students "If I drop the rain (ball) on this side of the book, which way will it roll?" solicit responses. Release the ball and note the results.
4. Explain to the students that the low area where the rain fell (ball rolled) on each side of the mountain (book) is called a watershed. In nature, this is where rain water runs off.
5. Review the watershed graphic on pages 2-3 of the student book.



## ENGAGEMENT

