

## Teaching News Is Elementary

### October 2, 2015

Each week, this lesson will share some classroom activity ideas that use the newspaper or other NIE resources. You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a class discussion.

*Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.*

**Materials you will need for this lesson:** The Seattle Times e-Edition, pencil or colored pencils for sketching/drawing. Internet/library for research.

**Article: Stormwater: What you Otter Know: Water Pollution and You**

**Page: special section pages D2 and D3**

**Date: Thursday, October 1, 2015**

#### **Pre- Reading Discussion Questions:**

Look at the title. What do you think stormwater is? Look at the images on the cover and pages 2 and 3. How might stormwater affect pollution in the area you live?

#### **Vocabulary:**

Read the following quotes and determine the meaning of the word based on how it's used in the sentence:

“But did you know that not all **pollutants** are throwaway items, and most of them are invisible to the naked eye?”

(substances that make land, water, air, etc., dirty and not safe or suitable to use: things that cause pollution)

“Watershed boundaries are defined by the **elevation** of the land, with the highest elevation points, mountain ridges and hills, marking the boundary of a watershed.”

(the height of a place)

“When rain falls in a forest, most of the water is soaked into the ground, **evaporated** back into the air or absorbed by trees.”

(to change from a liquid into a gas)

“The combination of fewer trees and more **impervious** surfaces changes the way that rainwater moves across the land, and also how it enters streams, lakes, and the Puget Sound.”

(not allowing something (such as water or light) to enter or pass through)

### **Journal Writing Prompts:**

**“Do you know the difference? Grab a cup of water and test surfaces outside your home to determine whether they are pervious or impervious. Water will absorb into a pervious surface like a sponge. Water will run off an impervious surface. Try the driveway, lawn, deck, garden or sidewalk. What other surfaces can you test?”**

Try the above experiments and record which surfaces around your home are pervious and impervious. Why is it important to understand the difference between impervious and pervious surfaces? How does testing surfaces around your home relate to stormwater runoff?

### **Discussion Questions:**

**Review the excerpt and discuss the following questions:**

**“Finally, as the rain washes over streets and lawns, it picks up pollution that is then carried into waterways. Most of the time, stormwater flows into streams, lakes and Puget Sound without being treated.”**

What are the effects of stormwater runoff in an urban environment? How do you think stormwater runoff impacts the plants and animals of local streams, lakes, and Puget Sound? What do you think you can do to lessen the harmful effects? Read page J6 to learn more.

### **Small group discussion and activity:**

**“Watershed boundaries are defined by the elevation of the land, with the highest elevation points, mountain ridges and hills, marking the boundary of a watershed. Land is a very important part of water quality. How water flows across the land and what it picks up along the way has a critical impact on all of the bodies of water downstream.”**

Research the elevation of the state, county, and city in which you live. Create a color-coded map illustration which shows the different elevations. Indicate the watershed boundaries with one color. In an accompanying description, explain how the watersheds and their boundaries impact where you live.