

## Making a Watershed at Home Activity

Activity and instructions adapted from "[What's a Watershed?](#)" activity by the Science Education Resource Center at Carleton College

The National Geographic Society defines a watershed as an area of land that drains or "sheds" water from the highest point to the lowest point. Today, we're going to make one at home!

Watch the [Making a Watershed](#) video and follow along with the instructions. Then answer the questions below.

For this activity you'll need the following:



1. Grab your newspaper and crumble several pieces of paper into balls and rolls of different sizes and shapes.
2. Place the balls and rolls in your pan and use tape to keep them in place.
3. When they're securely attached, place one end of your pan on wood blocks or a book.
4. Lay your sheet of plastic out flat on a table top or the floor and smooth out the wrinkles.
5. Lay the sheet of plastic over the entire pan and gently press the plastic down around the crumpled balls and rolls.
6. **Fill your spray bottle with water and add a few drops of blue food coloring. (The bottle in this picture already has blue food coloring in it.)**
7. Spray water over your model, see how the rain moves around, and make observations.



8. Use your towel to absorb the water from your model.
9. Adjust the paper balls and plastic to make your landscape as realistic as you can. Then, spray the model with rain again.
10. When you think you can predict the locations of features on your landscape, wipe your plastic dry and set up the model again.
11. Use markers to draw your predictions for the locations of streams and divides directly on the plastic.
12. Make it rain one last time to check if your predictions were correct.

### Questions:

1. Did you observe the following watershed features?

Streams and rivers

**YES**      **OR**      **NO**

Ponds or Lakes

**YES**      **OR**      **NO**

Drainage divides

**YES**      **OR**      **NO**

2. Explain the path a fish would take to get from one side of your watershed to the other.

3. What do you think happens when trash or other types of waste get into the watershed?