

Video Transcript for “MWEE Issue Investigation”

Posted by: Chesapeake Bay Program

Text: Issue Definition: Students explore a locally relevant driving question using background research and investigation

Video images: Interview with Ms. Byard, text: Dale Byard, 6th grade, Frederick County Public Schools, VA

Narration: We decided that it would be great to use the MWEE project as a way of incorporating all of our science standards for sixth grade into a project where the kids could really see science in action. It wasn't something read in a book. It was something that happens around them every day, all of the time.

Video images: Students walking schoolyard, Interview with Ms. Reilly, text: Megan Reilly, 6th grade, Frederick County Public Schools, VA

Narration: The driving question was “how does our daily interaction with our watershed negatively impact and what can we do to facilitate a healthier watershed by creating something to prevent that pollution from actually making it into our waterways?”

Video images: Interview with Ms. Rouget, text: Wendy Rouget, 5th grade, Prince George's Co. Public Schools, MD

Narration: My concern is at my grade level, with 5th graders, they may not know enough about the issues to say, “let's investigate them.” So I have to front-load a lot of things.

Video images: Interview with Ms. Reilly, students testing water samples, Ms. Byard interview

Narration: Everything is a building block to something else so with this project, I really focused on the idea that they have to understand water first. So we did a whole couple weeks about properties of water so that they understood the molecular structure of water, the functioning of water before they got into the bigger picture which is your water cycle. Which then fed into the bigger picture which is your wetlands and watershed. [Ms. Reilly Interview] Students did water quality testing with the museum staff using samples from around the Shenandoah Valley watershed which is part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. And they were really intrigued about testing their own water and how healthy their water supply was. And it was very eye-opening for them to discover that the water that they were drinking, which does go through a water treatment plant, was really coming from a river that did have some pollution issues. [Ms. Byard]

Video images: Interview with Ms. Reilly, students investigating a map

Narration: Yes, the kids are aware that streams flow into rivers. Rivers flow into the ocean. But I don't think they quite understood just what that looked like and so being able to test different water bodies along the route from Winchester to the Chesapeake Bay showed them indications that yes, even though it might be very minor where we are, the pollution actually compounded the further towards the Chesapeake Bay it got.

Video images: Interview with Ms. Rouget

Narration: It was the big idea that you're trying to get across. So for me it's how do the behaviors of humans impact the environment? I don't say negative or positive to the kids. I want them to gather that for themselves over time and through the experiences that was provided to them. Hopefully, they will see that it could be either way.

Video images: Interview with Ms. Snavely, text: Kerrie Snavely, High School Biology, Conestago Valley School District, PA

Narration: This is life. This is their watershed. No matter what you major in, you have to know how to treat your natural resource. And no matter your history, math, phys-ed, we're all using water. So if you don't understand how to protect it, you're not gonna be able to do what you want to do in life.