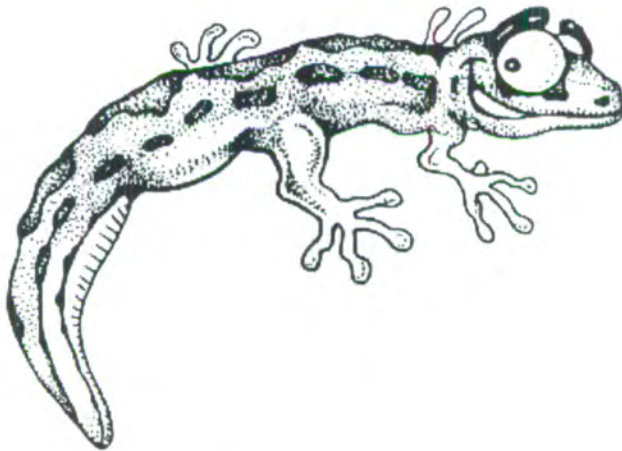


The Watershed  
Adventures  
of  
Nate the Newt



Hi Kids,

Welcome to Mussel Creek Watershed. The watershed is all the area where water travels to get from high places to low places. Every spot on our large planet Earth is in some watershed. Much of Illinois is in the Mississippi River Watershed which runs into the ocean. Each of us lives near a smaller creek or river, and that is our local watershed. Wander with me through my watershed.

Fun times ahead,

Nate



Add your own splash to this activity book by coloring the front cover.

# Meet Nate the Newt

Hi, I'm Nate the newt. I can be found in all of North America and around the world. Because I am an amphibian, I am able to breath underwater through my skin. Also, my skin provides protection because of its bad taste (predators don't like to eat me). Newts, like all animals, need clean water to survive. We can help determine the quality of water by our presence. If we are in the water, it is clean enough for us to live. If we are gone from a place where we typically live that could mean the water is not clean enough for us. Read through the passage below to learn more about me and other newts. Then, go through the activity book with me, and learn about watersheds and their importance to all of us.



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## What is a newt?

- Newts are amphibians, a type of salamander with moist, slick skin (not slimy). Amphibians were the first to adapt to life on land, but they still lay their eggs in water. All amphibians are cold-blooded meaning their body temperature is the same as their surroundings.

## Where do newts live?

- Very young newts live in water, juveniles live on land, and adults live in water and on land. More than forty species of newts can be found throughout the world.

## What color are newts?

- Newts vary in color, but in Illinois they are typically brown with a yellow belly and black spots.

## What do newts eat?

- Insects, leaches, frog eggs, worms, snails, and other small animals.

## When can you see newts?

- Look for newts at night. They are nocturnal, meaning they sleep during the day and search for food at night.
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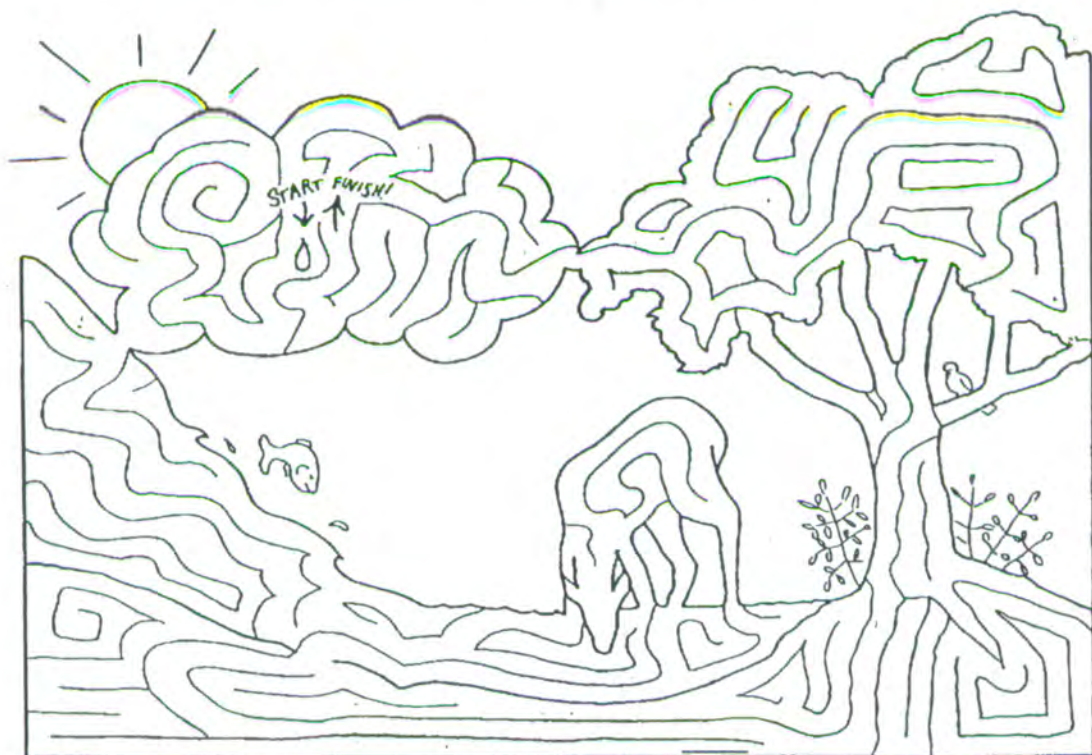


Water is one of our most precious natural resources. All plants and animals need water to live. Water travels from the clouds as rain or snow and lands in places like streams, on plants, or on driveways. People take baths in it, animals drink it, and fish swim in it. Eventually, the water evaporates back into clouds and the cycle begins again. This is called the water cycle.

## Travel With a Water Droplet

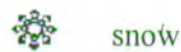
(Remember water can be a gas, liquid, or solid.)

Follow the water droplet as it makes its way through the water cycle. Color the picture as your droplet travels.



# The Dirt on Erosion

As you read through the passage below, use the symbols to help fill in missing words.



When \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ wears away at exposed \_\_\_\_\_ taking it along as it travels, it is called \_\_\_\_\_. This \_\_\_\_\_ can carry with it \_\_\_\_\_ nutrients, toxic substances from pollution and pesticides, and bacteria all of which can be harmful to our \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ by itself can cause problems by decreasing \_\_\_\_\_ depths and blocking drainage systems to cause flooding. It can also darken \_\_\_\_\_, which causes it to soak up much more heat from the \_\_\_\_\_ making the temperature too high for \_\_\_\_\_. There are many areas that can suffer from \_\_\_\_\_ such as stream banks, \_\_\_\_\_ shorelines, ditches, construction sites, and \_\_\_\_\_ fields.

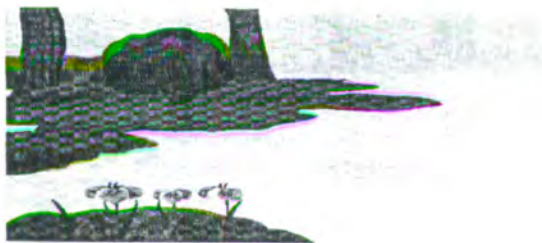
Best Management Practices are things people can do to slow down or stop \_\_\_\_\_. A silt fence is a temporary \_\_\_\_\_ to prevent loose \_\_\_\_\_ from washing away. A berm is a dam-like \_\_\_\_\_ that temporarily retains \_\_\_\_\_, preventing the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ from land. Lastly, a filter strip is made of grass \_\_\_\_\_, and shrubs that hold \_\_\_\_\_ in place. They can be used to filter nitrates and other chemicals before they enter \_\_\_\_\_.

# Watershed Crossword Puzzle

Dive into the crossword puzzle and see how many words you know. All the words have something to do with water.

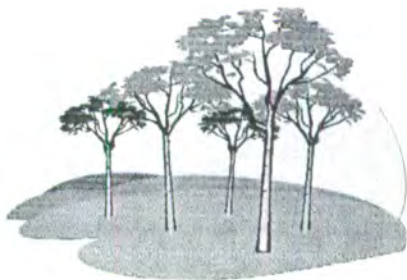
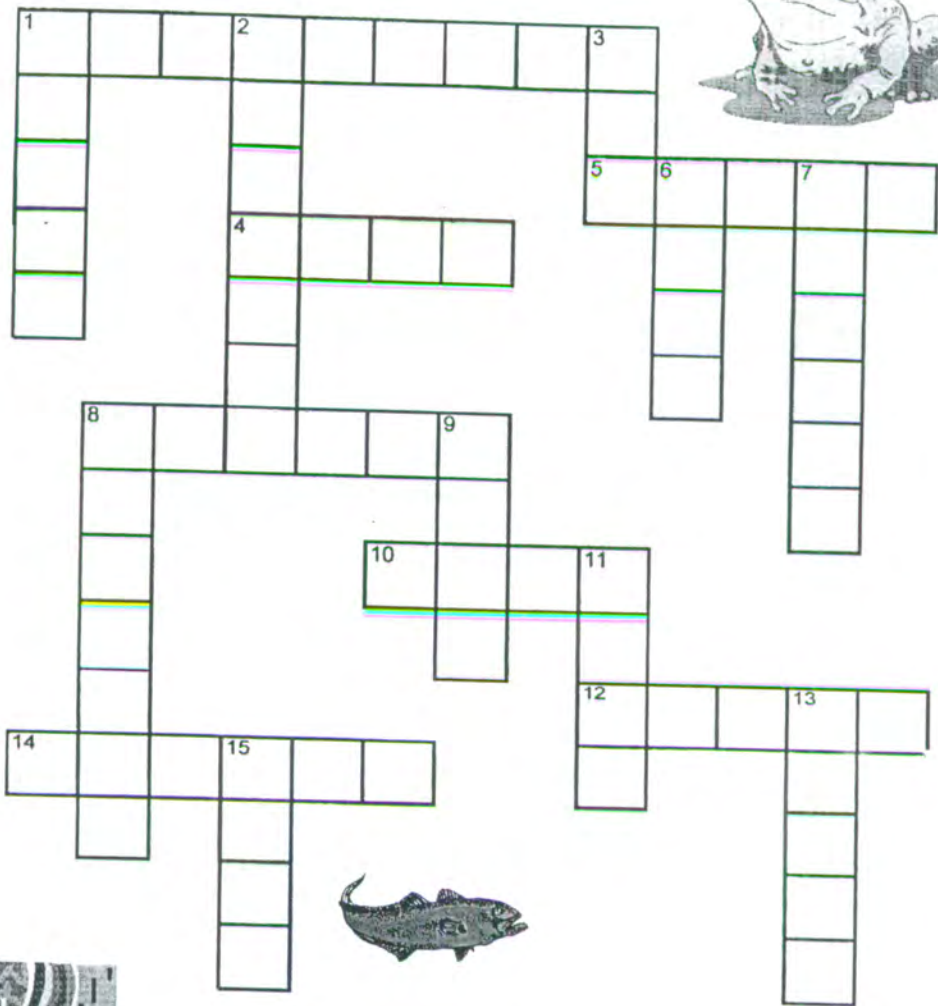
## Across

1. The land area that drains water to a stream, lake, river, or ocean
4. A fun thing to do in water on a hot day
5. A wet area of land where many kinds of grasses are growing
8. Water that flows across surfaces rather than soaking in
10. A still body of water smaller than a lake
12. A large body of flowing water
14. \_\_\_\_\_ need water and sun to grow and make their own food



## Down

1. All living things need \_\_\_\_\_ to survive
2. The wearing down or washing away of soil and land surfaces
3. What beavers build
6. Another name for water
7. A body of flowing water smaller than a river
8. Reduce, reuse, \_\_\_\_\_
9. An amphibian with moist skin, webbed feet, and long legs for jumping
11. Another name for soil
13. Water covers more than 70% of this planet
15. A type of salamander that spends part of its life in water and part on land



# Watershed Word Jumble

Rearrange the letters to form words that have to do with watersheds. The pictures can give you hints on some of the words. The rest of the words will be found in other places of the booklet.



serivr \_\_\_\_\_  
 eclrcye \_\_\_\_\_  
 ooisren \_\_\_\_\_  
 avebre \_\_\_\_\_  
 ttibah \_\_\_\_\_  
 urcsorees \_\_\_\_\_  
 deterwhas \_\_\_\_\_  
 smlues \_\_\_\_\_  
 ekcer \_\_\_\_\_  
 srags \_\_\_\_\_  
 eogdrtuwan \_\_\_\_\_



oils \_\_\_\_\_  
 sterfos \_\_\_\_\_  
 setincs \_\_\_\_\_  
 inarawert \_\_\_\_\_  
 coulsd \_\_\_\_\_  
 lasmian \_\_\_\_\_  
 ianbiphma \_\_\_\_\_  
 fhis \_\_\_\_\_  
 lpciaetarlr \_\_\_\_\_  
 adnri \_\_\_\_\_  
 ecnoa \_\_\_\_\_





# Watershed Word Search

Read the story below, then search for the underlined words in the word search.



Nate's friend, Cora the beaver, lives in the Mussel Creek watershed. Many other animals and plants live here too. The creek is full of different fish and bugs and mussels. Cora cuts down big trees with her long front teeth. She will use some of the branches to build her home. The bark and small twigs she will eat for food. Her whole life is spent near the water. When a big rain comes sometimes soil is washed into the creek. This is called erosion. Cora hates erosion because it covers up the habitat, or homes, of many of the animals that live in the creek. Keeping plants with deep roots along the banks of the creek filters the rainwater clean and holds the soil on the bank.

# Watershed Fill in the Blanks

Use other sections in this activity book to help fill in the blanks.

- 1) Nate the newt is a type of \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 2) A \_\_\_\_\_ is the area where rainwater or snow melt travels from high places to low places, and even to the groundwater below.
- 3) When water travels from the clouds as rain or snow and lands in streams, lakes rivers, ponds and oceans, and is then evaporated back into the clouds it is called the \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 4) Animals that are only active at night are called \_\_\_\_\_ .
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_ can be seen when rain washes soil into a creek.
- 6) Dirt in our water can cause problems. Name three of these problems.

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## Outdoor Activity!!!

### Watch for Salamanders (like Nate)

Salamanders are some of the most secretive amphibians. They prefer cool, moist land areas, or wetlands such as ponds. They can often be spotted during wet weather along the way to their breeding grounds. They are more easily found at night when they are most active.

# Activity Book Key

## Maze Key



## Word Search Key

a r h p x n l d m k y p f e r t d h l s o  
 s n g r e t a w u l k d p v f a p l s m x  
 l u p j o m z d h c f s q n e t k y o l b  
 a y g f r t a t b v e n w o h o n e p  
 w n q a c d w e r o e k h t a b p b u k  
 p c l h s g a m r w t a y l o a x l n c f  
 c u m r a b t h l d x r j w h a h s d y  
 d e k s a h c w s g t e k m l l o t r c a  
 j c b m u l z u q d e r k u i d o p e q y  
 f y s a m c s l d l p o h s p o w x r n a  
 r e n f h d z a p w b s l b x n k o m h s  
 o m u s c e l e l k s w l f e a w b m p  
 c e t k m b r w c t o p s n u t d a g n  
 l d e o t s r a h w l n g b n p c a x b k  
 a l s h o v n d u t q b h m u l s z w p o  
 c r e v a e b f u m f o h y a g p v c l w  
 k l p w j u d k s o m p l a n t s q a s r

## Word Jumble Answers

Rivers	Soil
Recycle	Forest
Erosion	Insects
Beaver	Rainwater
Habitat	Clouds
Resources	Animals
Watershed	Amphibian
Mussel	Fish
Creek	Caterpillar
Grass	Drain
Groundwater	Ocean

## Crossword Answers

### Across

1. Watershed
4. Swim
5. Marsh
8. Runoff
10. Pond
12. River
14. Plants

### Down

1. Water
2. Erosion
3. Dam
6. Aqua
7. Stream
8. Recycle
9. Frog
11. Dirt
13. Earth
15. Newt

## Fill in the Blanks

1. Salamander or Amphibian
2. Watershed
3. Water Cycle
4. Nocturnal
5. Erosion
6. It can carry away soil nutrients, move toxic substances into lakes, block drainage systems, cause pollution, increase water temperature, and others.

I hope you have enjoyed learning about the environment and working through the watershed activity book. Share your interest in the environment and this activity book with your friends and family members. Remember that nature offers hundreds of fun activities that you can do everyday.

## Nate the Newt



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\*For more copies of this booklet call the IDNR Clearinghouse at (217) 782-7498.