

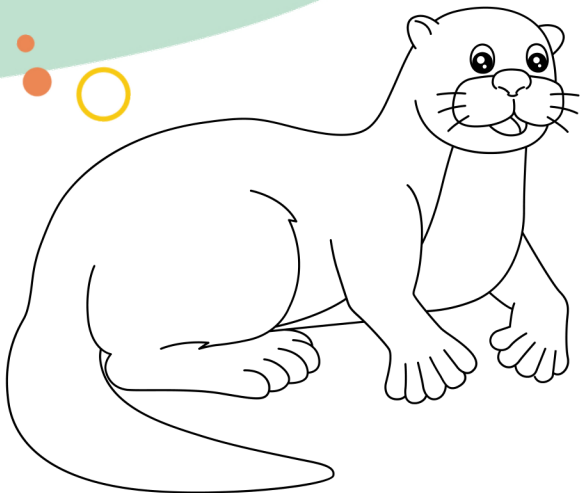
# Watershed Wonders

The Big Sioux River is 419 miles long, stretching from the northeast corner of South Dakota all the way south to North Sioux City. A river's watershed includes not only the river but all the communities whose excess water sheds to the river as well. This means that anyone living within the watershed can impact the health of the river. Complete the activities below to learn more about rivers!



## It's Up to Us!

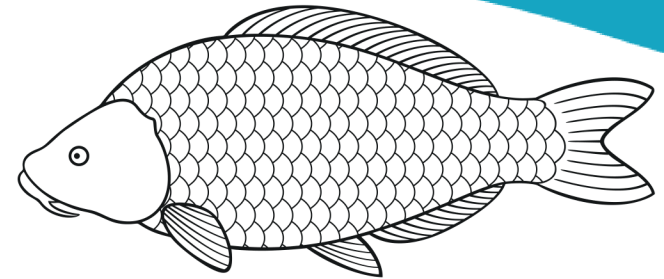
By cleaning up the river, you can help reduce pollution in our waterways. All wildlife needs a safe, healthy, and clean home, just like us.



## Fill in the Blank

Pollution   Animals   Big Sioux   Water

The \_\_\_\_\_ River flows into the Missouri River. Currently, the river contains a lot of \_\_\_\_\_. Many \_\_\_\_\_, including otters and fish, call this \_\_\_\_\_ home.



## Word Search

W	W	T	D	K	C	C	C	E	S
E	A	S	C	T	L	F	H	O	M
T	T	W	K	M	E	E	I	Y	A
A	E	I	A	W	A	U	A	C	N
T	R	M	Y	E	N	E	K	D	M
F	S	U	A	S	U	O	S	S	A
I	H	R	K	P	P	T	R	I	D
S	E	H	F	A	C	T	K	I	T
H	D	C	A	N	O	E	C	A	T
P	F	K	K	S	T	R	E	A	M

Canoe   Clean Up   Fish   Kayak  
Otter   Stream   Swim   Watershed

## Did You Know?

The Big Sioux River watershed is the size of New Jersey!

# Build Your Own Watershed

In this activity, kids build a simple model of a landscape to see how water droplets flow and how the shape of the land helps collect water. By adding materials such as food coloring or paper to their landscapes, they also see how water carries pollutants.



## Materials

- 1 tray (lunch tray, lid of a plastic storage container)
- 2 tall containers (e.g., 12 oz. cups or soda bottles, coffee cans, etc.)
- 2 short containers (e.g., soup or soda can, 6 oz. paper cup, yogurt container, etc.)
- 1 sheet of clear or light-colored plastic (e.g., cut open garbage or shopping bag)
- 1 spray bottle
- 2 bottles of food coloring
- Cooking oil
- Glitter, dried spices, cake sprinkles, pieces of confetti, or other small objects
- Towels for cleaning up spills

## Instructions

1. Hand out the materials with the exception of the cooking oil, food coloring, glitter, spices, cake sprinkles, and spray bottles.
2. Have kids stack the containers on the tray in a pile that's 1 to 2 feet high. Make an irregular mound with peaks, ridges, and valleys by draping the plastic sheet over the containers.
3. Ask kids to make predictions about where rainwater will collect in their landscape.
4. Hand out spray bottles and tell kids to take turns being "sprayers" and "observers." As the kids spray, ask them to explain what the water is doing and show you lakes and rivers in their model.
5. Next, let kids experiment with how "pollutants" might travel through their watersheds through the use of cooking oil, food coloring, glitter, and other materials.
6. Discuss their watershed and answer the questions below.

## Discussion Questions

1. How do you think people in our community use water? Where do you think all that water comes from?
2. What is pollution? Have you ever seen pollution? What did it look like?
3. Where are the streams and rivers in your model? Where are the lakes?
4. If you drip food coloring or glitter into one of the rivers, where does it go when it rains? How quickly does it spread? Are there any places in the landscape where it doesn't go?