

Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience



A Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience, or MWEE, enables students to participate in hands-on environmental learning about the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This experience will serve as the foundation for a rich, lifelong relationship between students and their

Bay. Throughout the MWEE process, students develop a sense of environmental ethics and stewardship that are essential to the long-term sustainability of the Chesapeake Bay. In addition, studies have shown that hands-on environmental education increases the academic performance of students in a variety of subjects.

What is a MWEE?

A MWEE integrates field work in the Chesapeake Bay watershed with multi-disciplinary classroom activities and instruction. Students then share their discoveries with local schools and communities, both orally and in written form.

MWEEs Are Investigative or Project-Oriented

Students investigate questions, problems, and issues related to the watershed. Activities include streambank or oyster restoration projects and SAV planting; water quality monitoring; onsite studies of Bay plants and animals; or social studies that deepen a student's understanding of historical, cultural or economic interests. Projects may also involve interaction with natural resource personnel.

MWEEs Are Integrated within the Instructional Program

A MWEE is not a single field trip, rather the experience reflects an integrated approach to learning. MWEEs align with jurisdictional learning standards and occur where and when they fit into the existing curriculum. They are also effective tools for teaching many subjects—including science, math, history, reading and art.

MWEEs Involve Preparation, Action and Reflection

A MWEE is organized into three phases. First, students research and discuss a watershed issue or problem in preparation for the field component. Second, students take action by observing, measuring or collecting data during their outdoor experience. Third, students return to the classroom, reflect upon and analyze their project, and reach conclusions.

MWEEs Reveal the Watershed as a System

MWEEs have an intentional connection to the watershed as a whole. Experiences focus not only on the Bay, rivers and streams, but also on terrestrial issues such as erosion control, buffer creation, groundwater protection and pollution prevention.

Students and Teachers Sustain MWEEs throughout the School Year

In-class preparation and reflection activities are vital to solidify the watershed concept. Thus, an outdoor experience, or extended outdoor project, should be expanded by classroom activities throughout the school year.

Did you know?

Recognizing the value of hands-on environmental education, the governors of the Chesapeake Bay states and the Mayor of Washington, DC signed a commitment in 2000 to provide a meaningful watershed experience for every student in the Chesapeake Bay watershed before graduation from high school.

www.chesapeakebay.net

1-800-YOUR-BAY



Eyes are Opened, Environmental Ethics are Formed