

Watershed Unit Overview

Essential Question: *How do living things interact and depend on each other in our Lake Champlain Watershed?*

This unit is designed around the Lake Champlain Basin focusing on how living things interact and depend on one another in the watershed. The purpose is to show students how all living things impact the health of the watershed. Throughout the unit students will be provided with hands on experiences, which will teach them what is a watershed, where they live in their watershed and how food chains/webs interact. Investigations and learning journeys will lead students into discovering the creatures that inhabit our watershed and how these various ecosystems both in water and on land depend and interact. Students will examine some of the issues around human impact and how humans impact the watershed in various ways, through recreation, business, etc.

The 4/5th grade students who will be engaging in this unit are students of the Sustainability Academy of Burlington, VT. This unit corresponds with the Sustainability Academy's mission to educate students in environmental, social justice and economic issues in their local and world community. Students will be identifying how the interconnectedness of the watershed affects environmental, economic and social issues in their community. This unit also aligns with the 4th grade district interdependence unit and 5th grade living things unit.

VT State Standards and Common core standards will be addressed:

7:13 Students understand the characteristics of organisms, see patterns of similarity and differences among living things, understand the role of evolution, and recognize the interdependence of all systems that support life. This is evident when students:

7:13c Describe and show examples of the interdependence of all systems that support life (e.g. food chains, food webs, interdependence of living systems, effects on the environment) and apply them to local systems.

GE S 3-4:34

Students demonstrate their understanding of Energy Flow in an Ecosystem by...

- *Identifying the source of energy for the survival of organisms*

S3-4:35 Students demonstrate their understanding of a Food Web in an Ecosystem by...

- *Recognizing that in simple food chain, all animals food begins with plants*
- *Researching and designing a habitat and explaining how it meets the needs of the organisms that live there.*

Common Core:

Writing: Production and Distribution of Writing

- *Produce a clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.*
- *With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, re-writing, or trying new aspects.*

Writing: Research and Present Knowledge

- *Recall relevant information from experience or gather relevant information from print, digital sources; take notes and categorize information; and provide a list of sources.*