



# WATERSHED 360°

**GRADES 4-8**

## SERIES PREVIEW

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**Each episode of Watershed 360° begins with the same two questions. "Who cares about a watershed? And why?"**

**Each episode ends with the question, "Do you know your watershed?"**

Tell students that they should be able to answer these questions after viewing most or all of the episodes. However, the first two questions have many different answers.

[Watershed\\_questionsposters.pdf](#)



Before the preview, define "watershed" for students. Teacher will explain that "A watershed is an entire river system—an area drained by a river and its tributaries. It is sometimes called a drainage basin" (<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/watershed1/>).

If students are not familiar with the word "tributary," use the vocabulary placard to show that tributaries contribute to larger streams or rivers [Vocab-tributary.pdf]

"A tributary is a freshwater stream that feeds into a larger stream or river. The larger, or parent, river is called the mainstem. The point where a tributary meets the mainstem is called the confluence. Tributaries, also called affluents, do not flow directly into the ocean" (<https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/tributary/>).

Then, use the 0:00:22 clip at <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/09/mississippi-river-watershed-map/> so students can view an animation of the Mississippi River watershed.

Ask students to notice how water is used in the preview (*snowboarding/ skiing, fishing, rafting, and irrigation are some possible responses*).

After viewing, use a map to locate the three rivers mentioned by the narrator. Show students how the Platte is a tributary of the Missouri which is a tributary of the Mississippi.

Platte River → Missouri River → Mississippi River  
[Rivers\_and\_Lakes.png]



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## OTHER ACTIVITIES TO CONSIDER:

Go to <https://www.groundwater.org/> for some excellent activities. Most of the activities are appropriate for grades 4-6 and may be useful at other levels depending on your student population. *The Educator's Guide to Water1der* can be found in the Watershed 360° Resources Document | K-8 [Water1der User's Guide.pdf]

### These 2 lessons are especially useful as an introduction:

Lesson 1 in *The Educator's Guide to Water1der* "Groundwater Basics (Concept)" provides important information and the related activity "There's No New Water" uses simple materials to illustrate the amount of water available for human consumption on Earth. It would be an excellent introduction to use before viewing any of the Watershed 360 episodes. Download the activity directly from the Watershed 360° Resources Document | K-8. [There's-No-New-Water.pdf]

Lesson 4 in *The Educator's Guide to Water1der* "Watershed (Concept)" and the related activity "Build a Watershed" is also a good model to use when introducing watersheds before viewing the episodes.

## SOURCES

National Geographic Society. (OAD). Watershed: National Geographic Society. Retrieved from [http://www.nationalgeographic.org/topics/resource-library-watershed/?q=&page=1&per\\_page=25](http://www.nationalgeographic.org/topics/resource-library-watershed/?q=&page=1&per_page=25).

National Geographic Society. (2012, October 9). tributary. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/tributary/>

Mason, B. (2016, September 23). Map Shows Every River That Flows to the Mighty Mississippi. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2016/09/mississippi-river-watershed-map/#close>

The Educator's Guide to Water1der "Aquifer (Concept)". (OAD). Retrieved from [https://www.groundwater.org/file\\_download/inline/30bd996f-06a0-4911-aa02-fc1b2bb4950e](https://www.groundwater.org/file_download/inline/30bd996f-06a0-4911-aa02-fc1b2bb4950e)

Map of Major Rivers and Lakes Used for Migration in the United States. Drawn by: Diltsgd (FamilySearch Wiki).

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