

A. UNIT OVERVIEW **What is a River and What is its connection to us?** [Bird's Eye View](#)

The reasons for teaching this unit was to ignite within the students their connection to the place that they live and more importantly the importance of and rich resource that is the White River which winds its way along the boundaries of their school.

Our hope is that at the end of this year they will not look at the river with the same “often unobservant” eyes and to not take it for granted. Instead they will look at the river as an important part of their community and environment. They will learn the interrelationship between the river and the small stream that runs along the school and their interrelationship to the wellbeing of both. We hope that they will come to realize the important role they play in the health of our waterways and will take action in helping to insure their continued health.

Through this unit we addressed the “District initiatives, by connecting to the “Common Core standards and Next Generation Science Standards.” Within our grade we teach all subjects and through this unit we were able to integrate many subjects besides science. We decided to make this our yearlong science theme and incorporate as many as possible of the Next Generation Science Standards.

Personally I feel “Place-Based” education has a far more meaningful connections ([link to student work](#)) for the students and will have longer lasting results. I would rather have students learning about their own environment and make connections to the rest of the world than have a set of standards that often seem disconnected from what is really important.

Next Generation Science Standards that were addressed:

Students who demonstrate understanding can:

- 3-ESS3- Make a claim about the merit of a design solution that reduces the impacts of a weather-related hazard.** [Clarification Statement: Examples of design solutions to weather-related hazards could include barriers to prevent flooding, wind resistant roofs, and lightning rods.]
- 1.

ESS3.B: Natural Hazards

- [A variety of natural hazards result from natural processes. Humans cannot eliminate natural hazards but can take steps to reduce their impacts. \(3-ESS3-1\)](#)

3-LS4 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity

- 3-LS4-4. Make a claim about the merit of a solution to a problem caused when the environment changes and the types of plants and animals that live there may change.*** [Clarification Statement: Examples of environmental changes could include changes in land characteristics, water distribution, temperature, food, and other organisms.] [Assessment Boundary: Assessment is limited to a single environmental change. Assessment does not include the greenhouse effect or climate change.]

COMMON CORE STANDARDS THAT ARE ASSESSED

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.D

Provide a concluding statement or section.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1.B

Provide reasons that support the opinion.

Holly Brennan-Cook
Watershed for Every Classroom
April 2015