



Welcome!

Water & Agriculture

Week 5

Week 5: Water & Agriculture

Program Focus:

- Learn why water is important for plants, animals, and people.
- Discover how farmers use water to grow crops and care for farms.
- Understand how clean water helps specialty crops grow healthy and strong.
- Create a watering can craft to remind us how we can care for plants.



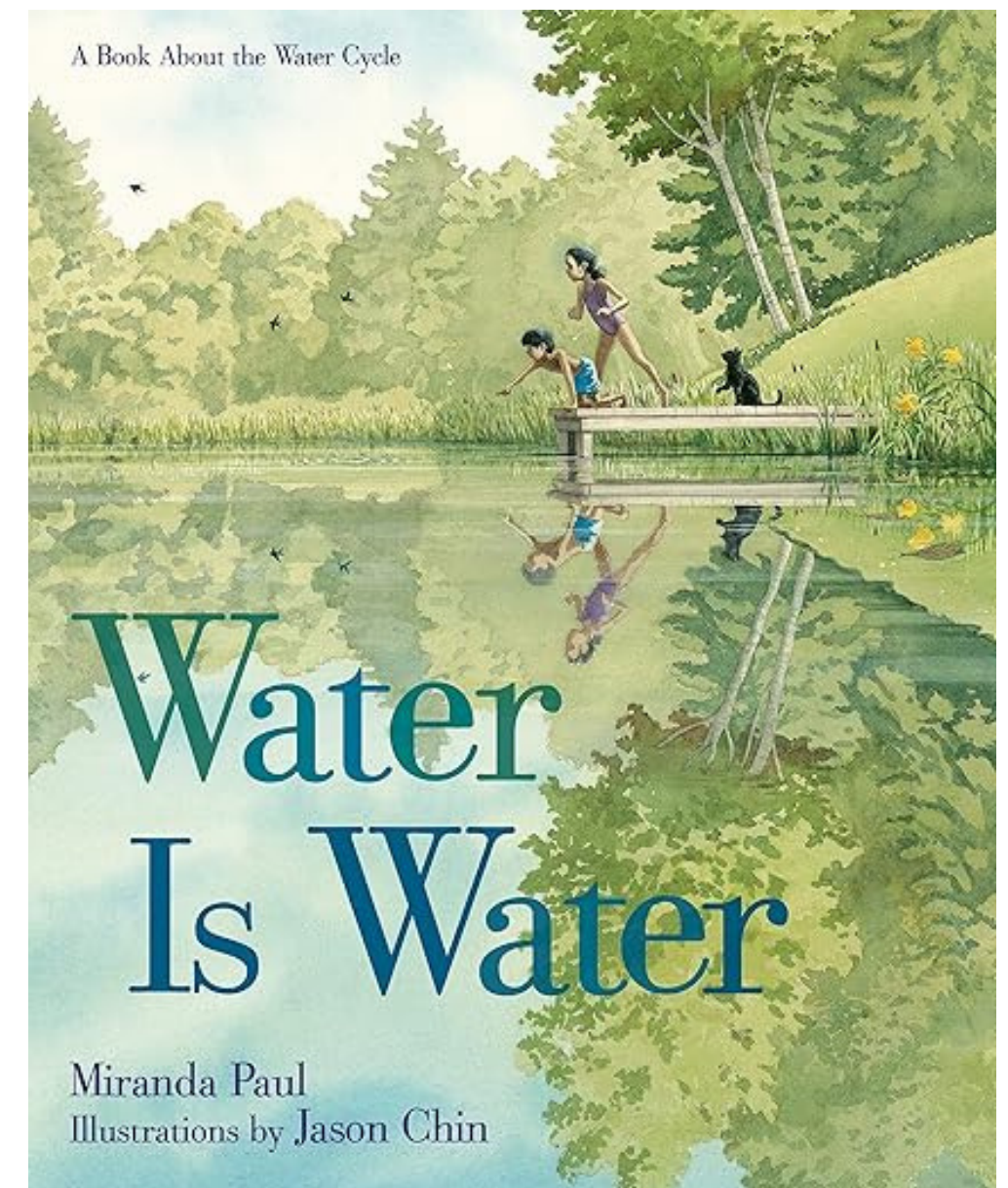
Agriculture uses about 70% of the world's freshwater, helping grow the food we eat every day. Even though only 16% of farmland is irrigated, it produces about 36% of our food.



Book of the Week:

Water is Water By: Miranda Paul

Water Is Water follows a group of children as they experience the different forms of water in nature, from rain and fog to snow and mist. Learn about the water cycle and why water is important for plants, people, and the world around us.





Story Discussion

- What different forms of water did you see in the story?
- Why do plants and animals need water to live?
- How does rain help gardens and farms grow?
- Where do you see water in nature or in your community?

Why Is Water Important?

- Water is essential for all living things, including plants, animals, and people.
- Plants need water to grow, stay healthy, and produce food on farms and in gardens.
- Our bodies are more than half water, helping our brain think clearly, move nutrients, and keep us cool and healthy.
- Without enough water, plants couldn't grow and people and animals couldn't survive, making water one of our most important natural resources.



In West Virginia, forests release water vapor into the air through a process called transpiration, which helps create clouds and rain that feed rivers like the Ohio and Potomac.

Why Water Matters in Agriculture & Specialty Crops

Farmers rely on water to grow specialty crops like fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

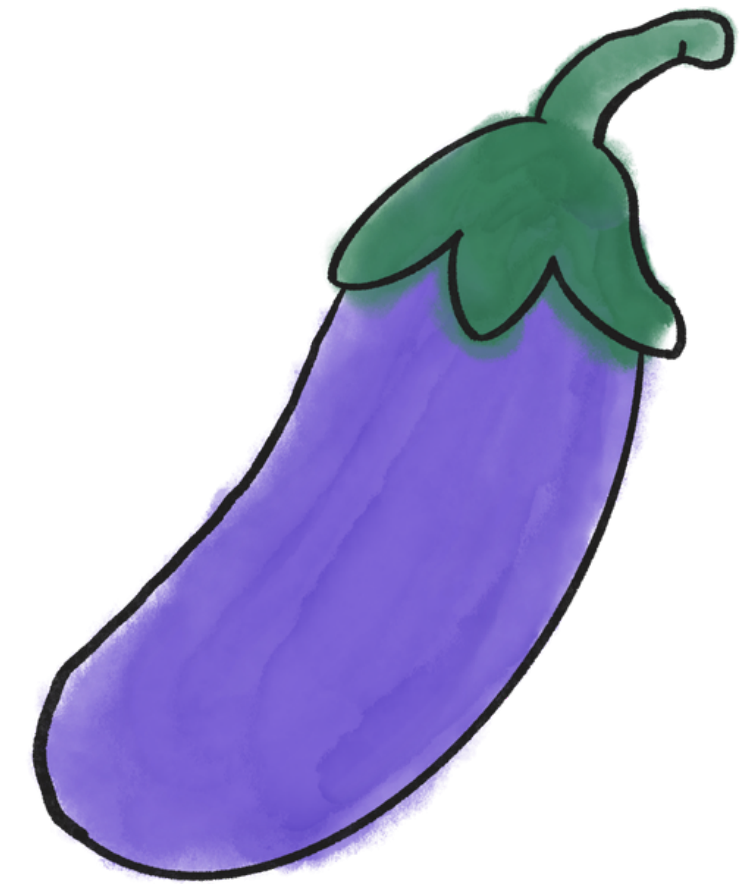
- Water helps plants grow roots, leaves, flowers, and fruits.
- Crops like tomatoes, peppers, berries, and squash need regular watering.
- Rain, rivers, and irrigation systems help farmers provide enough water for crops.
- Healthy water sources help farmers grow fresh, nutritious foods for communities.



Some specialty crops in West Virginia need lots of water to grow well, including artichokes, tomatoes, pumpkins, cucumbers, and lettuce.

Water Pollution & Protecting Water

- Water pollution can harm plants, animals, pollinators, and farms, affecting the food we grow.
- Common causes include trash, chemicals, fertilizers, and oil that enter rivers, lakes, and streams.
- Ways to protect water: keep waterways clean, reduce waste, protect soil and plants near water, and practice conservation and responsible farming.
- Clean water is essential for healthy crops, thriving gardens, safe drinking water, and strong communities.



Eggplant is a specialty crop in West Virginia. It's actually a berry, loves summer heat, and is a profitable crop for farmers.

Week 5 Activity: Watering Can Craft

Activity Focus:

- Introduce participants to the importance of water for plants, animals, and farms.
- Provide materials for participants to decorate and assemble their own watering cans.
- Encourage participants to add designs, water tips, or farm-themed decorations.
- Discuss what they learned and how watering plants helps gardens, farms, and specialty crops grow healthy food.



Even in wet West Virginia, specialty crops need careful watering. Farmers use drip irrigation to give plants water at the roots and reduce waste, especially with unpredictable rainfall.

Connecting Specialty Crops to Water

- Specialty crops like tomatoes, peppers, squash, berries, and herbs need regular water to grow healthy and produce food.
- Irrigation, rainfall, and clean water help farmers provide enough water for crops throughout the growing season.
- Water supports pollinators that help specialty crops produce fruits, seeds, and vegetables.
- Protecting and conserving water ensures we have healthy crops, tasty meals, and strong local food systems.

Reflection Questions:

- Why is water important for plants and farms?
- How does water help specialty crops grow?
- What are some ways we can protect clean water in our communities?
- How does water connect to the food we eat every day?