



NORTH CAROLINA WETLAND METAPHORS

Objective: Students will evaluate wetland functions as they relate to wildlife and humans, and make comparisons between wetland functions and physical objects

Age Group: Middle

Materials:

- ✓ Sponge →
- ✓ Bird seed →
- ✓ Water bottle →
- ✓ Pillow →
- ✓ Bar of soap →
- ✓ Watering can →
- ✓ Coffee filter →
- ✓ Slice of bread →

Function represented:

- Ability to soak up floodwaters
- Provides food for local animals
- Stores water
- Place of rest for migratory birds
- Cleans water
- Releases water when we need it
- Filters toxins from stormwater
- Provides food for us via pollinators

Curriculum Connection:

5.L.2: Understand the interdependence of plants and animals within their ecosystem

What you need to know:

Wetlands function in many ways to benefit both humans and animals. Their soil, plant species, and water availability make them excellent places for animals to grow and live. See if you can come up with some other ways that wetlands help us and the animals who live in them!

The activity:

- ❖ Split students into 8 groups
- ❖ Give each group one of the items listed above
- ❖ Allow them to see and feel the object
- ❖ Tell students to try and determine how their item represents a wetland function and how the wetland performs that function
- ❖ Have them write down their ideas and then discuss them with the rest of the class

Follow-up Questions:

Who benefits from wetlands?

How do wetlands help us stay safe?

What kinds of animals do you think live in wetlands?