

You Can Build a Watershed

Using salt dough or other materials, make a model of a watershed like the picture to the right. Make sure to have lower areas in the middle, surrounded by higher areas around the top and side edges.

Take a spray bottle filled with blue colored water and spray your watershed gently and sparingly. This represents rain.

Where does the water go?

Does water always flow downhill?

Look at your surrounding mountains. What happens to the water that rains on the very top of the mountains?

Are there areas where water pools or runs off?

Where do you think a river would form?

What does this say about the elevation of the Shenandoah River compared to the surrounding land and mountains?



ANOTHER WAY TO MAKE A WATERSHED MODEL

Place small paper cups, crumpled newspaper or rocks at one end into a large shallow pan to represent mountains. Tear off a large piece of aluminum foil to fit into the pan and lay it over top of the “mountains”, making high and low points throughout the landscape to represent hills, valleys, rivers, streams and a bay or ocean.

SALT DOUGH RECIPE

Ingredients: 1 cup salt, 2 cups flour, 1 cup lukewarm water and 1 tbsp. vegetable oil.

Directions: In a large bowl mix salt and flour.

Gradually stir in water and oil. Mix well until it forms a doughy consistency. If you want it to be colored, add green food coloring. With your hands form a ball with your dough and knead it for at least 5 minutes. The longer you knead your dough the smoother it will be.