Nashua River Watershed Investigations for Grades K-8

Lesson # K-3

Title: K-3 Water Warriors: How Beavers Create Wetlands

Grade Level & Standard: Grade K
K-ESS2-2. Construct an argument supported by evidence for how plants and animals (including humans) can change the environment.

Objective:
Students will build a beaver dam to understand how animals can change their environment.

Vocabulary:

- **Beaver lodge-** large mound of sticks and mud built by beavers for a home
- **Beaver dam-** long structure made of sticks and mud, built to hold back water.

Discussion Points: How could an animal change its environment? Can you think of any other animals that can change the habitat around them?

Materials:

- small sticks
- leaves
- mud, clay, small stones
- ten basins or trays
- cups or bottles of water

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Procedure (40 minutes to 60 minutes):

1. Begin by showing images of a beaver building a lodge and a dam. Watch the PBS video. “Watch Beavers Build a Dam”.
2. Distinguish between a lodge and a dam. A dam is a long shaped structure that spans from shore to shore and a lodge is a circular home in which to live. Explain why beavers make a lodge: to hide from other animals, to provide a safe place for young beavers, and to keep warm. Explain why beavers make a dam: hold back water to create a pond and be able to swim up to their food.
3. Provide a tray for each group of students.
4. Provide materials such as small sticks and mud or soft clay. Direct students to make a dam that can hold water. Make the dam in the center of the tray.
5. When everyone is done, give each group 1 cup of water to pour into one side of the tray.
6. Is the water held back by the dam?
7. Draw your basin, dam and the water. Label the dam.
8. Students can make a beaver out of craft materials and put the beaver in water.

Extension:

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- Teacher brings in pretzel rods to chew like beavers chew logs.

Data Sheet:

- Water Warriors data sheet
- **Watch Beavers Build a Dam | Nature on PBS - YouTube**

  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=82DiWd7KGt0

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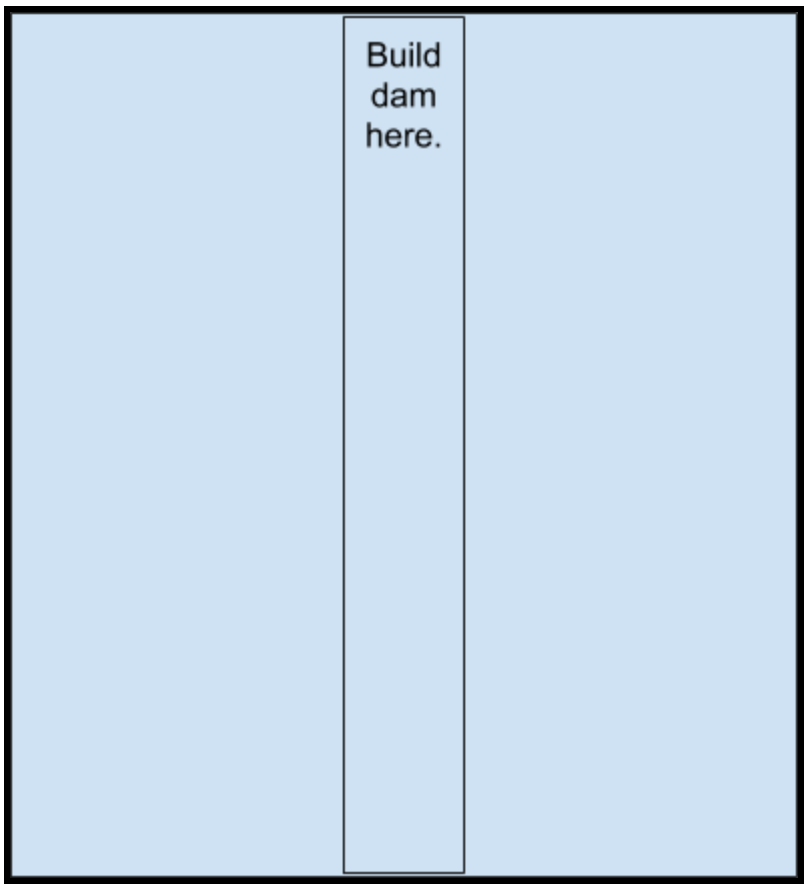
Water Warriors **NRWI Lesson K-3**

Name_____

1. Using clay, stones and sticks, build a beaver dam in the middle of your tray.



2. Does your dam keep the water back? YES NO

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