

2026
Conservation Education
Classroom Lessons
Grades K-8



Jessica Dunn, Conservation Education Coordinator
Jessica.dunn.swcd@gmail.com
740-259-9231

Scioto Soil and Water Conservation District is proud to offer the following SWCD educator-led classroom lessons. These projects are available *free* to all Scioto County Schools. These lessons are aligned to the Ohio State Standards for Science. Advance scheduling is recommended.

Kindergarten

Rain Gauges - Students will explore the weather of each of the four seasons before engineering a classroom rain gauge for measuring rainfall. We will discuss how plants live and grow and the importance of water for plants and rain to farming.

Intro to birding - Enter the world of birds. Students will learn about the structure of birds and the functions of those structures. We will look at local Ohio birds as well as birds around the world. Students will play a bird matching game and be invited on a nature walk to look for signs of birds.

1st Grade

Water on Earth - Students will learn about bodies of water and simple ways we can conserve water. This lesson also includes a discussion reducing, reusing, and recycling.

Bird feeders - Presentation includes discussing bird feed choices and feed types and installing one outside the classroom for observation. Can include student activity to craft their own bird treat to take home.

2nd Grade

Incredible Journey - A game that explores the water cycle and allows the student to imagine the experience of the cycle from the perspective of a rain drop. Includes storytelling about their journey.

Worm Composting - Craft a classroom worm composting bin to begin to observe the decomposers in action!

Enviroscape - Explore how humans can impact the ecosystem by evaluating the movement of water over the surface of the land and witnessing the results of human land use and pollution.

3rd Grade

Into to Soils - Students will explore the world of soil and even work as a class to make soil. Presentation includes several soil samples to illustrate air, mineral, and water components of soil. A felt depiction of the soil layers and soil life is also included in the lesson.

Rock Cookies - By investigating the characteristics of cookies and rock samples the students will learn how to view rocks and examine texture and composition.

3rd Grade Continued

Bluebird House Project - Participating 3rd Grade teachers will receive a bluebird nest box to install and monitor through the spring. In class presentation will include the blue bird life cycle, the importance of nest boxes, and how to care for and monitor bluebird nest boxes.

Furs - This lesson delves into our mammal fur collection and explores how traits of different animal furs are perfect for their lifestyle and environment.

Skulls - Learn how to be a skull detective and evaluate physical features in the skull and how they fit the needs in life of the animal. Special emphasis on predator and prey features.

4th Grade

Landforms - Learn about the water available on the planet by playing games and discussion. Also explore some of the impacts water can have on the land by making a sinkhole model in class.

Weathering - The earth is impacted by many weathering variables. The class will explore several weathering experiments and make observations.

Erosion - Delve in the wet sand of the streamtable model and learn about stream erosion, stream dynamics, and sedimentation. This is a wonderful lesson to see erosion in action.

Ohio Wildlife History - A presentation that covers the history of wildlife in Ohio beginning with the lush land the new settlers and trappers found upon arrival through the dark days of the Great Hinkley Hunt and Iron Furnaces to the current recovery of many wildlife populations.

5th Grade

Poster Contest - A yearly nationwide poster contest with a natural resource theme. Presentations offered in early fall. Students that participate have the chance to win small prizes and recognition at an awards dinner. Deadline for submissions is the end of October.

Owl Pellets- Explore the food web with a lesson on owls of Ohio and the dissection of one of their pellets.

Pollinators!- A fun look at the importance of pollinators and the complex relationship they have with flowers.

6th Grade

Geology 101 - A great introduction to the rock cycle. Includes an exciting and memorable activity turning crayons into rocks. Many different rock samples to explore and great insight into the beginning study of geology.

Ohio Minerals - Students will explore the ODNR Division of Geology's Ohio Mineral Kits and learn about the products and resources produced in and from Ohio minerals.

Advanced Soils - Review soil composition and soil layers while also looking into soil structure. Presentation will include a simple soil test and discussion of nutrients.

7th Grade

Groundwater - Groundwater is always such a mystery or at best an abstract concept, but with the help of our groundwater model students will have the opportunity to learn about aquifers, contaminants, and more.

Stormwater - Explore the flow of stormwater and the impact that the land and land use can have on water quality by spending some time with our enviroscape model. Also includes stormwater management strategies.

Macroinvertebrates - Learn about evaluating a stream's water quality through the life present in the stream. Presentation involves life cycles of several macroinvertebrates and a mock stream sampling and evaluation. Special focus on the impact of pollution on the stream ecosystem.

8th Grade

Glaciers and Landform Changes - Explore the local history of the Scioto, Ohio, and ancestral Teays Rivers. Learn about the long term impact and damage a glacier can have on the land. Can include a review of stream dynamics and erosion with the stream table unit.

Topographic Maps - Class will make a 3D topographic map out of clay and explore the component of height on maps. Includes exploring local topographic maps and identifying watersheds as a practical application.

***Each lesson can be adapted or utilized in other grade levels.**