

Our mission is to increase awareness and understanding of agriculture among New Jersey educators and students. You can learn more on our website

[newjersey.agclassroom.org](http://newjersey.agclassroom.org)

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## Let's Hope for April Showers

April usually brings a sigh of relief - the dreary, cold days of winter are over and the balmy days of spring are beginning. Spring this year will be particularly welcome, after the heaps of snow that fell and then stayed and stayed.

After all the winter precipitation, it may surprise you to learn that New Jersey remains under a statewide drought warning. The NJ Department of Environmental Protection says the below-average precipitation throughout the winter has provided limited improvement to an already low water supply. A drought warning, which asks residents to voluntarily conserve water, is one step from a drought emergency with mandatory water restrictions.

So this month seems like an opportune time to teach students about the water cycle, and Earth's finite water resources and how to conserve them. Below we've highlighted our favorite water lessons for all grade levels.

***"We forget that  
the water cycle  
and the life cycle  
are one."***

*--Jacques Cousteau*



## Earth Day is April 22

The annual celebration of Earth Day will be held this year on April 22. Below are our two favorite quick and easy lessons, suitable for any grade level, that show students why it is crucial to conserve and protect our natural resources.

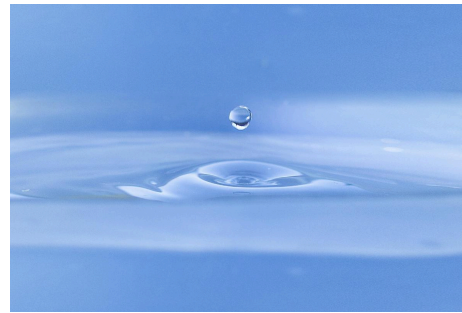


## The Earth as an Apple *How much land is there to grow food?*

The Earth may seem like a big place, but the small amount of land available to grow food will surprise your students.

This simple activity will demonstrate to them how little land can be used for farming and start a discussion about why this land needs to be preserved.

For the K-5 lesson, click [here](#).  
For the 6-8 lesson, click [here](#).  
For the 9-12 lesson, click [here](#).



## All the Water in the World

This simple demonstration will give your students a striking picture of how little water on Earth is available for humans, animals, and plants to use.

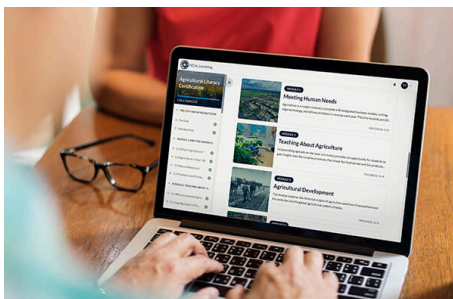
Even though three-quarters of Earth is covered with water, only a tiny amount is usable fresh water.

Get your students talking about why it's important to conserve water and how they can help.

Click [here](#) for the lesson that can be modified for all grades.

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## Introducing Agricultural Literacy Certification for Educators



The National Agriculture in the Classroom Organization has created a self-paced online course for K-12 teachers to become certified agricultural literacy educators.

Agriculture is so ubiquitous, it's difficult to have a complete understanding of our modern existence without at least a basic understanding of agriculture.

In the Agricultural Literacy Certification course, you will explore the diverse field of agriculture, learn about its pivotal role in society, and get a better understanding of how agriculture can be integrated into your curriculum to enhance your students' understanding of the world around them.

The online course takes about 12 hours to complete, with no time limit on completion. There is a \$25 charge to enroll. For more information and to enroll, click [here](#).

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## Join Our Team! Be an NJAITC Educator

New Jersey Agriculture in the Classroom is seeking a part-time agricultural literacy educator to help us inspire teachers to show the next generation where their food, fiber, and fuel come from.

We are flexible, so if you are interested, let's talk. Email program leader Caroline Etsch at [njagliteracy@gmail.com](mailto:njagliteracy@gmail.com).

## Registration Now Open for National Ag in the Classroom Conference

The National Agriculture in the Classroom annual conference is on the East Coast this year, and registration is open. The conference will be held in Providence, RI June 22-25.

NAITCO's annual conference is the best place to learn how to incorporate agriculture into your core curriculum. There are farm tours, workshops, guest speakers, and the chance to network with lots of agricultural educators.



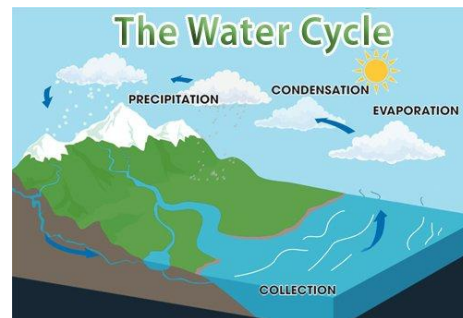
To find out more about the conference and to register, click [here](#). To find out more about the New Jersey contingent attending, email [njagliteracy@gmail.com](mailto:njagliteracy@gmail.com).

## Lessons of the Month



### How to Measure Rain Grade 2-5 *can be modified for older students*

Students discuss the importance of water in growing food and how rainfall benefits our gardens and crops



### Creating the Water Cycle Grades 2-5 *can be modified for older grades*

What better way to teach the water cycle than to have your students recreate the process in terrariums they build themselves?

With just a 2-liter soda bottle, students build a rain gauge so that they can measure the weekly rainfall and track the pattern of rain where they live.

After tracking the rainfall for a growing season, students can make a graph of their findings and compare it to the average rainfall for the season.

Click [here](#) for the lesson.



## Learn, Protect, and Promote Water Grades 6-8

Students learn about water sources, water pollution, and water protection.

They participate in an activity where they demonstrate the water cycle and see the potential for our water supply to become contaminated.

Click [here](#) for the lesson.

In this lesson, students observe evaporation, condensation, and precipitation while also watching seeds germinate and sprout.

All you need are some plastic salad containers such as a restaurant takeout container, some potting soil, and seeds.

Click [here](#) for the lesson

Image courtesy:  
[easysciencefor kids.com](http://easysciencefor kids.com)



## The Water Footprint of Food Grades 9-12

Students explore concepts of sustainability by evaluating the water footprint of food.

They are introduced to irrigation practices throughout the world, consumptive and non-consumptive water use, and investigate the water requirements for various food crops.

Click [here](#) for the lesson.

## Incredible Journey Water Cycle Game *Suitable for grades 3 and up*

Picture a class of students scurrying all over the room, pretending they are drops of water moving through the water cycle. A roll of the dice might send them evaporating into the clouds, condensing into the ocean, or transpiring from a plant. All the while they record their journey, by collecting colored beads at every stop or making tallies.

It takes a bit of prep to create this fun and engaging game, but once done, you can use it for years.

Click [here](#) for the entire lesson  
Click [here](#) for the game station pictures.  
Click [here](#) for the game dice labels.



## Library Corner

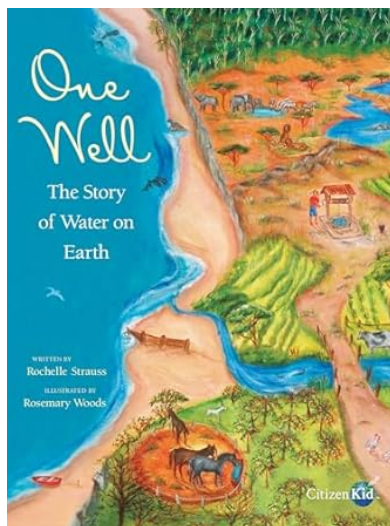


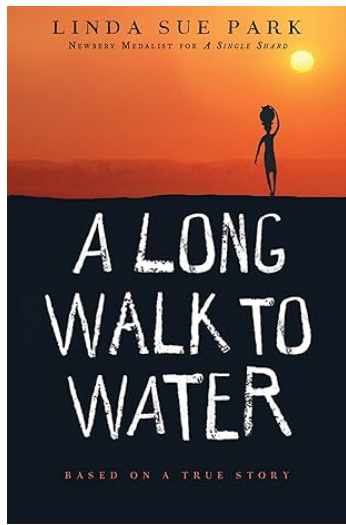
### The Great Big Water Cycle Adventure By Kay Barnham Grades K-3

This picture book answers the question: *Where does water come from and where does it go?* Children will journey through rivers, clouds, and rainstorms, exploring the process that keeps our planet's water moving.

### One Well The Story of Water on Earth By Rochelle Strauss Grades 4-7

All water on Earth is connected. Every raindrop, lake, underground river, and glacier is part of a single global well. How we treat the water in the well will affect every species on the planet, now and for years to come. This book shows how every one of us has the power to conserve and protect our global well.





## **A Long Walk to Water** **Based on a True Story** **By Linda Sue Park** **Grades 6 and up**

This book tells the stories of two 11-year-olds in Sudan, a girl in 2008 and a boy in 1985. The girl, Nya, fetches water from a pond that is a two-hour walk from her home. She makes two trips to the pond every day. The boy, Salva, becomes one of the “lost boys” of Sudan, refugees who walk the African continent searching for their families and for a safe place to stay. Their two lives eventually intersect.

### **April Ag Gag**

**If April showers bring  
May flowers, what do  
May flowers bring?**

**Pilgrims!**

***Happy Earth Day!***



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