Name: _____ Date: _____

A Rain Garden Catches Water Before It Runs Off

Circle group

Rain that lands on a roof, a driveway, or a street cannot soak into the ground. It rushes over the hard surface and pours into storm drains. This water is called runoff. It carries oil, dirt, and litter. It ends up in a nearby stream. A sudden flood of runoff can wash away the banks of the stream.

A rain garden is one simple answer. It is a shallow dip in a yard. It is filled with soft soil and plants. The plants can live through wet weeks and dry ones. People often put it where a downspout empties or where water already flows.

In a storm, the dip fills like a shallow bowl. Then the water slowly soaks down through the soil, usually in a day or two. Plant roots make tiny paths that help the water sink in. The soil holds back much of the dirt and some pollution. The water that reaches the ground is cleaner. The flowers feed bees and butterflies. One small garden helps a stream and makes a yard prettier.

Questions

1. What is runoff?

_____

_____

2. What bad things can runoff carry to a stream?

_____

_____

3. What is a rain garden?

_____

_____

4. Where do people often put a rain garden?

_____

_____

5. How do plant roots help a rain garden work?

_____

_____

6. Why does one small rain garden help both streams and wildlife?

_____

_____

Words to know

runoff: rainwater that flows over the ground instead of soaking in
storm drains: openings in streets that carry rainwater away
downspout: a pipe that carries rainwater down from a roof
pollution: harmful stuff that makes air, soil, or water dirty
shallow: not deep

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

A Rain Garden Catches Water Before It Runs Off

Triangle group

When rain falls on a roof, a driveway, or a street, it cannot soak into the ground. Instead it rushes along the hard surface and pours into storm drains. This water is called runoff. It often carries oil, dirt, and litter with it, and it ends up in a nearby stream. A sudden flood of runoff can even wash away the banks of that stream.

A rain garden is one simple answer. It is a shallow dip in a yard, filled with soft soil and plants that can live through both wet weeks and dry ones. People often place it where a downspout empties or where water already tends to flow.

During a storm, the dip fills like a shallow bowl. Then the water slowly soaks down through the soil, usually within a day or two. Plant roots open up tiny paths that help the water sink in. As it passes through, the soil holds back much of the dirt and some of the pollution, so the water that reaches the ground is cleaner. The flowers also give food to bees and butterflies. One small garden can protect a stream and make a yard prettier at once.

Questions

1. What is runoff?

_____

_____

2. What bad things can runoff carry to a stream?

_____

_____

3. What is a rain garden?

_____

_____

4. Where do people often place a rain garden?

_____

_____

5. How do plant roots help a rain garden work?

_____

_____

6. Why does one small rain garden help both streams and wildlife?

_____

_____

Words to know

runoff: rainwater that flows over the ground instead of soaking in
storm drains: openings in streets that carry rainwater away
downspout: a pipe that carries rainwater down from a roof
pollution: harmful stuff that makes air, soil, or water dirty
shallow: not deep

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

A Rain Garden Catches Water Before It Runs Off

Square group

When rain falls on a roof, a driveway, or a paved street, it cannot soak into the ground. Instead, it races across the hard surface and pours into storm drains. This water is known as runoff. It frequently carries oil, dirt, and litter along with it, and it eventually empties into a nearby stream. A sudden surge of runoff can even wash away the banks of that stream.

A rain garden is one simple and attractive solution. It is a shallow dip in a yard, filled with soft, absorbent soil and with plants that can survive both rainy weeks and dry ones. People often place it where a downspout empties or where water already tends to gather and flow.

During a storm, the dip fills like a shallow bowl. Afterward, the water gradually soaks down through the soil, typically within a day or two. Plant roots open up tiny pathways that help the water sink in, and as it passes through, the soil holds back much of the dirt and some of the pollution, so the water that reaches the ground is cleaner. The blossoms also provide food for bees and butterflies. A single small garden can protect a stream and beautify a yard at the same time.

Questions

1. What is runoff?

_____

_____

2. What harmful things can runoff carry into a stream?

_____

_____

3. What is a rain garden?

_____

_____

4. Where do people often place a rain garden?

_____

_____

5. How do plant roots help a rain garden do its job?

_____

_____

6. Why can one small rain garden help both streams and wildlife?

_____

_____

Words to know

runoff: rainwater that flows over the ground instead of soaking in
storm drains: openings in streets that carry rainwater away
downspout: a pipe that carries rainwater down from a roof
pollution: harmful stuff that makes air, soil, or water dirty
shallow: not deep

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: A Rain Garden Catches Water Before It Runs Off

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: A Rain Garden Catches Water Before It Runs Off

Easier · 176 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.1

1. Rainwater that rushes over hard surfaces and into storm drains instead of soaking in.
2. Oil, dirt, and litter.
3. A shallow dip in a yard with soft soil and plants that can handle wet and dry weather.
4. Where a downspout empties or where water already flows.
5. They make tiny paths in the soil that help water sink in.
6. It cleans the water that reaches the ground, and its flowers feed bees and butterflies.

Triangle: A Rain Garden Catches Water Before It Runs Off

This passage · 197 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5

1. Rainwater that rushes over hard surfaces and into storm drains instead of soaking into the ground.
2. Oil, dirt, and litter.
3. A shallow dip in a yard with soft soil and plants that can handle wet and dry weather.
4. Where a downspout empties or where water already tends to flow.
5. They open tiny paths in the soil that help water sink in.
6. It cleans the water that reaches the ground, and its flowers feed bees and butterflies.

Square: A Rain Garden Catches Water Before It Runs Off

Harder · 208 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.9

1. Rainwater that races over hard surfaces and into storm drains instead of soaking into the ground.
2. Oil, dirt, and litter.
3. A shallow dip in a yard with soft soil and plants that can survive both wet and dry weather.
4. Where a downspout empties or where water already tends to flow.
5. They open tiny pathways in the soil that help the water sink in.
6. It cleans the water that reaches the ground, and its blossoms feed bees and butterflies.