

WHERE DID THE RAIN GO?

Grades 3–6 • Water Science • Runoff • Infiltration • Erosion

YOUR QUESTION

Rain falls everywhere, but it does not always stay in the same place.
How do different surfaces affect where water goes?

1. FIND THREE SURFACES

Choose three safe places to observe after a rain or water them on dry day.

A. HARD SURFACE

Sidewalk, driveway, or pavement

B. BARE SOIL

Dirt or a garden with little
or no plants

C. COVERED SURFACE

Grass, plants, or mulch

2. MAKE A PREDICTION

Which surface do you think will have the most runoff? _____ Why? _____

Which surface do you think will let the most water soak into the ground? _____ Why? _____

3. OBSERVE WHAT THE WATER DOES

What did you observe?	Hard surface	Bare soil	Covered soil
Did water move across the surface?	☐ yes ☐ no	☐ yes ☐ no	☐ yes ☐ no
Did water soak in?	☐ yes ☐ no	☐ yes ☐ no	☐ yes ☐ no
Did soil move with the water?	☐ yes ☐ no	☐ yes ☐ no	☐ yes ☐ no
Did water collect in a low spot?	☐ yes ☐ no	☐ yes ☐ no	☐ yes ☐ no

4. RECORD EVIDENCE

Where did you see the fastest-moving water? _____

Where did you see the most water soaking into the ground? _____

Where did you see evidence of erosion or moving soil? _____

THINK LIKE A SCIENTIST

How might plant cover change what happens when it rains? What could people do in their yards, schools, or communities to help more water soak into the ground?
