

Anacostia Field Experience

Mapping Your River



Anacostia Riverkeeper offers these educational experiences when out exploring the watershed. Feel free to print & use when exploring on your own!

Anacostia Field Experience: Mapping Your River

Suggested Grade Band:	Grades 3-5
Next Generation Science Standard:	5-ESS3-1: <i>Obtain and combine information about ways individual communities use science ideas to protect the earth's resources and environment.</i>

Background Information

The Anacostia River flows from the Maryland suburbs of Washington, DC to its mouth at the Potomac River near downtown Washington. Its watershed encompasses 176 square miles and contains 13 subwatersheds in southeast Washington, DC and Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland. The watershed is composed of three main drainage areas - the Northeast Branch, the Northwest Branch, and the tidal river. The Northeast and Northwest Branches converge in Bladensburg, MD and form the tidal Anacostia River, which flows 8.4 miles through Maryland and Washington, DC until it meets the Potomac River at Hain's Point.

Supporting Materials & Resources

To help you (& your students) understand this data, we suggest the following websites & readings:

- DOEE [Water in the District Homepage](#)
- Anacostia Riverkeeper's [resources page](#) (maps, info, & more!)



Anacostia Experience Mapping Your River



A watershed is a landmass in which all water drains into a particular waterbody, like a lake or a river. This means, if a drop of rain fell anywhere into the map at left, it would end up in the Anacostia River! The watershed is both made up of the river itself, and the smaller tributaries (brooks and streams) that lead into it!

On the map at left, mark the following:

(1) STAR the area you are standing today!

(2) TRIANGLE the location where the river seems to be at its widest

(3) CIRCLE the end of the main-stem river!

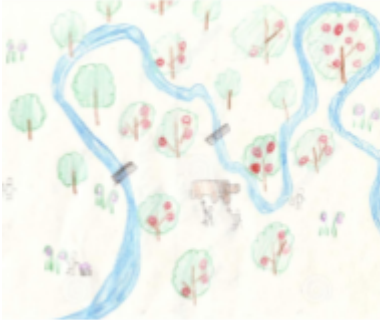
(4) UNDERLINE the name of the longest tributary

(5) BOX the southernmost tributary in the Anacostia

(6) SMILE on a place you love to visit in the Anacostia!

Mapping Your Water Quality

Below, draw a map of your water sampling site. Think of this as a drone shot- what does the stream or river you are closest to look like in the area you could walk to in 1-2 minutes



Include on your map:

- What direction is the water moving?
- Any bridges, roads, or other man-made objects near the river?
- What does the bank look like? Grass, mud, rocks, etc?
- Any trash or other debris in the water?
- Any smaller streams flowing into the water? Puddles nearby?
- Any signs of plant or animal life in the water?

Think!

In your areas, where might the water be cleanest?

Where might the water be dirtiest?

Why?