



# THE READING LINK

for *The Science of Water Teacher's Guide and Mystery of the Muddled Marsh*

Written by

Barbara Z. Tharp, M.S.  
Judith Dresden, M.S.  
Nancy P. Moreno Ph.D.



BioEd Teacher Resources from the Center for Educational Outreach

© Baylor College of Medicine



Read Main Idea

Conclusions  
Write

This Reading Link contains ready-to-use reading and language arts activities that are aligned with The Science of Water integrated unit. It is not intended to represent a comprehensive reading program. The activities are related to language arts objectives common to many curricula and cover a range of grade and ability levels. Teachers may wish to select from these activities those that are most appropriate for their own students.

# BioEd<sup>SM</sup>

Teacher Resources from the Center for Educational Outreach at Baylor College of Medicine.

© 2010 by Baylor College of Medicine  
All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America

No part of this book may be reproduced by any mechanical, photographic or electronic process, or in the form of an audio recording, nor may it be stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, or otherwise copied for public or private use without prior written permission of the publisher.  
Black-line masters reproduced for classroom use are excepted.

The activities described in this book are intended for school-age children under direct supervision of adults. The authors, Baylor College of Medicine and the publisher cannot be responsible for any accidents or injuries that may result from conduct of the activities, from not specifically following directions, or from ignoring cautions contained in the text.

Development of The Science of Water: The Reading Link, originally published as a My Health My World® component, was supported by grant number R25 ES10698 from the National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. The opinions, findings and conclusions expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Baylor College of Medicine, the sponsoring agency or the publisher.

The mark "BioEd" is a service mark of Baylor College of Medicine. The mark "My Health My World" are trademarks of Baylor College of Medicine.

---

Authors: Barbara Z. Tharp, M.S., Judith Dresden, M.S., and Nancy P. Moreno, Ph.D.

Editor: James P. Denk

Design: Martha S. Young

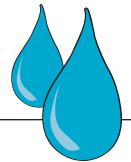
Illustrations: T Lewis and Martha S. Young

---



Center for Educational Outreach  
Baylor College of Medicine  
One Baylor Plaza, BCM411  
Houston, Texas 77030  
713-798-8200 / 800-798-8244  
[www.bioedonline.org](http://www.bioedonline.org) | [www.k8science.org](http://www.k8science.org) | [www.bcm.edu/edoutreach](http://www.bcm.edu/edoutreach)

# Word Meaning/Context Clues



Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Find the word that fits best in each blank space. Fill in the circle next to your answer.

a. The water in the creek was so \_\_\_\_\_ that Riff could not see the bottom.

- clear
- cold
- polluted
- sparkling

b. The beaver's \_\_\_\_\_, made of sticks and twigs, would not let water go through.

- dam
- garden
- marsh
- pond

c. The \_\_\_\_\_ is causing the plants to grow too much.

- scum
- oxygen
- fertilizer
- turtle

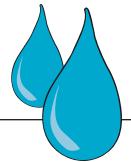
d. If Mr. Otterbee couldn't catch fish to eat, he would have to become

a \_\_\_\_\_.

- vegetarian
- carpenter
- reptile
- dinosaur



# Word Meaning/Context Clues (cont.)



2. **Many Meanings.** Sometimes a word can have more than one meaning. Look at the different meanings for gear and spring. Then pick the meaning of those words that fits best in each sentence. Write its number next to the sentence.

## gear

1. part of a machine that controls speed
2. equipment; things to use for a special purpose

\_\_\_\_\_ Riff threw his camping gear into his backpack.

\_\_\_\_\_ Mr. Otterbee shifted the tractor into high gear.

## spring

1. jump up; leap
2. coiled wire used in chairs and beds
3. season between winter and summer
4. flow of water out of the ground

\_\_\_\_\_ Water bubbled up from the spring.

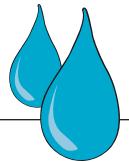
\_\_\_\_\_ Watch Rosie spring off the diving board.

\_\_\_\_\_ A spring was popping out of the sofa.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tulips bloom in the spring.



## Word Meaning/Context Clues (cont.)



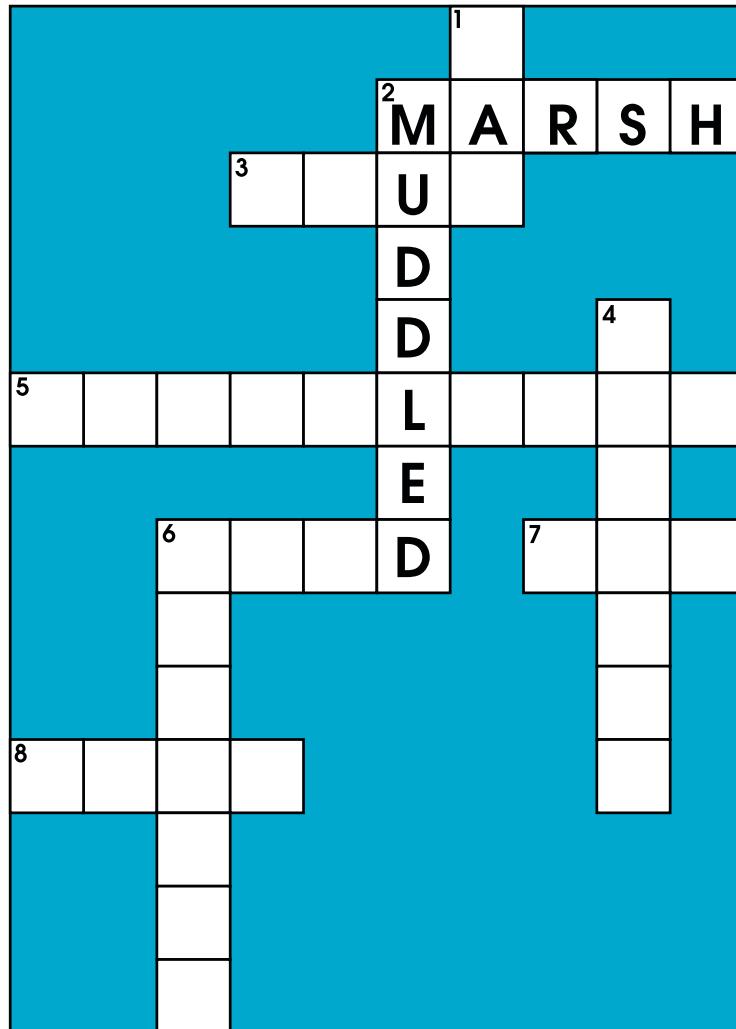
3. A Muddled Marsh Crossword Puzzle. All of the words in this crossword puzzle are in the story, *Mystery of the Muddled Marsh*.

### Across

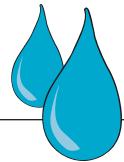
2. Low, wet land covered by grasses and other small plants
3. A slimy coating on top of water
5. A substance added to soil so that plants will grow better
6. A body of water that is smaller than a lake
7. Not young, but \_\_\_\_\_
8. To bend one part over another

### Down

1. A barrier across a waterway that controls the flow of water
2. Mixed up; messed up
4. Land covered with shallow water most of the time
6. To make dirty or impure



# Sequence of Events



Name \_\_\_\_\_



1. Read pages 1 and 2 in *Mystery of the Muddled Marsh*. Which one of the three things below happened FIRST? Write 1 next to it. Then write 2 by the event that happened next, and 3 by the one that happened last.

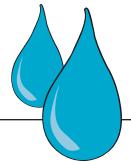
- Riff almost knocked Mr. Slaptail into the pond.
- Rosie bumped into Mrs. Pondslider.
- Rosie bet that her boat would beat Riff's boat across the pond.

2. After you have read the whole story, find which event below happened LAST. Write 4 next to it. Then write the numbers 1, 2 and 3 to show the order in which the other events happened.

- Riff, Rosie and Mr. Slaptail discovered the new park, with new grass and plants.
- Riff and Rosie met all of the neighbors as they were moving out of the marsh.
- All of the neighbors got together to clean up the marsh.
- Riff, Rosie and Mr. Slaptail learned that there were no fish to be found in the marsh, and that the marsh was full of scum and weeds.



# Cause and Effect Relationships



Name \_\_\_\_\_



Read pages 3 and 4 in the storybook. Then write your answers to these questions.

1. Why was Mrs. Pondslider leaving?

---

---

---

2. Why did the water hit Rosie in the face?

---

---

---

3. Why couldn't Mr. Slaptail see the stems of his hyacinths?

---

---

---

4. Why was Oscar Otterbee in Mr. Slaptail's pond?

---

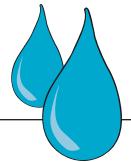
---

---

---



## Details and Supporting Ideas



Name \_\_\_\_\_

1. Look at the picture on pages 22 and 23. In your own words, write down what you see. Tell who, where and what. Include as many details as you can.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. Think of all the characters you can remember from the story. Then choose which one is your *favorite*. Tell why you like that character the best, giving as many reasons as you can.

My favorite character in the story, *Mystery of the Muddled Marsh*,

is \_\_\_\_\_. That is because:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

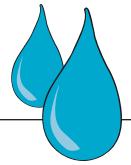
---

---

---



# Main Idea



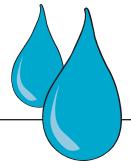
Name \_\_\_\_\_



1. Look at the yellow box at the bottom of page 5. Which sentence below best tells the main idea of this Science Box? Fill in the circle by your answer.
  - I could use a cool glass of water right now!
  - Water helps us stay healthy.
  - We use water to keep ourselves clean.
  - Most water comes from things we drink.
  
2. Look at the Grasshopper's Science Box on page 14. Which sentence below best tells the main idea? Fill in the circle by your answer.
  - Water comes into the body through the mouth.
  - The kidneys are the body's waste treatment plants.
  - Water is very important inside the body.
  - Liquids inside our body, like blood, are made mostly of water.



# Fact and Opinion



## Following Written Directions

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Facts are true. Opinions are what someone thinks, but they might not be true. Tell whether you think each of these sentences from the story states a fact or an opinion. Write F or O in each space. (Look back in the story if you need to.)

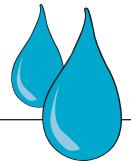
- \_\_\_\_\_ Paper boats will get soggy and sink in a minute. (page 1)
- \_\_\_\_\_ When Beaver Pond gets too full, the water backs up into the marsh. (page 9)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Almost everything on Earth depends on water. (page 13)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Riff is a “Mr. Know-It-All.” (page 14)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Natural spring water comes right out of the ground. (page 16)
- \_\_\_\_\_ An ugly, gasping monster staggered up the hill. (page 19)
- \_\_\_\_\_ The tractor took off without Mr. Otterbee. (page 20)
- \_\_\_\_\_ When it rains, loose soil and fertilizer run into the creek. (page 23)
- \_\_\_\_\_ This boat will win for sure. (page 30)

## Following Written Directions

Follow the directions on pages 32 and 33 to make a paper boat. Work with a partner to make a boat together the first time, and then make and decorate your own boat.



# Summarizing



Name \_\_\_\_\_



1. Read pages 5 to 7. Pretend you are Riff, visiting your cousin Rosie. Write a short note to your family at home, telling them what happened today. (Describe what happened only on pages 5–7.)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

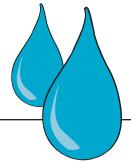
---

2. After you have read the whole story, list 5 things you have learned that we can do to keep our water supply safe and clean.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_



# Inferences, Generalizations and Conclusions



Name \_\_\_\_\_



1. Fill in the circle by the word that shows how each character felt.
  - a. How did Mrs. Pondslider feel when she said, “We can’t live here anymore!”?  
 happy  
 curious  
 sad  
 excited
  - b. How did Riff feel when he said, “What are they talking about? Creeks don’t die.”?  
 happy  
 lucky  
 sad  
 confused
  - c. How did Mr. Slaptail feel when he said, “We worked hard to fix the park, and our water is clean again, so everyone can live here!”?  
 happy  
 angry  
 sad  
 afraid

## Inferences, Generalizations and Conclusions (cont.)



2. After you have read *Mystery of the Muddled Marsh*, decide whether you think each of these sentences is True or False. Mark T or F on the line by each sentence. If you decide a sentence is false, rewrite it below to make it a true statement.

- Riff and Rosie do not care about the environment.
- The marsh became polluted because the people who live there were careless litterbugs.
- Even parks can be damaging to the natural environment if they are not built and taken care of properly.
- Oscar Otterbee was trying to pollute the marsh to anger his neighbors.
- Once water becomes polluted, it can not be cleaned and will remain polluted forever.
- Many types of wildlife live in marshes because there are plenty of food and nesting places.



3. Rewrite False sentences on the lines below to make them true.

---

---

---

---

---

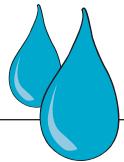
---

---

---



# Predicting Probable Outcomes



Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Think About It!** What do you think will happen in Bright Water Corners after this story ends? How will the neighbors feel when the creek and marsh are healthy again? Do you think everyone learned something from what happened? Will life around the marsh be different from before? Write a paragraph, telling what you predict.



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

