

Projects developed by the students using our garden and stream system address multiple standards in NGSS, including those found in the categories of Interdependent Relationships, Human Impacts, Life Science, and Engineering Design. The practices component of the standards guides the implementation of the students' inquiry investigations.

In addition to providing the breadth of information required by the course outline, students developed a depth of knowledge in an area of interest to them. This knowledge will last a lifetime.

Disney Planet Challenge 2012

State Winners - Oregon

6th Place Nationally

Blanchet Catholic School

Class of 2016

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One Stream at a Time

Engaging students in the
field and classroom



**8th Grade Earth
Science Class**

**Blanchet Catholic School
Salem, Oregon**

Addressing A Local Issue



The stream system on campus provided us an opportunity to solve a problem.

Why Outside Learning?

We began this project in response to the Disney Planet Challenge, a challenge to engage students in finding a solution to a local, current, environmental problem. The students chose Willamette River pollution as a problem to investigate and improve. Students guided the investigation and found a stream system on campus that is part of the Willamette watershed.

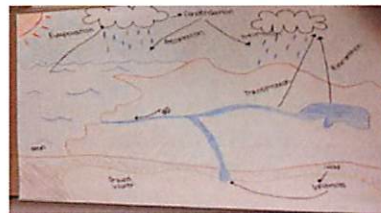
During the course of the project, students listened to guest speakers, spent multiple weekends and out of school time working to improve the quality of the watershed, and worked at Oregon Garden to remove invasive species. The amount of time students volunteered outside of class inspired me.

Learning Outside and Inside the Classroom

After our native plant garden and Disney Planet Challenge were completed, we continued our learning outside through the development of inquiry investigations in the stream and garden areas.

Students engaged in inquiry investigations about macroscopic organisms, pH levels, ground cover, erosion, composting, and more.

Each year, 8th grade students will design and conduct further inquiry investigations in the stream and garden areas.



Example of classroom work related to the stream project

Standards Addressed

Through this project, students addressed English language standards as well as Science Standards. We covered content and inquiry standards, and we stayed on track to cover all of the scope and sequence for our Earth Science course.

In addition to completing the course expectations, students left with a new passion for working to solve real problems in our area.

Incorporating English Language in the project

Students prepared brochures, newspaper contacts, garden guides, videos, a website and bulletin announcements to share our project's message with the community.

Students also presented to the Blanchet School Board and to the Swegle Boys and Girls Club.