

Moorefield Elementary



2nd Graders Capture Rooftop Runoff to Grow Native Plants

The 2nd grade classes at Moorefield Elementary, WV, took part in Grow-a-Garden this spring. The students began the four classroom education lessons shortly after returning from winter break. With spring weather a



distant thought, Cacapon Institute's watershed education specialist began the educational foundation for understanding the role a rain garden will play at the school. Students built model watersheds out of playdough, read stories about pollution and how water travels through many rivers to reach the ocean, labeled the parts of a fish, and made observations about

benthic macroinvertebrates. All of these lessons allowed students to gather an understanding of what and how creatures live in streams as well as how water carries land pollution into the local stream system. Since these streams travel for many miles to reach the Chesapeake Bay, many animals can be harmed along the way. Students also learned that they can plant a rain garden to collect the water and pollution prior to reaching the streams or storm drains.

Two hundred fifty students and six teachers took part in planting the 157-square-foot rain garden with 100 native plant species. Students were excited to get their hands dirty for

cleaner streams. Students found that worms and other insects had already found a home in their garden. The students were able to see how their garden would collect rooftop



runoff from the downspout before it could reach the storm drain at the front of the school.

Many students were inspired to plant gardens at home with their parents. One student had even worked with his father to build a wooden planter for the school. Staff members at the school have already asked him to build another one!

