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# Earthball

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## Materials:

- Earthball with oceans identified
- Map of Georgia with rivers
- Map of Georgia with watersheds

## Objectives

Campers will learn to recognize that the Earth is a water planet and they will become aware of oceans, rivers and of Georgia watersheds.

Campers will become aware of the positive actions they can take to keep the water planet healthy.

Campers will learn that it takes cooperative efforts of many people to make the waters healthy.

## Background

We have been able to take a look around at other planets but Earth is the only one with so much water. Our planet, like no other, has most of its surface covered by water, nearly 80 percent. As far as we know, Earth is the only planet with flowing water.

Water is the most abundant liquid in our world. More than 97 percent of the water on Earth is salty which means that less than 3 percent is available to us and 2 percent of this water is frozen in icecaps or glaciers. .62 percent makes up groundwater and all the water in lakes and rivers makes up .00091 percent. The land animals and some aquatic animals including humans depend on this small amount of water.

If the Earth were perfectly smooth and flat, the surface would be covered by about 1/2 mile of water. All the water on Earth is thought to be old, at least 4 billion years. No new water comes to Earth and the water is recycled again and again. The water cycle or hydrologic cycle means that water is heated by the sun, evaporates to form clouds and then falls to Earth as rain or snow. Some of this water nourishes the Earth before flowing back to the ocean as rivers and glaciers. The oceans receive 2/3 or all solar heat that comes to Earth and this drives the weather systems.

## The Activity- Water/Land Ball

This activity is designed to help younger campers understand that the Earth is a water planet. Campers can also learn the names of the oceans and continents. Campers form a circle and make their place with a rock or index card or whatever you have that will clearly mark the camper's place in the circle. One camper is in the center and rolls (young campers do not have the skill to hit the ball volleyball style) the earthball to anyone in the circle. That camper stops the ball with one finger. If the earthball stops on water the camper says "water" and returns the earthball to the center camper who keeps rolling the earthball to other campers.

If the earthball is stopped on land, he/she says "land" and everyone must change places like musical chairs. The camper in the center tries to take a place in the circle and the camper who cannot find a spot moves to the center to roll the earthball. As play continues, campers will realize that the ball stops mostly on water not land. Count how many times it stops on land and how many times it stops on water. In a different round, name the bodies of water and the continents. IN this case, only run until after the name of the continent is given. Make sure that campers run across the circle to a new space and not just to the space beside them.

### **The Activity- Waterball**

This activity will help campers discover oceans, rivers and watersheds in Georgia. Campers will learn that cooperation is necessary to keep that water planet healthy. Use the information to prepare campers for this activity.

Put campers in a big circle. Choose one camper to be the team recorder who will keep track of the highest score and record the highest score for the team at the end of the activity. Campers will hit the earthball and try to keep it in the air without letting it touch the ground for as long as possible. They will count the number of support hits for the water planet. If the earthball does hit the ground, the camper who gets it will announce ocean, river or watershed. This camper throws the waterball to another camper who should name an ocean, a Georgia major river or Georgia watershed. Campers cannot repeat what someone has used in another round. If the camper cannot think of a name, he/she can throw the waterball to another person who has a chance to answer for the team. If both campers cannot answer, the waterball count starts over again at 0. If the answer is correct the count can continue. Younger campers may only be able to do the 4 major oceans.

### **The Activity- Water Planet Ball**

This activity encourages water stewardship and stresses that it takes the actions of many persons to keep the water planet healthy.

Put campers in a big circle and choose 3 or 4 campers to represent water protection environmental organizations working to keep the water planet healthy. These campers are in the center of the circle in different areas. Begin by counting the number of times the earthball is hit and tell the group to try and keep the earthball supported by keeping it up as long as possible. Campers can hit the earthball more than once if necessary. When the earthball hits the ground the last person to touch the earthball before it hits the ground gets to announce something great they have done for the water planet lately (such as turning off the water when brushing teeth, picking up trash by the river, adopt-a-stream, keeping trash on the boat in the summer, not using chemicals on the lawn, giving water to the birds, making a wildlife pond in the backyard, cutting up 6-pack yokes etc.). After the announcement, everyone cheers, hoops and yells for the action. The camper begins the count again by hitting the earthball to someone in the circle. Count starts over each round and campers try for as high a score as possible.

### **The Activity- Create Your Own Game**

Encourage campers to create their own earthball games.