

What I Learned Walking Home From School.

This morning when I was getting ready for school, I asked my mom if I could walk home today. She said that would be ok as long as I was careful and watched for cars. It was a really nice spring day and when 3:00 rolled around I was looking forward to my walk home. I got my backpack together with all my homework said "see you tomorrow" to my friends and off I went.

This wasn't an ordinary walk home. In school today we talked about Storm Water Drainage. When it rains the water from the rain washes over our land and it soaks up into the earth except that it runs off of **Impervious Surfaces**, which are things like the roof of your house, the driveway and nearby streets. When the water runs off these surfaces the water then goes into the storm water drainage system and then makes its way to our lakes, rivers and streams. So on my way home I noticed some things that my community and neighbors were doing in their everyday lives that were not good for our lakes, rivers and streams.

First: I saw Mr. Jacobson mowing his lawn. He left all his clippings scattered on his driveway and in the neighboring street. (Dump the container that has the picture of someone mowing the lawn on it into the bowl of water.)

Second: I kept walking and saw Miss. Swanson using the leaf blower to clear her shrubs of last fall's leaves and was blowing them into the street. (Dump the container with the picture of leaves on it into the bowl of water.)

Third: I then came upon a group of guys getting ready to go fishing and I noticed while they were filling up the boat with gas they spilled a little one the street. (Dump the container with the picture of gasoline into the bowl of water.)

Fourth: Just a few more feet down the way I noticed a guy going pee behind the tree down by the pier. (Dump the container with a picture of a tree on it into the bowl of water)

Fifth: I didn't want to stare so I kept walking I was my big sisters friend Melissa walking her dog and her dog went to the bathroom and she forgot to pick up the mess. (Dump the container with the picture of a dog on it into the bowl of water.)

Sixth: I said "hi" and kept on my journey home. I stopped by the new construction site of the new Mall being built and notice that the soil and dirt was overflowing into the street and I had to carefully walk around it. (Dump the container with the picture of a bulldozer on it into the water.)

Seventh: I had to keep moving or I was going to be late and my mom was going to worry about me. So as I kept moving I noticed John Doe the local mechanic changing the oil of his truck, he must have spilled because oil was running down the driveway. (Dump the container with the picture of oil can on it into the water.)

Eighth: The neighbor next to John Doe was washing his truck and all the soapy water was rushing down his driveway into the street. (Dump the container with the picture of someone washing their car on it into the water.)

Ninth: There are just a few blocks left to my walk home. I then came up to the local restaurant where there were a lot of people eating outside on the patio. It was a bit windy and their chip bags and napkins were blowing into the street. (Dump the container with the picture of garbage on it into the water.)

Tenth: I'm finally to my street and I can see my house. On the corner of my street I noticed Mr. Kelly had painted his house. I watched him rinse his paint pan out with the garden hose, as the water ran down the driveway so did the paint. (Dump the container with the picture of a paint can on it into the water.)

Eleventh: As I continued on towards my house I noticed one more thing, Mrs. Green was fertilizing her yard and she over shot into the street and the fertilizer was everywhere. (Dump the container with the picture of fertilizer on it into the water.)

When I finally walked into the house, my mom gave me a big hug and asked me how the walk home was. I explained to her that our neighborhood needs to be more aware of the pollutants we are letting run into our lakes, rivers and streams. I told her at school today we learned about **Storm Water Pollution**, and how when it rains the water that runs off the **Impervious Surfaces** carries our pollutants into the streets, down the storm water drains and into our lakes, rivers, and streams. And this is what the teacher said our lakes, rivers and streams will look like if we are not more careful! (**POINT TO THE DIRTY BOWL OF WATER.**)

What you will need for the Demo:

- Large CLEAR glass/plastic bowl (clear is best)
- water to fill the bowl
- 11 small containers (preferably not clear)
- Some grass clippings (mowing the lawn)
- leaves (raking leaves in the fall)
- vegetable oil or vinegar (gasoline)
- Mt. Dew or Apple Juice (pee)
- tootsie rolls (doggie doo doo)
- small amount of dirt (construction site)
- Chocolate syrup (oil)
- dish soap (washing the car)
- small pieces of garbage or shredded up paper (litter)
- small amount of a bright color paint (house paint)
- bath salts (fertilizer)

In some way you will need to label each of the bottles so they can be identified with the story. (Example: walking the dog...a picture of a dog on the bottle.) Once each of the bottles are labeled place the appropriate item that matches the image of the bottle. Once that is done fill your large bowl with water. Then you can begin the demonstration. As the story is read as you come to the appropriate spot in the story (the highlighted sections) have someone dump that correlating item into the bowl of water. At the end of the story the water will appear very dirty thus showing you STORMWATER POLLUTION.

Note-this is just a guideline, you can create the story however you would like to, and use whatever you want to fill the bottles, just remember to keep it safe for kids and the environment.