

Program one – Explore your local creek

In program one, you will take your class to explore a local creek so they can learn about the importance of our waterways. Embedded in this section are instructions on how to dipnet for and identify macroinvertebrates (or waterbugs) which are indicators of waterway health.

Can't get to a local creek? No problem! We can take you down the creek virtually. Come along and explore the creek with us. We have a range of digital resources to help!

Learning outcomes

Learning Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- 2.4 Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

Learning Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- 3.2 Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

Learning Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

- 4.2 Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- 4.4 Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

Exploring your local creek

Throughout this program, we encourage teachers to use water and waterways as a tool to promote spontaneous exploration, discussion and learning about the local environment. There are many ways to explore water and waterways and promote classroom discussion. One of the best ways to do this, if possible, is to regularly visit your local creek. If you visit it on a seasonal basis, you will notice different changes throughout the year.

This page contains resources and information to help in teaching your students about the importance of our waterways and the animals that live there. If you are unable to visit a creek, you can still use the resources contained here but adapt them to your needs. All resources mentioned below can be found in the resources section of this lesson on the Creek Neighbours online program page.



1. Before you visit the creek, discuss with your class their understanding of creeks. Some example questions:
 - What animals live in, on and by the creek?
 - How would we know if the creek is happy (healthy) or sad (unhealthy)?
 - Where does a creek start and end?
 - What are some rules we need in order to visit the creek safely?



2. Play the video ‘Where Is Gracie?’ before your first creek visit. The video is a virtual exploration of healthy and unhealthy creeks and looks at what creek animals, in particular Gracie the Graceful Treefrog, need to survive. Your students can look for these things when they visit their creek. You can also jump ahead to Section 3 and introduce your very own Gracie toy to the class after the video!

Required resources:

- Where is Gracie? (Video)

3. Before visiting the creek, we advise you to undertake safety audits and preparations to ensure your students’ safety when exploring the creek and its environs, including being aware of recent rainfall which may lead to flash flooding.
4. Before visiting the creek with your students, watch the instructional video ‘How to dipnet’. Dip-netting is done by using hand-held fine mesh net, held open with a hoop, to scoop through the water and catch animals that live there. This video teaches you and your students how to dipnet for macro-invertebrates in your creek. You can either purchase or create your own dip nets for this activity. Here are our DIY instructions for how to easily & cheaply make your own dipnet/s.

Required resources:

- How to dipnet (Video)
- How to make a dipnet (Word doc.)



5. During your visit to the creek, use this printable 'Wildlife of our waterways' to help identify the waterbugs you find. The presence of waterbugs (macroinvertebrates) are important indicators for telling us how healthy or unhealthy a creek system is.

Required resources:

- Wildlife of our waterways (Word doc.)

6. If you are unable to visit a creek in person, use our short video – 'Underwater Explorer' - that takes you on a virtual tour of a variety of creeks throughout Brisbane featuring some of the animals who reside there.

Required resources:

- Underwater Explorer (video)

7. To further extend upon your students' growing understanding of waterway health, we invite you to use this lesson plan for our game – 'Happy creek, sad creek'. It can be played back at your Centre after you have visited the creek.

Required resources:

- Happy Creek, Sad Creek instructions (Word doc.)

8. Because we know how much children love music and singing, we created our very own Creek Neighbours song! Sing it with your class to the tune of Incy Wincy Spider.

Required resources:

- Creek Neighbours song (Word doc.)

We also recommend checking out the resources and support available at [Nature Play QLD](#) – especially if your centre is new to this type of activity. Nature Play QLD's [Resource Hub](#) page is a great starting place.