

2024

Poster, Poetry, and Prose Contest

Theme Focus

Where Does Rain Go?
How Can We Slow the Flow?

Understanding how rain moves through the landscape, the effects of droughts and floods, and how we can adapt to help protect our water resources.

Participants

Illinois 5th and 6th
grade students

Awards

You could win an environmental reference book for your school library and an invitation to the awards ceremony in Springfield.



Entry Guidelines

- Submit entries by February 1, 2024
- Include Entry ID and Release forms
- All entries must be submitted electronically

To access the contest's website, scan the QR code or follow the link:



bit.ly/44lt9Pc

Sponsored by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

Contact: Kristi Morris, Environmental Education Coordinator - Kristi.Morris@illinois.gov

2024 Poster, Poetry, and Prose Contest

Contest Rules, Information, and Timetable

Where Does Rain Go? How Can We Slow the Flow?

Theme Focus: Understanding how rain moves through the landscape, the effects of droughts and floods, and how we can adapt to help protect our water resources.

Participants: Illinois fifth and sixth grade students

Art guidelines:

- Art paper or poster board no smaller than 8-1/2" x 11" and no larger than 12" x 18"
- Markers, crayons, pens, pencils, paints, or graphics software (two-dimensional media only)
- **Must be own work**

Poetry/Prose guidelines:

- One page maximum length, one-sided (no larger than 8-1/2" x 11" sheet)
- Neatly handwritten or typed; minimum 10-point font (must be readable)

Entries must be submitted electronically (word, pdf, jpeg, or tiff files). Please make sure to include the entire work in the photo with appropriate lighting to enhance the quality of the work.

The max number of entries per school is eight.

NOTE: Each student must submit a release form and entry ID with his or her work. Only one person per entry (no group projects).

Each student's work will be judged on:

- Understanding of the concept
- Originality of execution -- no magazine articles, commercial slogans or copyrighted characters or figures
- Clear, accurate message
- Emphasis on the theme focus
- Neatness/attractiveness, legibility/readability, correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar
- Effort that was put into the work

Submission Process:

- Choose **eight entries** (four art and four written works) to represent your school
- Make sure completed identification forms are included
- Each entry must include a release form filled out and signed at the time of submission
- Entries must be emailed no later than **February 1, 2024**
- Email entries, ID and release forms (word, pdf, jpeg or tiff files) to: EPA.contest@illinois.gov

All entries become the property of the Illinois EPA and will be distributed for judging.

Awards:

Each participating student whose work meets the guidelines and requirements will receive a certificate. Finalists will receive a certificate, a ribbon, and an invitation to the awards ceremony in Springfield (subject to change). If we are unable to hold an awards ceremony, or if a student is unable to attend, awards will be mailed to the teacher for distribution. Finalists include top winners, honorable mention, and special recognition. There will be twelve top winners (six in each category) whose work will be displayed as such and will receive an environmental reference book for their school's library.

Contest Timeline and Resources

January 2024	Educators introduce watersheds and the water cycle, how the amount (frequency and duration) of rain impacts the landscape in droughts, floods, and water pollution, and how we can apply conservation practices (slow the flow) to help protect our water resources. Conservation practices can reduce stormwater runoff, which will reduce nonpoint source pollution and flooding impacts on our rivers and lakes and even our city's sewer systems.
January 8-19	Students create posters or written works relating to the theme focus: Where Does Rain Go? How Can We Slow the Flow?
January 22-31	Teachers display posters and poems/prose at their schools. Students and faculty vote to select four posters and four written entries to submit to the Illinois EPA for further judging.
February 1	Teachers submit up to eight entries per school to the Illinois EPA for judging Entries must be submitted electronically no later than February 1, 2024.
February 2024	Judging
April 2024	Awards Ceremony held in Springfield - <i>tentative</i>

If you have any questions, please contact: Kristi Morris, Environmental Education Coordinator, at: kristi.morris@illinois.gov. For more information or to download the participation packet, please visit the website at: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/education/contest/elementary.html>.

Informational resources can be found on the following websites:

- USGS, Water Science School: <https://www.usgs.gov/special-topics/water-science-school>; Water Resources: <https://www.usgs.gov/educational-resources/water-resources-education>
- NOAA, Watersheds, Flooding and Pollution: <https://www.noaa.gov/education/resource-collections/freshwater/watersheds-flooding-and-pollution>
- NASA Climate Kids, Water Cycle: <https://climatekids.nasa.gov/water-cycle/> ; Climate Change: <https://climatekids.nasa.gov/kids-guide-to-climate-change/>
- Friends of the Chicago River, Overflow Action Days: <https://www.chicagoriver.org/issues/policy/overflow-action-days>, MWRCDGC: <https://mwrdd.org/flood-prevention-101> , mwrdd.org/understanding-your-sewer
- IL-IN Sea Grant: <https://iiseagrant.org/>, Flooding and stormwater: [http://www.connectcca.org/sites/default/files/downloads/Flooding%20 Stormwater Tool.pdf](http://www.connectcca.org/sites/default/files/downloads/Flooding%20Stormwater%20Tool.pdf)
- Drought.gov: <https://www.drought.gov/what-is-drought/resources-for-teachers-and-students>
- Kids Against Climate Change: <https://kidsagainstclimatechange.co/start-learning/>
- American Museum of Natural History, Ology: <https://www.amnh.org/explore/ology/climate-change>
- Center for Climate and Energy Solutions: <https://www.c2es.org/content/climate-basics-for-kids/>
- Illinois EPA, NPS: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/water-quality/watershed-management/nonpoint-sources/what-is-nonpoint-source-pollution.html>, What You Can Do: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/water-quality/watershed-management/nonpoint-sources/what-you-can-do.html>
- US EPA, Groundwater and Drinking Water: <https://www.epa.gov/ground-water-and-drinking-water/drinking-water-activities-students-and-teachers>; How's My Waterway?: <https://mywaterway.epa.gov/>, NPS: <https://www.epa.gov/nps>

Art/Poster Entry Identification

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND RETURN IT WITH THE 2024 ART/POSTER ENTRY.

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Parent's Email: _____

School: _____ County: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Educator: _____ Educator's Email: _____

Student's statement about work: _____

Written Entry Identification

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM AND RETURN IT WITH THE 2024 WRITTEN ENTRY.

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Parent's Email: _____

School: _____ County: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Educator: _____ Educator's Email: _____

Student's statement about work: _____

Appearance and Material Release Form 2024

In consideration that (student name), _____,
has entered the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's *Where Does Water Go? How Can We Slow the Flow?* contest and said works are the property of the Illinois EPA, I hereby give my consent to the Illinois EPA to publish my **child's name, school, city, photo, and creative works** on the Illinois EPA's Internet site, publications and social media for educational, informational, marketing or other purposes deemed necessary.

I hereby waive any right that I may otherwise have to inspect or approve the finished product, or the manner of its use chosen by the Illinois EPA. I also release, discharge and agree to hold harmless the Illinois EPA to whom this consent and waiver is given from any liability by virtue of any blurring, distortion, alteration, or use in composite form, whether intentional or otherwise, that may occur or be produced in the taking of said pictures or in any processing, or in the publication and distribution. I understand that I shall receive no compensation whatsoever in connection with the foregoing, beyond my child's opportunity to participate. I hereby waive all rights of privacy in connection with the use of my child's name, school, city, photo, or creative works. I also waive any and all rights, whether explicit or implied, in the material and consent without reservation to the Illinois EPA using, distributing or otherwise making available the material to other parties as it sees fit.

Parent or legal guardian must sign below (unless student is 18 years of age or older):

Parent/Guardian Name

Contact number or email

Address

Parent or Student (*if 18 or older*)

Signature _____ **Date** _____

