

Dear kids, teachers, parents, guardians, and all concerned citizens:

What questions do you have about acid mine drainage, the colors in the water, the critters in the water, or any other water quality questions? This document will help you answer some of those questions and more. It is full of simple experiments that will lead you to some of the answers, but more importantly it will help you understand how important it is to protect, preserve, and learn about our environment.

Dr. Robbins and her sister wrote a science activity book for kids in 1992. (It is now out of print by the federal government and only available from Colorado School of Mines.) It is called "[What's Under Your Feet?](#)" They talked to many scientists while writing the book. One fascinating finding was that most scientists find their vocation (what they would like to do when they grow up) by age 8 or 9. This means that, when they were children, they were making observations about their environment. These observations were so powerful that they formed the basis for understanding how the world works. Now, everyone is not going to become a scientist. But everyone is going to enter the job market. It is my opinion that working with our environmental is going to provide many jobs in the future. I think that if we get the kids out and looking and getting dirty now, they will have a body of observational knowledge needed to compete in that future job market.

The kinds of experiments that are laid out here are some of the very things that scientist do when they are trying to understand the natural environment and to help clean up problems left from past activities. The observations that kids will be making will also be helping present day scientists.

These are our thoughts on why we put these experiments together. We are outdoor people, so we have written this for other outdoor lovers. Some of the experiments are also indoor activities. In the next section is a general description of some goals and objectives we hope to accomplish with these experiments. As you try them and invent new ones at home and at school, please keep these goals and objectives in mind, but also keep fun in mind. Please feel free write or e-mail any of the authors with all of your comments or questions.

Sincerely yours,



WV Save Our Streams Coordinator

Please send your comments, suggestions and stories to the WV Save Our Streams Coordinator

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Being "**scientific**" involves being curious, asking how things happen, and learning how to find the answers. Curiosity is natural to children, but they need help understanding how to make sense of what they see. All we need is a willingness to observe and learn with them, and, above all, to make an effort and take the time to nurture their natural curiosity.