

Part II: Investigating How Pollutants Can Reduce Dissolved-Oxygen Levels

Ask students to compare the prediction they made about dissolved-oxygen levels in the water at the study site to what they actually found. Explain that students will use the online resources for Session 5 to learn more about how pollutants can reduce dissolved-oxygen levels in surface water and affect organisms that live there.



Divide the class into small groups. This activity works well with groups of two to four students. Distribute Student Science Journal page 18. Have students use the procedure from “How Much Oxygen Is in Our Water?” (Part II).

Procedure for Finding Out About Dissolved-Oxygen Levels and Water Quality



Help students use the online resources for the session to find out about dissolved-oxygen levels as an indicator of water quality. The website includes information about where oxygen dissolved in surface water comes from, what parts per million means, and the relationship between dissolved-oxygen levels and water quality. You will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to open the parts-per-million activity sheet. Go to the “Unit Contents” page and click on “Setting Up Your Computer” to download the application.

Have students answer the following Student Science Journal questions:



1. How does most oxygen get into water?



2. How do pollutants cause a decrease in the amount of dissolved oxygen in surface water?



3. What are signs of low levels of dissolved oxygen?

Ask volunteers to share with the class what they discovered about dissolved-oxygen levels and water pollution.