

River Science Visit Activity

Title: Rivers Come in All Shapes and Sizes

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Target Age: Designed for Kindergarten, Adaptable for PreK – 2nd Grade

Activity Length: ~30 minutes

Goal for the Activity:

The main goals for this visit were to: (1) introduce how rivers come in different shapes and sizes, (2) show how scientists can look at rivers using pictures from space, (3) introduce very basic map concepts. We want children to start thinking about rivers on a larger scale and to make connections with why rivers are important.

Materials:

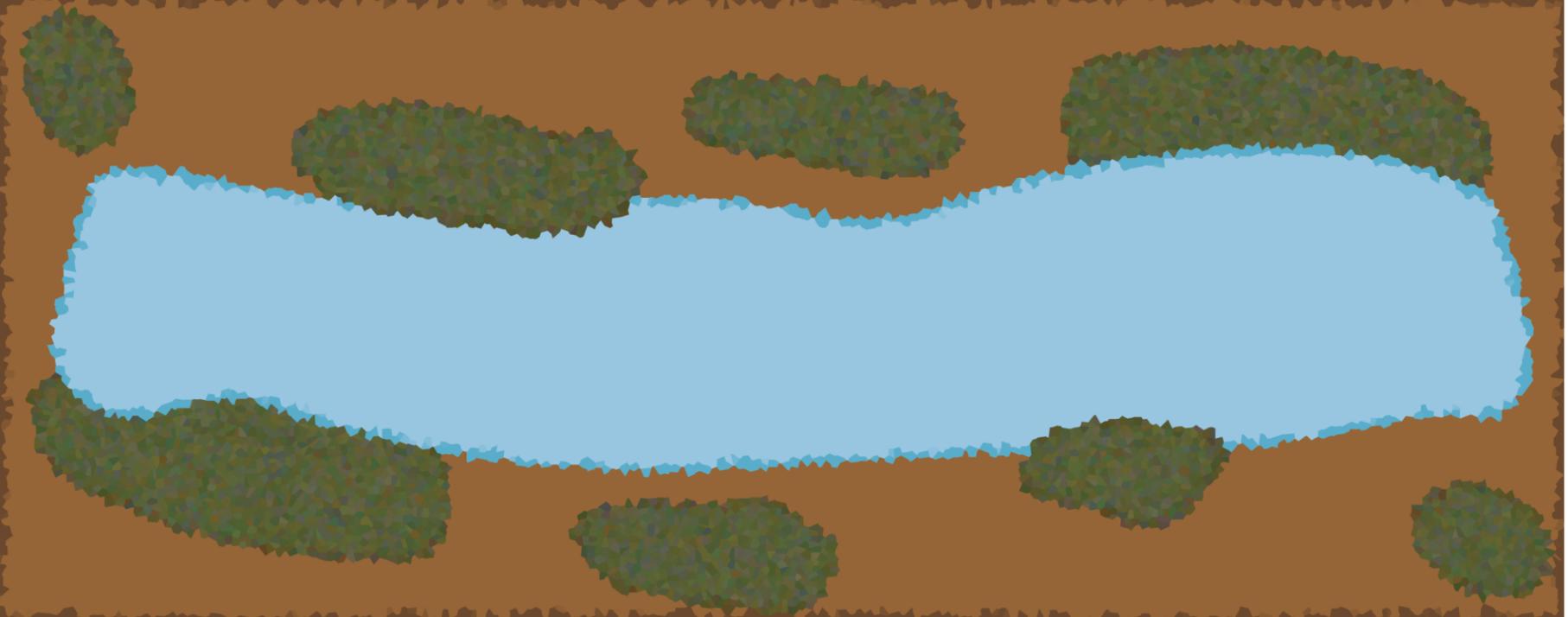
- Small jars of blue playdoh
- **Laminated** placemats with examples of basic river shapes
- Stickers (optional)

How we led the activity:

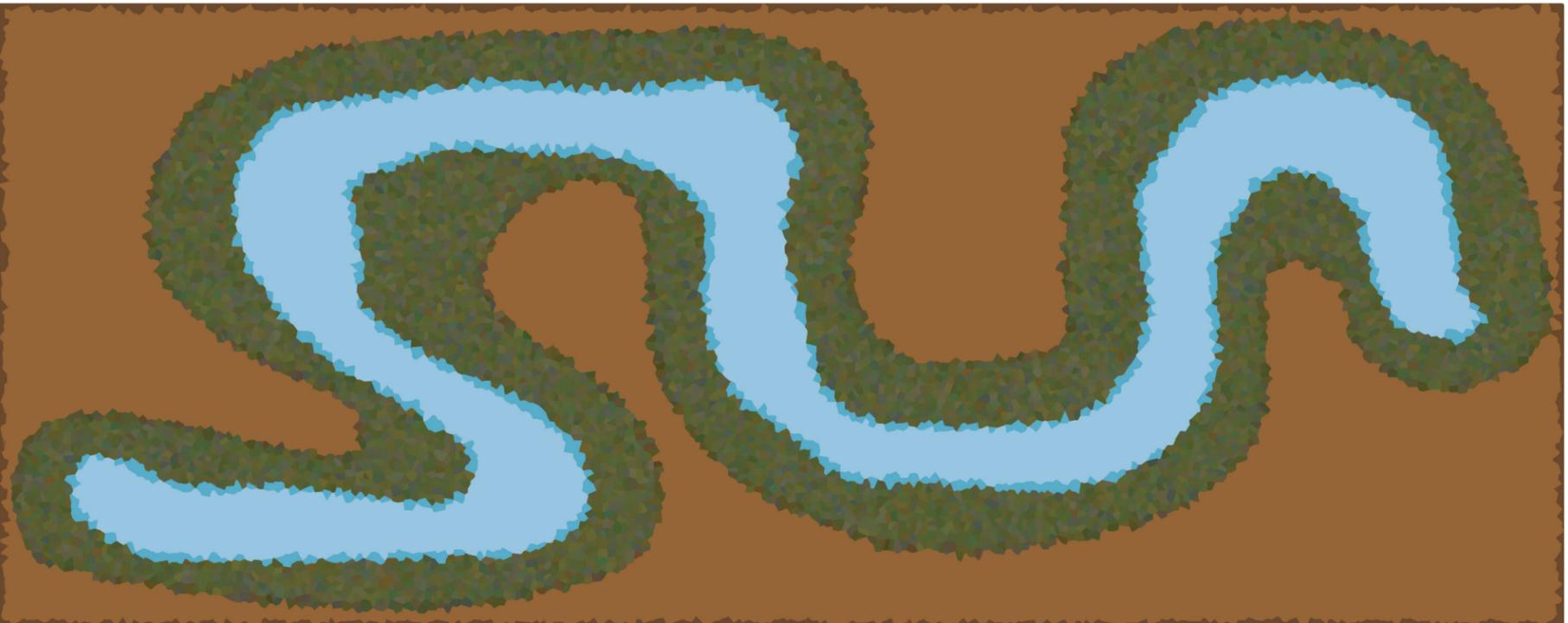
We began by introducing ourselves as scientists called “hydrologists”, because we like to study rivers and lakes. We asked the kids if they would like to be hydrologists with us for the day. They loved saying “Hydrologist!!!”. To begin, I asked the kids if they had ever been to or seen a river. We talked about how sometimes scientists learn about rivers by looking at big pictures. I used the projector to show a big satellite image of rivers. I said that satellites can see the rivers the same way that birds do – from the sky! I pointed out that not all rivers are the same. Rivers across the world are very unique. Some rivers are straight, some are curvy, and some are braided. We had the kids be different types of rivers with their arms and moved around in their seats. To make more of a connection with this, I brought individual small jars of playdoh and laminated placemats with different river shapes. We will let the kids use the placemat as a guide to make rivers out of the playdoh. They also got to design their own rivers and talk about what plants and animals would live in their river. The kids loved being able to create the rivers and talk about times they’ve seen a river. We also got to talk a lot about all kinds of water things – like what happens when it floods! At the end, I handed out some different stickers. Fish and frogs remind them of animals that live in rivers. Stars remind them that we can take pictures of rivers from the sky!

Altogether, this activity was very successful. The timing was perfect. They stayed pretty engaged the entire time. The clean-up was minimal.

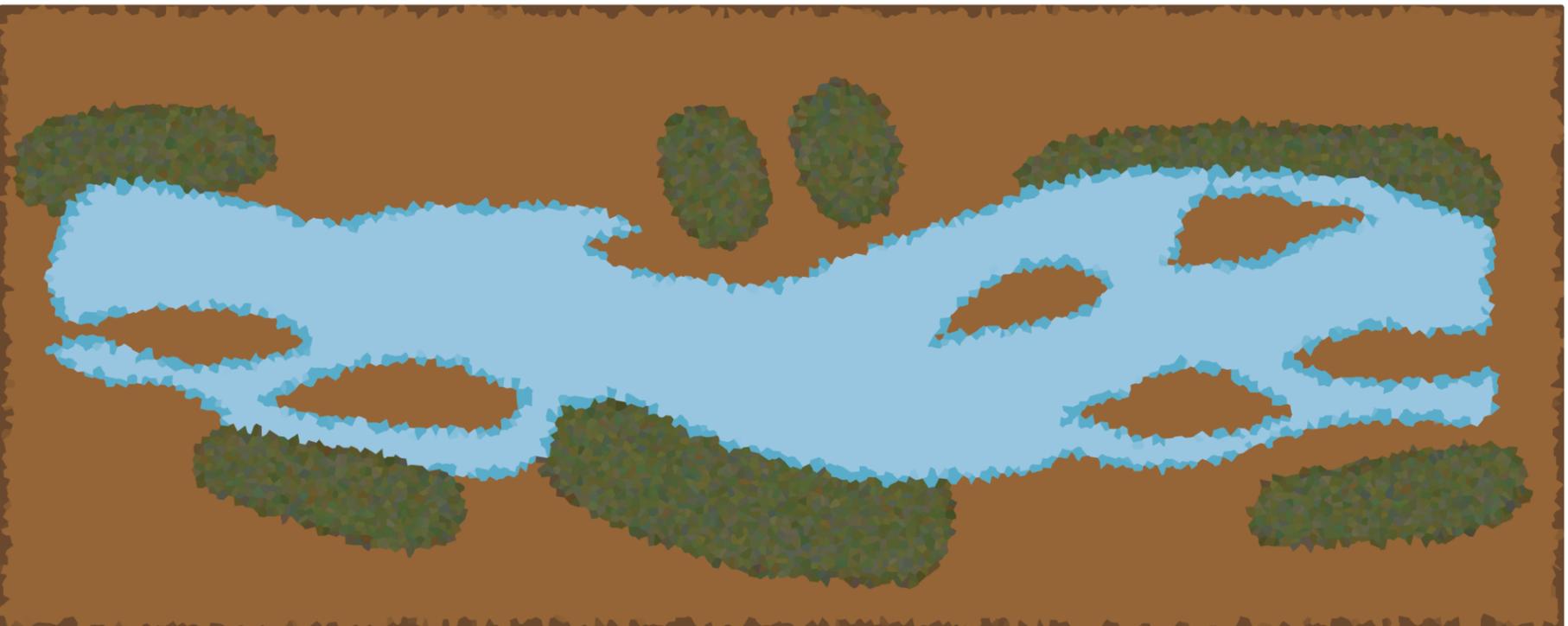
Straight



Curvy



Braided



My River

