

Name _____

BE A SUPER OBSERVER



Woof! I'm TURFMUTT. Did you know that grass, trees, and other plants help fight off the evil forces that attack our green Earth, our clean blue waters, and our sparkling air? It's true, and I'm here to help them. I know I look like an ordinary dog, but *shhhhh*...I'm actually a superhero!

You can help, too, but first you need to look around outside and really open your eyes.

1. Finish these sentences about your town or city.

My state's name is _____.

My town or city's name is _____.

Number of people who live in my town or city: _____

2. What changes do you observe during each season? _____

3. Look out your window. What do you see? Check the boxes. Remember to look near and far!

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> tall mountains | <input type="checkbox"/> small trees (most are smaller than houses) | <input type="checkbox"/> pavement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rolling hills | <input type="checkbox"/> fruit trees | <input type="checkbox"/> tall buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flat plains | <input type="checkbox"/> green grass | <input type="checkbox"/> houses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> farmland | <input type="checkbox"/> brown grass | <input type="checkbox"/> water (rivers, lakes, streams) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> tall trees (most are taller than houses) | <input type="checkbox"/> rocky or bare ground | |

What three things on this list do you see the *most*? Circle them.

4. Turn this page over and draw a picture of what you see out your window.

WORDS TO KNOW

bare (adjective): not covered

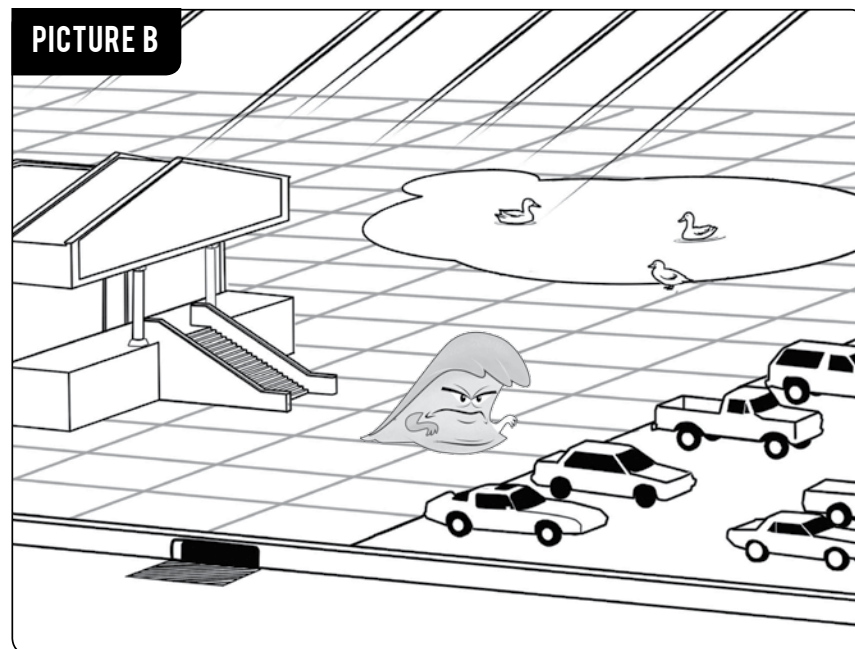
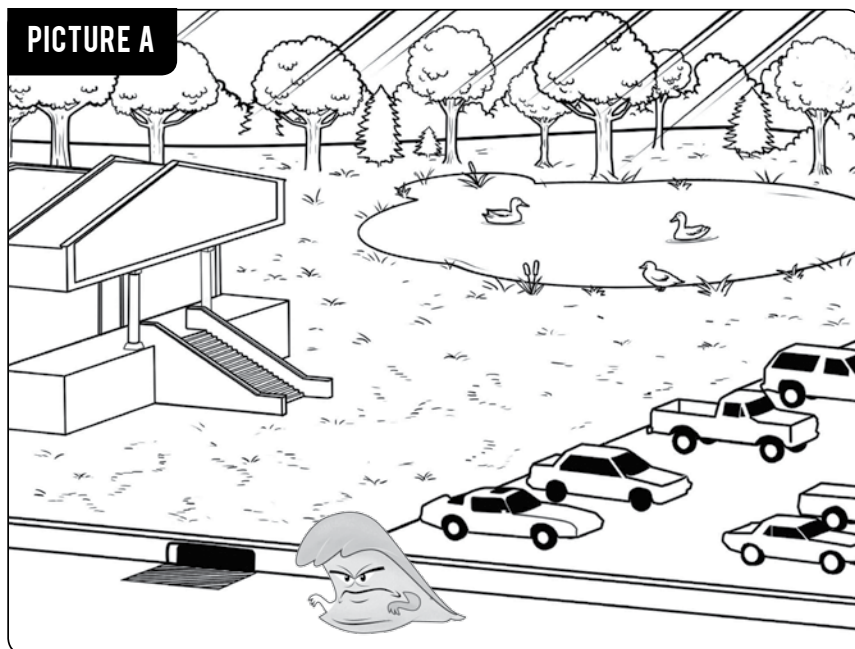
pavement (noun): the hard top of a road or driveway



Name _____

RUN AWAY, DR. RUNOFF!

HEY, IT'S ME AGAIN, TURFMUTT! Rain helps plants grow and fills up our lakes and rivers so we have clean drinking water. But when Dr. Runoff's around, that water can become polluted.



In both pictures:

- 1. Color** the trees and grass to match your local environment. Remember, not all grass is green!
- 2. Draw a blue rectangle** around the duck pond.
- 3. During a rainstorm**, extra water flows into drains, down streets, and into rivers and ponds. **Circle** the drain and pond.

Make a guess:

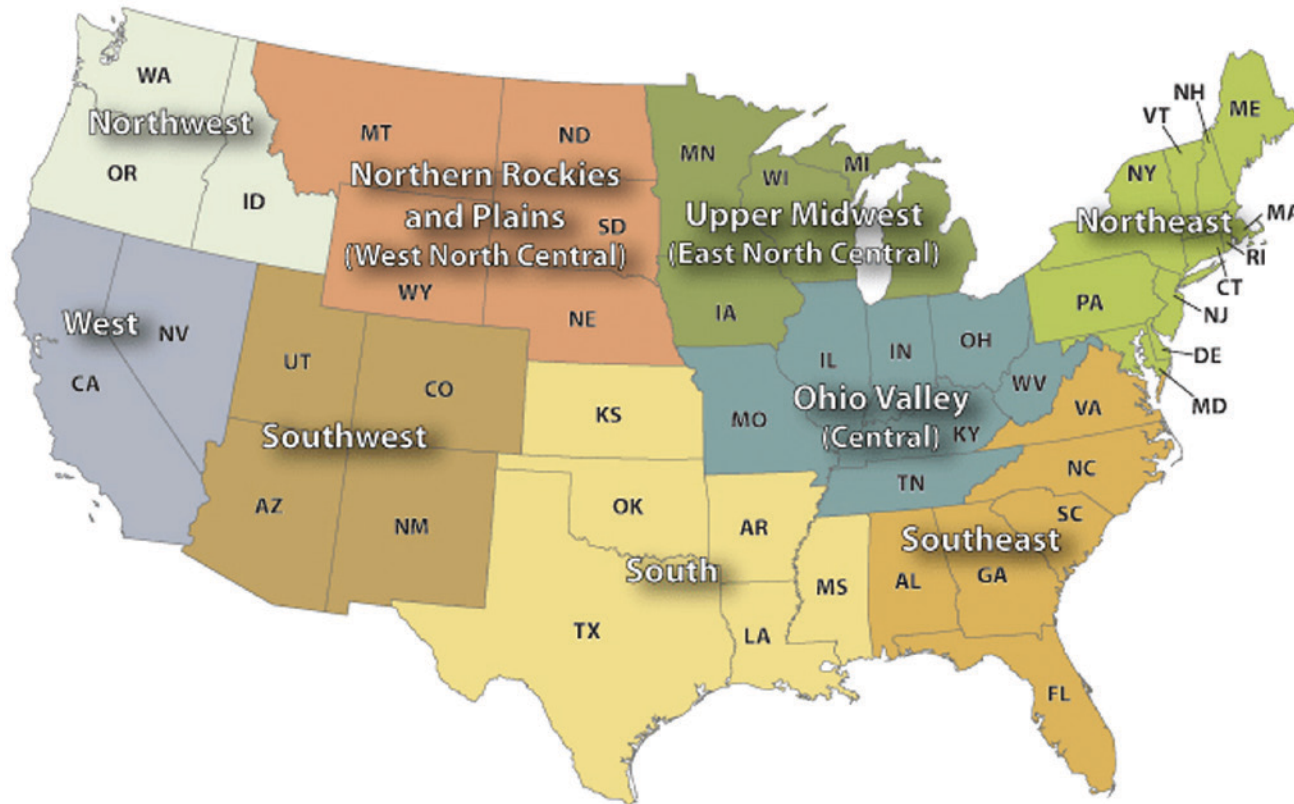
Water pollution is caused by bad chemicals or by litter on the ground. Guess which pond has more pollution. **Circle** the answer.

Picture A

Picture B

PARENTS: KNOW YOUR CLIMATIC REGION

Understanding your climatic region helps you choose the right plants and grasses for your garden.



BE AN INFORMED LANDSCAPER

Less is more: Don't overwater your lawn. If necessary, make sure to water deeply and only in the early morning hours, when evaporation rates are low.

Prune to perfection: Some shrubs will need summer pruning; some will call for midseason attention. For healthy shrubs, know your pruning calendar!

Lawn for your locale: Plant the right kind of grass. Knowing which grass for your area is best and using composted plant matter is important for healthy soil.

Raise that blade: Taller grass blades offer much-needed shade for soil and roots in the summer. Leave your grass high in those warmer months.

Nutrient delivery system: Collect grass clippings when you're done mowing the lawn. Clippings can be mixed into compost and make a good fertilizer.

Water wisdom: Rain barrels are great for recycling water to use on the lawn. Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation to reduce water waste!

BONUS! Your child has the chance to win **\$5,000** in the **"Be a Backyard Superhero" Contest** on behalf of his or her school to improve the school's green space! Parents, go to www.scholastic.com/Turfmutt/parents for complete contest rules and details.

