



Scientific Outreach for K-6 Students: The LTER Schoolyard Children's Book Series

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Here we present information on the many steps involved in writing and publishing a science book for children. This talk builds on the success of the children's book: *My Water Comes from the Mountains*, written by Tiffany Fourment and illustrated by Dorothy Emerling, and sponsored by the NWT LTER outreach program. The narrative of the book takes children of ages 7-10 on an illustrative journey from glacial and snowpack sources high on the Continental Divide to the plains and water in their faucet tap, introducing them to the distinctive wildlife and ecosystems along the way, including the diverse uses and human impact of water in Boulder Creek and St. Vrain watersheds.

We then talk about developing and distributing a teachers guide and materials packet developed for instructional use in the classroom and based on the children's book: *MY H2O: My Water Comes from the Mountains Teacher's Curriculum Guide and Kit*; edited by Colleen Flanagan, organizational authors Colleen Flanagan, Kenneth Nova, and Tiffany Fourment. The Teacher's Guide adds accompanying lessons, incorporation of water-wise sustainability in the classroom and community, and improvement of environmental education teaching skills with exemplary projects and practical edification. Direct feedback from the teachers was incorporated into the Guide, and their questions about the water cycle in the Front Range were addressed thoroughly. Utilizing local expertise and resources, the Guide encompassed four themes: 1) Water cycle, 2) Watershed, 3) Flora/Fauna/Life Zones, and 4) Human Interaction/Impact with Water. Each section includes a thorough explanation of 7-8 interactive projects, along with corresponding background information, suggested approaches and the book's parallel page number(s) for supplementary purposes.

We end by showing how this model was used to develop the children's book "The Lost Seal (<http://www.mcmlter.org/lostseal/>) as the next stage in a national program. The Lost Seal children's story, written by Antarctic scientist Diane McKnight, describes the first documented encounter with a live seal in the remote McMurdo Dry Valleys of Antarctica. Additional website information on the children's book "My Water Comes from the Mountains" is available at http://intranet.lternet.edu/archives/documents/Newsletters/NetworkNews/fall04/fall04_pg15.htm. All 433 pieces of original artwork for *My Water Comes from the Mountains* can be viewed at http://culter.colorado.edu/exec/Mywater/mywater_search_page.cgi.