



The Water Table

Deep beneath the earth, aquifers:
Mississippian,
Devonian,
Silurian,
Cambrian-Ordovician
Ancient rivers still fed by rain
What we see on the surface
Is a small part of what lies below



The Oxbow

One can't bend a river like a
River bends itself
First it is here, then it is there
It has its own mind
We can build a dike
But the river moves itself
A constant subtle power

A Changing Lake

The Shape of Blue Heron Lake 1955
The Shape of Blue Heron Lake 1967
The Shape of Blue Heron Lake 1974
The Shape of Blue Heron Lake 1998



The Water Balance

I saw the river, it was my enemy
I saw the river, it was my friend
I pushed the river over there
It pushed me back to here
Engineering equilibrium for a lake
A thread of land and a pipe for balance
A precarious stable state
I was thirsty and I drank



The Well

Tap the earth
Drink the water
Fix the pump
Drought, no Drought



LET'S EXPLORE PUBLIC ART



EVEN WATER

CLIFF GARTEN
2019

About Even Water...



Even Water is not just a beautiful piece of art for you to enjoy. It was created to remind you that water plays an important part in a community's everyday life. The Public Arts Advisory Commission wants you and your family to think about what you can do to improve water quality in our watershed.

A **WATERSHED** is an area of land that drains all the streams and rainfall to one place. Blue Heron Lake is part of the Scenic Valley Creek watershed.

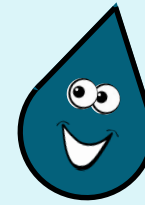
Every drop of rain that falls has to go somewhere. In a watershed, all of those drops go to the same place — and so does pollution. That is why it is important that we all do our part to keep our watershed clean and preserve the quality of our water.

DID YOU NOTICE?

In addition to the sculptures, *Even Water* includes another type of art—poetry!

How many poems can you find in *Even Water*?

What do the poems teach us about our watersheds and the history of Blue Heron Lake?



Let's Explore the Art!

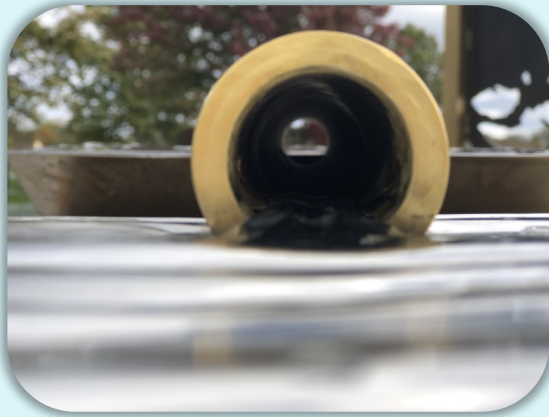
A good way to learn more about a piece of art is to ask yourself questions about it.

See what you can learn about *Even Water* when you think about these questions.

- What colors do you see?
- What textures do you see?
- Why do you think the artist used these colors and textures?
- What makes each piece of “Even Water” different? In what ways are all of these pieces alike?
- Look at “A Changing Lake” – how does the “lake” change when you look from different directions?
- Why do you think the artist titled it “Even Water?”
- If you gave “Even Water” a new title, what would you call it?
- What shapes can you find in more than one sculpture?



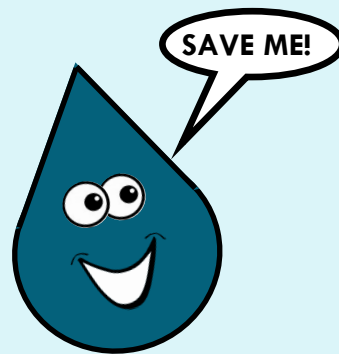
What can *YOU* do to improve water quality?



Here in West Des Moines, our drinking water comes from our watershed. Do you see the eight well houses around Raccoon River Park? They pull water from the aquifers deep under the ground for everyone to drink. That means that each and every one of us has a responsibility to keep our water clean. Here are some things you and your family can do to preserve our water quality.

SAVE WATER

Water is one of our most precious resources. One of the easiest things you can do to improve water quality is to **save water**. Taking showers instead of baths, turning off the water when you brush your teeth, and asking your parents to fix leaky toilets and sinks are easy ways to avoid wasting



FLOWER POWER

Planting a **rain garden** can be a fun and beautiful way to preserve water quality in your own yard! Using native plants, a rain garden can allow 30% more water to soak into the ground — which means less water goes in the storm drains.

DON'T POLLUTE!

The MOST important thing you and your family can do to preserve water quality is to avoid contaminating our water sources. Remember, in a watershed every drop that doesn't go into the ground ends up somewhere — and in West Des Moines, that somewhere is often our drinking water.

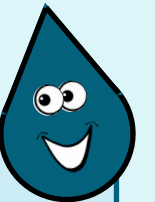


Dos and Don'ts of Clean Water



Don't

- Wash your car in the driveway
- Let your downspouts wash water into the driveway
- Dump oil or, leaves, or cleaning supplies down a storm drain
- Leave grass clippings in the street or gutter
- Use weed killer



Do

- Take your car to the car wash
- Redirect your downspouts to the lawn
- Clean up spilled chemicals right away
- Pick up after pets
- Fix oil and antifreeze leaks in your car

REMEMBER: Keeping our water clean is EVERYONE'S responsibility!

YOUR TURN!

Even Water is made up of eight different sculptures. What would it look like if you added a ninth sculpture?

Use the next page to draw your addition to *Even Water* — if you like, incorporate a poem about keeping our water supply clean to go with it!



Questions to think about

- What shapes and colors from *Even Water* would you use in your sculpture?
- What will your sculpture tell us about our watershed and water quality?
- What is the name of your sculpture?

