

## Year 7 sustainability

### What is a catchment?

The term 'catchment' is used to describe that area of land which is bounded by natural features, such as hills or mountains, from which all run-off water flows to a low point (Figure 1). Simple analogies are water in a bathtub flowing to the plug hole, or water that falls on a roof flowing to a down pipe. In a natural catchment area, the low point could be a dam, a river, an inland lake, or the mouth of a river where it enters the ocean. A single ridge defines a catchment's boundary.

Catchment areas vary in size and make-up. Large catchment areas, such as those drained by the Fitzroy and Burdekin rivers, are bordered by mountain ranges and include major drainage networks of creeks and rivers. Large catchment areas are made up of hundreds of smaller sub-catchment areas. These may be bordered by low hills and ridges and drained by only a small creek or gully.

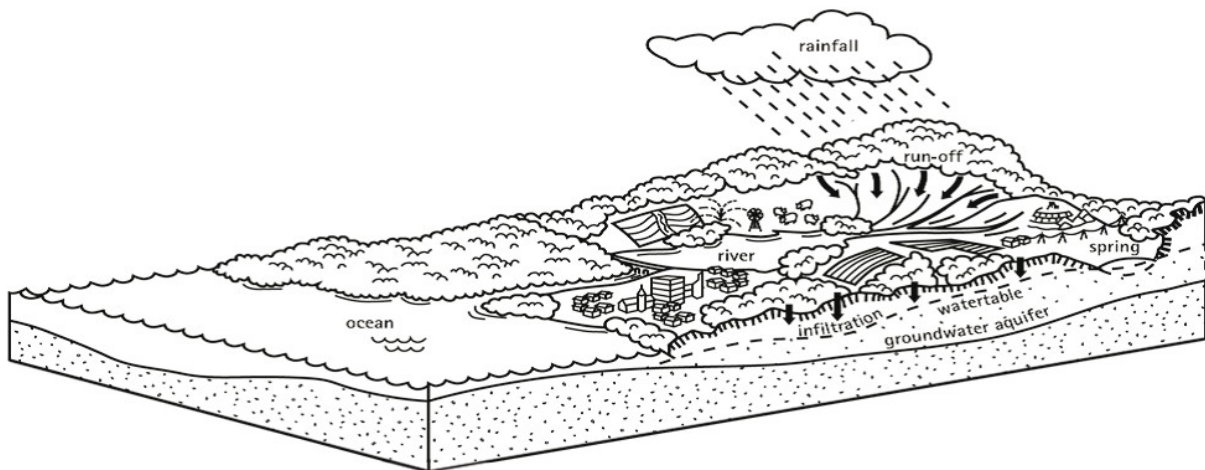


Figure 1 Diagram of a catchment