

Aeration Pond, Toxic Water Treatment Facility, Pine Bluff, Arkansas

by Emmet Gowin



ACTIVITY SHEET



About The Artwork:

Emmet Gowin took a picture of a **toxic water treatment facility** in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. This is a place where poisonous water is cleaned and returned to the **earth's water cycle**. This toxic water is forced up into the air. The air becomes foul-smelling and gray because of all the chemicals that are carried upward. Once the poisonous chemical contents have been removed from the water, it is returned to the river from where it was taken. Pine Bluff, Arkansas, is also known as a town that stores 12 percent of the country's **chemical weapons**.

Activity #1: A New Perspective

With this photograph, Emmet Gowin wanted to create a new **perspective** of the world and capture it the way it really is, without altering the photograph in any way. Seeing the landscape from the air was new to him. He was drawn to taking this photograph, but he was stunned to see the world from this perspective too. **Have you ever been in a plane before? What did the world look like to you from the sky?**

Go outside. Look at something in a new way - while standing on a chair, laying on the ground, sitting in a tree. Draw what you see. How does this landscape differ from other landscapes you have created?

Activity #2: Controversy

Artwork in all forms has the power to change our minds, create **controversy**, make us happy, or even upset us. Artwork can open our minds, and think about things we may not have considered. Artists like Emmet Gowin can sometimes be considered **activists** too. This artwork might make you think about our environment and how we are harming it. **You may ask yourself, what can I do to help the earth? List 10 things below that you can do to help the environment in your community.**

Image credits: *Aeration Pond, Toxic Water Treatment Facility, Pine Bluff, Arkansas*, 1989, Emmet Gowin, (b.1946), Toned gelatin silver print on paper, James A. Michener Art Museum, Museum Purchase

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