

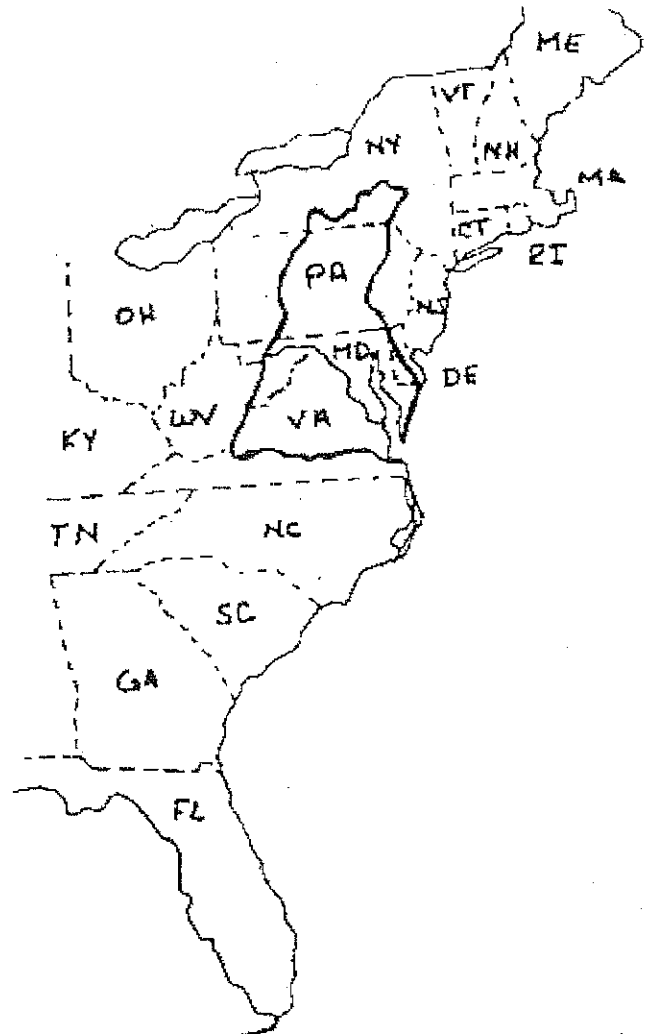
Chesapeake Bay Background Information

The word *Chesepiooc* is an Algonquian Indian word commonly believed to mean "Great Shellfish Bay;" however, a reconstruction of Virginian Algonquian implies that the word may mean something like "Great Water" or it might just be the name of a village at the mouth of the Bay. The Chesapeake Bay is an estuary. It's a drowned river valley in which fresh water and salt water mix. The fresh water comes from the rivers and the salt water comes from the ocean at the mouth of the bay.

The Chesapeake Bay is a valuable resource – economically, recreationally, and environmentally – for the Commonwealth of Virginia as well as the nation and the rest of the world. The Bay is a shipping artery, and the Bay cities of Norfolk, VA and Baltimore, MD, are among the nation's leading ports. The Chesapeake Bay is the nation's largest and most productive estuary. Fish, oysters and crabs are harvested from the Bay. The Bay holds approximately 18 trillion gallons of water. It is approximately 200 miles long with a width that varies from 4 miles across at the head of the Bay to 30 miles across in the middle of the Bay. It is relatively shallow with an average depth of 28 feet.

A drainage basin or watershed is the land area that the rain water runs off of into a body of water. The drainage basin of the Chesapeake Bay encompasses over 64,000 square miles. Over 150 rivers, creeks and streams from six states and Washington, D.C. drain into the Bay. The five main sources of fresh water input into the Bay are the Susquehanna, Potomac, Rappahannock, York and James rivers. These five rivers and their tributaries are responsible for 90% of the fresh water that enters the Bay. Four of the five major rivers flow within the boundaries of Virginia. It is these rivers that carry the bulk of the "ingredients" that are steadily destroying the Chesapeake Bay at an alarming rate.

The Watershed of the Chesapeake Bay is home to over 13 million residents. In Virginia, over 75% of the state's total population lives within the watershed of the Bay. Residential development, agricultural activities, and industrial expansion have caused a severe pollution crisis.



The Chesapeake Bay Drainage Basin/Watershed Map

1. Read the Background Information.
2. On the map the dark black line shows the Chesapeake Bay drainage basin area. Note where the state boundaries are. The dotted lines are the state boundaries. There are parts of the states that are not in the drainage basin.
3. Color the Chesapeake Bay blue.
4. Color blue and label the following rivers:
 - a. The most southern river shown in Virginia – James
 - b. The next finger of water north (very short) – York (Be sure to color the two small tributaries)
 - c. The next river north – Rappahannock

These first three rivers are only in Virginia

 - d. The next river north and its extensive tributaries – Potomac (Be sure to color all tributaries)
 - e. The river, and its extensive tributaries, at the north end of the Chesapeake Bay – Susquehanna (Be sure to color all tributaries)
5. Lightly color only the part of Virginia in the Chesapeake Bay drainage basin yellow.
6. Lightly color only the part of Maryland in the Chesapeake Bay drainage basin green.
7. Lightly color only the part of Delaware in the Chesapeake Bay drainage basin purple
8. Lightly color only the part of West Virginia in the Chesapeake Bay drainage basin red.
9. Lightly color only the part of Pennsylvania in the Chesapeake Bay drainage basin orange.
10. Lightly color only the part of New York in the Chesapeake Bay drainage basin brown
11. Lightly color only the part of New Jersey in the Chesapeake Bay drainage basin pink
12. What is the word *Chesepiooc* commonly believed to mean?
13. Why is the Chesapeake Bay a valuable resource?
14. What can you say generally about the depth of the Chesapeake Bay (don't give a number)?
15. Name the six states of the Chesapeake Bay.
16. Name the five rivers that bring most of the fresh water into the Chesapeake Bay.
17. From where does the Chesapeake Bay get salt water?
18. What do think is meant by the term "ingredients"? What do you suppose is destroying the Bay?

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

CHESAPEAKE BAY WATERSHED

