On March 25th and 26th, educator Jaclyn Miller, from the Chesapeake Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in VA, visited all of Ms. Rickerson’s 7th grade science classes to instruct the students about the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Students spent time learning about the human impacts on the Chesapeake Bay watershed and how climate change could affect organisms living in the bay. Students participated in a variety of demonstrations and hands-on activities to better understand the concepts taught.

Students constructed paper watersheds to see how run off reacts during a rain event. A watershed is an area of land where all of the water drains to a common body of water. Students were able to explain how the marker on the paper could represent fertilizers and pollutants that we as humans add to the watershed, which consequently can end up in the Chesapeake Bay.

A run-off race was used to demonstrate how run-off behaves throughout different terrains of the watershed. Students compared a permeable surface to an impermeable surface. Students observed that the grassy, healthy habitat was able to absorb water and trap sediment, where as the wooden board, representative of roadways, sidewalks, etc, did not trap sediment or absorb any water. As a result, the water in the tray was dirtier from the runoff of the wooden board.
Students then studied the Chesapeake Bay Report Card from 2012. They brainstormed what factors could be causing the grades, and in what ways humans could improve the scores on the report card. While we do have negative effects on the bay, we can all make changes to have a more positive impact on the Chesapeake Bay.

To conclude the lesson, students played a game to see how fish may be affected by Climate Change. Climate Change could lead to warmer sea temperatures, sea level rise, and ocean acidification. During the game, as sea temperature rose, fish had to migrate north or south to adapt to the changing climate.

THANKS FOR TWO GREAT DAYS YORKTOWN!