Rachel Carson Fact Sheet

♦ Born in 1907 and grew up on family farm in Pennsylvania.
♦ First published at age 10 in a children's magazine.
♦ Studied zoology and genetics in college.
♦ Worked for the Bureau of Fisheries (now known as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)
♦ Books: *Under the Sea-Wind, The Sea Around Us, The Edge of the Sea, Silent Spring,* and *The Sense of Wonder* (published after her death).
♦ In *Silent Spring¸* she exposed how DDT was detrimental as it moved through the food chain.
♦ DDT was used to kill insects for agricultural purposes as well as to control fleas, lice, and mosquitoes.
♦ DDT is blamed for the almost extinction of the American bald eagle.
♦ In 1963, there were only 417 pairs of bald eagles in the U.S.
♦ DDT was banned in 1972.
♦ There were 4,712 pairs of bald eagles by 1995 and they are no longer on the endangered species list.
♦ Rachel Carson died of cancer in 1964.
♦ Carson known as the "Mother of the modern environmental movement."

Here are some questions to think about and discuss. Write about your thoughts on the back of this page or in your journal. Use the following quote by Rachel Carson to encourage your journaling thoughts as well.

1. How did DDT pass through the food web to impact a range of species, including humans? How does this relate to the Food Department? Does this still happen with pesticides and other chemicals?
2. Do you think it made a difference that Carson was a woman scientist?
3. Would a man have gotten more respect? less respect?
4. What would have happened if she had been intimidated and had not stood up against the chemical companies and the government?
5. What would be the state of our ecosystems today if these dangerous chemicals were still used?
6. Are other harmful chemicals still used as pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers in the environment? What can we do to reduce the impact of these artificial control methods?

Rachel Carson once said,
"One way to open your eyes is to ask yourself, What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?"