

OKLAHOMA ROCKS! THE STATE PARKS

TENKILLER

Water brings people to this part of Oklahoma! Unlike the murky streams, rivers and lakes in most of the State, the water in Tenkiller Ferry Lake, and all of the Ozark lakes and reservoirs is remarkably clear, making it ideal for swimming, fishing, boating and even scuba diving. But why? The answer lies in the kind of rocks that surround the lakes. Most of the Ozark Uplift is limestone and sandstone; shale – a rock formed from mud – is common throughout most of the rest of Oklahoma. And when shale erodes it reverts back to its original form – mud – which then flows into our streams and lakes. But shale is rare in the Ozarks. Another reason the water is clear is that much of the rain falling in the Ozarks seeps into the ground and forms caves as it dissolves some of the underlying limestone. This water eventually finds its way to the surface as seeps and springs, thereby avoiding the surface runoff and erosion that would muddy-up a nearby stream.

Scuba diving has become very popular at Tenkiller Ferry Lake because of the clear waters. Very interesting terrain can be found at the bottom of the lake, which at 165 feet deep, it is one of the deepest lakes in the area. When the Illinois River was flooded, a town was left behind. You can still find home sites where many artifacts can be found, but not removed. Some things you might see at the bottom of Tenkiller Ferry Lake are: horseshoes, buggies, roads, houses, farm equipment. You can also find an old jailhouse, wagon wheels and many Native American artifacts as well.

>> ACTIVITY

1. Get on YouTube and search 'Lake Tenkiller Scuba Diving'
2. Choose one of the many videos to watch.
3. Have your students each write a short story about one of the items seen on the dive. Get creative; explain what the item is and how it got there, who might have owned it, why they may still be looking for it, etc.

Newspapers for this educational program provided by:



NEWSPAPERS IN EDUCATION
THE OKLAHOMAN



OKAA



The OKLAHOMA GEOLOGICAL
FOUNDATION
Serves Teachers, Schools

*Program details will be communicated through email.