

Water in the Arts



SUBJECT

Language Arts

GRADE LEVEL

High School



www.TheWaterProject.org

INTRODUCTION

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for your interest in The Water Project. We are excited to offer you two additional sets of lesson plans that expand the learning opportunities for High School students on the topic of water and how integral it is to our lives. The two available lessons span the major subject areas of Language Arts, and Social Studies/Economics. These lesson packages can be used as an extension of the [Water Crisis - Lessons to Challenge and Inform](#); or they can stand alone as materials to explore how water shapes our lives through language, arts, culture, social structure, and economics.



As always, we're providing these 3-5 day mini-curricula as a free resource for you and your colleagues.

In this package is:

Water in the Arts

Using a combination of literature, music and online resources, this 3-to-5 day language arts lesson plan highlights issues of water justice facing the world today.

Also available is:

Water and Society

This 3-lesson social studies and economics unit explores how water contributes to the rise of civilization, conflict and social justice.

These materials compliment our two week [Water Challenge](#) very nicely. When combined, they'll engage your students in academic exploration while developing their social capital.

Our thanks go to the two teachers who have volunteered their time to write and test these materials in the classroom. Both proven educators, Julia Mitchell (Pinkerton Academy, Language Arts/English) and Scott Allenby (Proctor Academy, Social Studies/Economics) heard about the work needed to address clean water in developing countries and took action by contributing their skills to develop this material.

We welcome your feedback on these material, and invite you to help us spread the word to others about these resources. Tell friend and colleagues; together we can be a formidable force for change by bringing education to our youth, and engaging them in world changing issues such as clean water.

Thank you again for your interest in The Water Project. Please let us know if we can be of any help as you engage in this important topic.



R. Peter Chasse
Founder and President

WATER IN THE ARTS

USING A COMBINATION OF LITERATURE, MUSIC AND ONLINE RESOURCES, THIS 3-TO-5 DAY LANGUAGE ARTS LESSON HIGHLIGHTS ISSUES OF WATER JUSTICE FACING THE WORLD TODAY.

NOTE TO TEACHER



The curriculum is designed with suggested activities for each day; however, flexibility is built into the week with some days' activities being longer and more structured and others being more open. This allows carry over between days while still ensuring the curriculum is completed. Options are also built in for teacher preferences.

WEEKLONG ACTIVITIES



- Daily Writing Journals (10-20 minutes)
- Weeklong Project – see description at end of lesson plans.

TIME NEEDED



Lessons are designed for a 3-to-5 day unit.

OUR THANKS TO MRS. JULIA MITCHELL, LANGUAGE ARTS, PINKERTON ACADEMY, DERRY, NH,
FOR HER GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION OF THIS ORIGINAL MATERIAL.

WATER IN THE ARTS

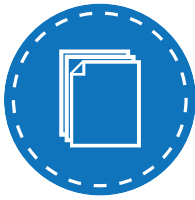
MATERIALS/RESOURCES NEEDED



- Journal for each student
- Internet access for online videos
- John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, or internet access to read it online
- Fact Vs. Opinion worksheet for each student (on last page)
- Article: "Dry Times Ahead" from the Santa Monica Mirror (<http://www.calwater-crisis.com/pdf/SMMirror.12.14.07.pdf>)
- Music selections (see "Day Four")
- Optional: Access to Desktop Publishing software for the students who choose to make a newspaper for their Weeklong Project

WATER IN THE ARTS

PROCEDURE: DAY ONE



Journal Topic: React to and write about the following quote: "If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water . . . Its substance reaches everywhere; it touches the past and prepares the future; it moves under the poles and wanders thinly in the heights of air. It can assume forms of exquisite perfection in a snowflake, or strip the living to a single shining bone cast up by the sea."



Discussion: Water is used in art, music, and literature as a symbol of life. What are some examples you are familiar with? How can water be seen as life-giving but also threaten life?

Background: The effects of both wet and dry climactic cycles have been both helpful and harmful to civilizations throughout history. In the 1930s, much of North America was stricken with failing crops, starvation, and poverty due to the Dust Bowl era. In more recent years, numerous floods have affected the United States, and most notably, Hurricane Katrina devastated much of the South. While these events are major news stories for a short time, they are forgotten not long after. Literature is one way that these events are remembered long after the media has forgotten them.

John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* is a novel set in the Dust Bowl era. Steinbeck was moved by the stories of families moving to California to escape the poverty of the Dust Bowl states. He traveled with families to experience the poverty firsthand in order to provide authenticity to his novel. His moving descriptions give a depth and human element to the tragedy that non-fiction writing might not.



Activity: Read an excerpt from *The Grapes of Wrath* (The description in the first few pages of the novel is very effective) and discuss the effectiveness of the writing.

Google Book -- *The Grapes of Wrath* (<http://books.google.com/>)

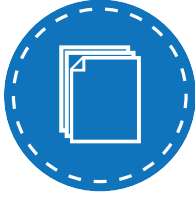
Ask students if they think the writing is effective? Moving? What water related events that they've experienced / lived through could they develop into a fictional story?



Classwork / Homework Assignment: Write a fictional story based on water related events. Be sure to use descriptive writing and dialogue to convey the human impact.

WATER IN THE ARTS

PROCEDURE: DAY TWO



Journal Topic: Imagine a day without running water in your home. Write a diary entry or a series of text messages to your best friend detailing what your day would be like.

Discussion: What role does water play in our everyday lives? How inconvenienced would we be without running water?

Activity: Watch "We've Got a Very Big Problem with Water"

http://www.water.cc/news/videos/?clip_id=6494616

Activity: Read "Rough road to sustainable development"

<http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/afrec/vol18no2/182environ.htm>

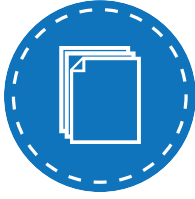


Further Discussion: What further ramifications (beyond basic inconvenience) does a lack of quality water have on life? Where does the responsibility lie to provide water for those in need?



Classwork / Homework Assignment: Complete story or create a visual (drawing, collage, etc.) illustrating the hardships created by a lack of a quality water source. This can be based on the student's life or an imagined peer in an area like Africa.

PROCEDURE: DAY THREE



Journal Topic: The water in your home is still not working, but a man comes to your home with a single gallon of clean water. Only one person in your family can use the water, and it must be used within twenty-four hours. It may not be saved. Explain why you need the water most and how you'd make best use of it. (This may take the form of a brainstorm web, graphic organizer, or written paragraph.)

Activity 1: Fact vs. Opinion Worksheet (attached at the end of lesson plans)



Discussion: Review and explain worksheet.

Activity 2: Read "Dry Times Ahead" from the Santa Monica Mirror. Identify five examples of factual statements and three examples of opinions.

"Dry Times Ahead" Santa Monica Mirror (<http://www.calwatercrisis.com/pdf/SMMirror.12.14.07.pdf>)

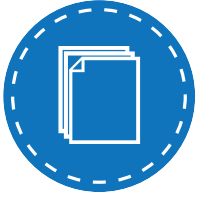
Wrap-up: Explain how writers use facts to support their opinions. Discuss how often times writers (and other reporters) present their opinions as though they are factual.



Classwork / Homework Assignment: Based on yesterday's video, the article, and the social studies lessons*, write a letter (to the editor or congressman) explaining why clean, quality water is a human right that needs to be protected. Use facts to support your opinions. (Note: This is an assignment given in the social studies curriculum. If using a team approach, teachers could work on this together i.e. English can work on letter format and/or peer editing.) or Write a news article or editorial based on facts / opinions gathered from lessons (in all disciplines) so far.

*Your class may not be doing the accompanying social studies lessons.

PROCEDURE: DAY FOUR



Journal Topic: As citizens of the world, what responsibility, if any, do we have to help provide for the water needs of the developing nations? What can/should we do as individuals? As a nation?

Background: Music can both reflect and influence societal views on current events. From patriotic tunes during war time to the culturally challenging music of the 1960s and even today, music has long had an impact on social thinking. Sometimes the messages are political, and other times they are in reaction to a disaster. No matter their motivation, these songs, like literature, create a more emotional and human connection to the event.

Activity: Listen to selections of music "with a message."

Suggestions:

Bob Marley's "Get Up, Stand Up"

John Lennon's "Give Peace a Chance"

USA for Africa "We are the World"

Various Artists "Voices that Care"

Mos Def's "New World Water" (explicit lyrics – need radio edit version)

Joni Mitchell or Counting Crows "Yellow Taxi"

Green Day "American Idiot" (explicit lyrics – need radio edit version)

John Mayer "Waiting on the World to Change"

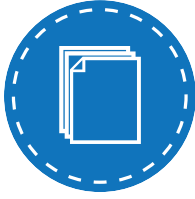
Young Artists for Haiti "Wavin' Flag"



Classwork/Homework: Write a poem, song, or rap conveying the need for social awareness of the clean water issue and the need to act. Continue to work on Weeklong Projects.

WATER IN THE ARTS

PROCEDURE: DAY FIVE



Journal Topic: Repeat Day One prompt but ask students to consider how their responses to the quote have changed based on the learning of the week. Discuss: Journal answers

Activity: Complete and/or present weeklong projects. This day can also be used as a wrap-up / discussion of the week's events. If the school is holding an awareness event such as a "Walk for Water" and it has occurred, students can also be given a chance to react to that experience whether through discussion, writing, or other means.

ASSESSMENT/VERIFICATION



Students will complete several individual assignments throughout the week. These assignments can be used to create a personal learning portfolio for each student, or students may work in groups to create a portfolio or "newspaper". Depending on time and/or objectives of the classroom teacher, these projects can then be used for oral presentations, writing, or other means.

NAME: _____

HANDOUT: FACT OR OPINION?

For each statement below, write F if the statement is a FACT and O if it is an OPINION.

_____ Although almost 75 percent of the world is covered by water, only 2.5 percent of that is freshwater, and only 1 percent of freshwater is usable as much is trapped in glaciers and snowfields.

_____ Nations should find their own solutions to their water crises, using whatever means necessary.

_____ Water is necessary for human life, and cultures have long built their civilizations near water sources.

_____ The water we drink today was likely around in some form hundreds of millions of years ago.

_____ It is our responsibility to help developing nations address their water needs.

_____ The water crisis should be our number one global priority.

_____ "One person in six lives without regular access to safe drinking water; over twice that number—2.4 billion—lack access to adequate sanitation," (2003)

_____ Global Environment Outlook scientists project that more than half the world's population could be living in water-stressed areas by 2032.

_____ "I think there are some areas of life that should be off limits to commodification [sic]. Water is probably the best example of something that should be kept outside the market place, a guaranteed right for all people."

_____ In many parts of the world, human use of water is beyond sustainable levels.

(Facts and quotations taken from National Geographic online articles news.nationalgeographic.com)