

THE AMERICAN SOUTHWEST: ARE WE RUNNING DRY? WATER RELATED HEALTH ISSUES

Post Screening Activity 4 Hope for the Future

Overview: Water quantity and quality impact people's lives. Its mere existence has been taken for granted by the United States. Students will create a public service announcement to increase awareness of the looming water crisis in the American Southwest. Problems and possible solutions will be included to give hope for the future.

Objectives:

- Students will identify water quantity and quality issues
- Students will identify possible solutions to the water crisis
- Students will create a public service announcement

Materials:

- Construction paper
- Markers
- Colored pencils
- Video camera/tape
- Computer with multimedia program

Background:

In *The American Southwest: Are we Running Dry?* Mark Twain was quoted, "Whiskey is for drinking and water is for fighting over." There are more than 300 million people in the United States and the population is still increasing. Nevada and Arizona are the two of the fastest growing states and Utah, Wyoming, and New Mexico are also rapidly growing.

The 1922 Colorado River Compact and the 1928 Boulder Canyon Project Act divided up the Colorado River between the seven Southwest U.S. states and Mexico. When these water allocation decisions were made, the amount of water was vastly overstated and the regional population shifts were not anticipated.

Water quality is an issue in the American Southwest, especially among the Native Americans. With groundwater as their primary reservation source of water, sometimes the water that is believed to be safe is not. Yellow teeth, skin problems, or birth defects occur when potable water is not used. As Sitting Bull once said, "Let us put our minds together and see what kind of life we can make for our children."

Activity:

1. Have students summarize all the water quantity and quality issues that have been generated during the debate.
2. Working in small groups, students will develop a Public Service Announcement (PSA) to raise awareness of water quantity/quality issues in the US. The PSA may be a series of posters, a 30 second television/radio commercial or multimedia computer presentation.
3. Present posters, multimedia computer presentations, or commercials to the class.

Evaluation Rubric:

Exceptional	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Public service announcement included at least one water problem and solution; artwork or performance was colorful, neat, attractive; facts were logically presented and supported the position; displayed curiosity; communicated observations; expressed ideas with clarity and fluency; analyzed and synthesized information effectively; presentation was elaborate, fluent, and included expanded vocabulary	Public service announcement included at least one water problem and solution; artwork or performance was colorful, neat, attractive; facts were logically presented and supported the position; expressed ideas with clarity; analyzed and synthesized information effectively; presentation was fluent	Public service announcement did not include at least one water problem and solution; quality work was not evident