

WATER DOCUMENTARIES

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Water Documentary Project

Introduction: Students will be creating a water documentary on a water initiative the students develop. They are placed in small groups based on their common desire. They delve into the major water issues of the day by looking at case studies. Students will then use the knowledge that they've learned to create their own water initiative that will benefit their local community and document their findings.

Audience: Intermediate Peers/Public/Water Documentary Film Festival (Water Docs 2018)

This assignment is geared towards intermediate students but the messages and ideas are directed at the education of the public.

Tools Needed: Video software, laptops, video equipment (i.e. iPads)

Grade 7 - Ecosystems

Grade 8 - Water Systems

Big Idea:

- Human activities have the potential to alter the environment. Humans must be aware of these impacts and try to control them.
- Water is crucial to life on Earth.
- Water is an important resource that needs to be managed sustainably.

Cross-Curricular

Media Literacy

Geography

Reconciliation: Aboriginal Issues

Math (Data Collection)

Part 1: Introduction

The importance of Water

Students use case studies from their local community to understand the ramifications of apathy about water. As students are exposed to issues that are directly related to them, discussions and conversations become more sophisticated and passionate. They begin to have a deeper understanding of the issues and they develop a more altruistic global outlook.

Group Discussions:

Introduction discussion: What do they know?

Watch “Drinking Water”

students discuss their understanding how much of the Earth’s Surface is water that is drinkable?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_R_vpNQ0fJc (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_R_vpNQ0fJc)

Discussion #1 Importance of Frozen Water

Watch Al Gore’s “What comes after An Inconvenient Truth?”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aU97aaKZT1g> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aU97aaKZT1g>)

What are the implications to the rapid melting of the permanent ice on the earth?

follow -up: W5 “What happens when the permafrost thaws?”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFfuHmrW2gc> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFfuHmrW2gc>)

Discussion #2 Importance of Water Ecosystems

Video Prompt: Watch The Water Brothers “End of Sushi”

<http://thewaterbrothers.ca/end-sushi/> (<http://thewaterbrothers.ca/end-sushi/>)

What are the dangers of the popularity of sushi?

What results from restaurants giving so much choice? If blue fin tuna is sold in the market in a large scale every day, yet they are endangered. How do you suppose we get the message across to the restaurant and fishermen? If it takes 10kg of anchovies and sardines to support 1 kg of tuna...what does that mean for the poor populations of people that also feed on the same food? Why should we be concerned about Mercury? Why is the University of Guelph bar coding organisms?

Finding an initiative: Students are guided toward looking for a local initiative through role playing.

Talk to your group. Pretend you needed to turn this into an initiative for a water documentary project. What would your message be?

Discussion #3 The Impact of Invasive Species

Share with your group. Pretend an invasive species has taken over Lake Ontario. What would the Mayors of Toronto, Rochester, Kingston and Montreal have to talk about? List their issues in priority order.

Video Prompt: Watch Silent Invaders

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPeg1tbBt0A> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPeg1tbBt0A>)

This video show first hand the implications of what can happen when an invasive species gets out of hand.

Students discuss what other factors they did not take into account.

Discussion #4 Water Pollution

Video Prompt: Watch The Tar Sands Oil Extraction: The Dirty Truth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkwoRivP17A> (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkwoRivP17A>)

This project is the largest industrial energy project in the world. They extract crude oil from bitumen found beneath the boreal forest of Alberta. This is a massive industrial project that puts money before the health and security of its people and the environment. We use 3 barrels of water to process every barrel of oil extracted. Ninety percent of this water is so toxic that it must be stored in tailing ponds. Unfortunately these ponds regularly leach pollution into the third largest watershed in the world.

Students discuss in their team: Why are the Tar Sands good for the Economy? How Big are the Tar Sands? Why are the Tar Sands bad for the environment? If the Athabaskan watershed is the 3rd largest in the world, what responsibility should Canada have to protect it? Who is at fault for this mess??

Part 2: The Initiative

Students are asked to search for local issues in their town or nearby city and be ready to share with their teams the next day. Students are encouraged to listen (especially to local and national news) and read carefully (newspapers, magazines, online news sites, online environmental sites) as they study during the beginning of the year. Once the teams have shared their ideas, they create a flow chart of possible initiatives.

Teams present their findings to the class. Each student has post-its that they write down questions for the Parking Lot. Following the presentations the class discusses the issues and answers questions from the Parking Lot. The teacher creates a long list of all of the possible initiatives.

Part 3: Choose 3 Initiatives

After very passionate discussions students choose 3 issues that are close to their heart. It is worded that way because this project is all about making a difference and it may take long hours of writing, filming, and editing. And why would you spend that kind of time on something that does not mean something to you?

Students are asked to prioritize their top 3 initiatives and they are grouped together according to their choices (usually 3-4 per group). Some of the topics that have come up in the past are;

water treatment plants

impacts of improper disposal of hazardous materials

runoff from hard surfaces (i.e. road salt)

fertilizers, farming and ground water

agricultural over-water use

100 mile diet

water footprint (personal consumption impacts water usage)

industrial water use (i.e. mining)

bottled water (in single-use plastic bottles)

water ownership (Nestle pumping water issue)

Part 4: Project Research and Planning

Once the teams meet for the first time a Google Team Drive is created for each of the teams to deposit their research and communicate the results of their discussions to the teacher.

CONSOLIDATION/JUSTIFICATION/MOTIVATION:

These are mini check-in sessions or “motivation meetings” with the class to share. These are guided by a set of check-in questions deposited in their Team Drive which help focus the meetings.

Meeting #1: Why We Chose This topic.

Where is Your Passion? Students meet for the first time to justify why they chose their topic. (2mins each)

Meeting #2: Research

Students are encouraged to dig deep and go to the source for information. We have had Webinars with professors at universities (i.e. PI), invited activists to come and speak, interviewed film-makers, journalists, town planners and environmental engineers. Whether students have already spoken to people or are intending to it does not matter for this discussion. As ideas fly around during the group chats students are encouraged to get out there and seek the truth rather than trust just 1 website.

Meeting #3: Our Initiative

Students must show that their initiative work and must demonstrate measurable results to show they have accomplished their task. Measured results could be surveys, a tally, graphs, etc. Students are documenting all the work they put into their initiative whether it is clothing drives, events, school assemblies, public speaking at a parent council meeting, town council or community event.

Here students meet for the second time to explain their initiative and receive feedback from the group. Are they able to explain the importance of their project's initiative so others will understand? (5mins each)

Students are strongly encouraged to extend the valuable work and studies by engaging parents and the local community. In the service of making a difference in the attitudes and behaviours of the entire community students are also encouraged to invite local residents and community leaders.

Rubric for the Project (initiative):

- - It is based on and relates to an issue impacting your local community.
 - measurable actions and results in the community
 - pre-project survey (*measurable actions and results in the community; ideally it would also engage and move to action members of the broader community like students; parents & family; neighbours, industry, etc).*
 - *A post-project survey (to identify changes in awareness)*

Meeting #3: Our Data Collection

Students discuss and assist each other to find ways to show before and after results. Other suggestions in the past have shown that as technologies and apps change there are always new ways of collecting information. For instance;

survey monkey

instagram

initiative website voting (reaches a larger and more varied audience)

Meeting #4: Did We Make a Difference?

A post-project survey allows them to identify changes in awareness and/or the changes in individual practices. Before the final editing of the documentary students meet to discuss the results of their data collection and help guide each other in the final stages of the project.

Rubric for the Documentary;

As students were intending to enter their projects into the Water Docs Festival they followed the criteria for the competition;

- 4 min documentary
- planning (storyboard)
- use of visual imagery in telling the story
- use of royalty-free music
- use of special effects
- use of visual effects (camera angles, lighting, etc)

Final Presentation

Students watch all the created videos as part of a school film festival and vote on videos to submit the Water Docs Film Festival.





<https://www.waterdocs.ca/school/> (<https://www.waterdocs.ca/school/>)



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http://connex.stao.ca/classroom-catalyst/water-documentaries-1)
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RESOURCES

-  Water Docs Festival Program (<https://www.waterdocs.ca/school/>)
-  Students use a storyboard to guide their planning of their documentary. (<https://connex.stao.ca/sites/default/files/storyboards.pdf>)
-  Guide sheet to focus on the issues presented in the video. (https://connex.stao.ca/sites/default/files/water_brothers_-the_end_of_sushi.pdf)
-  Guide sheet to focus on the issues and stakeholders presented in the video. (https://connex.stao.ca/sites/default/files/tar_sands-the_dirty_truth_2_student_sheet.pdf)

ELEMENT

-  Critical Thinking (/expert-elements/critical-thinking)

RETURN

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