

Lesson 9 – Making a Difference

Grade 5–8 (Science and Social studies)

Grade 9–12 (Science and Social studies)

Topic: Effecting change in terms of water pollution

Time: 60 minutes

Space Requirement: Regular classroom

Methodology: Brainstorming session, video presentation

Materials: projector and computer

Objectives: The students will work together to develop strategies for decreasing incidents of water pollution. Students will also analyze two short videos and determine how effective the strategies for reversing water pollution are and if they are applicable to their community.

Directions/Procedure:

1. Select one or two students to read their responses to the comparative look at the cost of bottled water v. tap water. (5 min)
2. On the board write “Reversing Water Pollution”. Have each student suggest a method or idea for reversing water pollution within the community. (5 min)
3. Discuss each idea from the above list in terms of how they could make the change themselves. (5 min)
4. Ask the students to identify potential areas of water pollution in their community. Have they noticed water pollution there? (3 min)
5. Ask the students if they believe the whole community should be aware of water pollution. Ask the students what they can do to make the community aware of water pollution and discuss each idea. (10 min)
6. Explain the concept of writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper. A sample letter to the editor is available in the Resources section. (10 min)
 - a. The letter addresses concerns community members have regarding issues they believe in strongly so that other members of the community can become aware of the issue too. There is a word



limit to these letters therefore contact the newspaper ahead of time to know what the limit for the local paper is.

7. Inform the class that each student will be writing a letter to the editor of the local newspaper. Each letter should contain the following information:
 - a. The name of the student
 - b. That by participating in Operation Water Pollution, an imitative of the Safe Drinking Water Foundation, they have become aware of the importance for action regarding water pollution
 - c. List the areas in the community where water pollution can or has occurred
 - d. Explain why they believe this is an important issue
 - e. Explain what they believe should be changed and how the community can help improve the situation.
8. The students have the remaining class time to work on the letter. An initial draft of the letter must be handed in the next day.

Evaluation: The Letter to the Editor serves as a concluding evaluation of the student's understanding of the concept of water pollution.

For the Teacher: The goal for this lesson is to empower students and give them an opportunity to effect change in water pollution. The letters should be edited and sent to the Editor of the newspaper. If any letters are published please send a copy of the letter to the Safe Drinking Water Foundation for posting on the website.

The Template for Change program from the Safe Drinking Water Foundation is a series of DVDs designed to be shown to communities seeking awareness about drinking water quality, drinking water and health issues and water issues in general. The students can promote this program as an opportunity for educating the community and to raise awareness regarding water issues affecting the community.

Related Links:

[Template for Change](#)

[Advanced Aboriginal Water Treatment Team](#)

Resources: A sample letter to the editor is available through the [Letter](#) link.

Extension Activity: The Safe Drinking Water Foundation has other educational programs that can be taught with this set of lessons. Operation Water Drop

www.safewater.org



looks at what chemical contaminants there are in water and is designed for a science class. Operation Water Flow looks at how water is used and where it comes from and is designed for a Social studies and Math collaboration. Operation Water Spirit presents a First Nations perspective of water and water issues and is designed for a Native Studies class. Operation Water Health looks at common health issues surrounding drinking water in Canada and around the world and is designed for a Health, Science and Social Studies collaboration. To access more information on these and other educational activities visit the Safe Drinking Water Foundation website at www.safewater.org.