

THE COLORADO RIVER STORY



For Teachers (Don't print this page)

Suggested complimentary lessons:

- Part II: How does geography play a role water distribution? – Colorado River watershed mapping
- Part III: What happens when demand for water exceeds supply? -Data analysis workbook

Students Learning Objectives

- Students will read important articles relating to water in the southwest and explain them to their peers.
- Students will understand social and political issues surrounding water in the west.

Age

- Upper middle & high school
- Younger students may need to highlight words they don't understand for scaffolded instruction.

Time

- One class period

National Standards

- D: Earth Science
- F: Science in Personal and Social Perspectives

Part I: Who needs water?

A jigsaw reading activity including articles from magazines and online publications to get the students primed for a deeper investigation into the inner-workings of the Colorado River.

Directions - READING JIGSAW ACTIVITY: Water rights and issues

Step 1 – Print articles and answer sheet (only one article per student)

- Article 1: Smithsonian Magazine: The Colorado River Runs Dry
<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/The-Colorado-River-Runs-Dry.html>
- Article 2: The New York Times: A Difficult Choice on Water
<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/04/06/a-difficult-choice-on-water/>
- Article 3: Fox News: Perilous New Vegas Water Pipeline Claims Life
<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2012/06/15/perilous-new-vegas-water-pipeline-claims-life/>
- Article 4: Scientific American: Devastating Drought Seems Inevitable for West
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article.cfm?id=the-coming-mega-drought>

Step 2 – Assign alternating articles to students.

- Each student with the same article will also be assigned a different letter. You may have as many as A-H for each article.
- Students will read their article and answer questions then briefly discuss their answers with students with the same article.

Step 3 – Rearrange students with groups of the same letter.

- Students will report out about the article they read in turn. Each student will share their article and hear about the others.
- At the end of the activity, each student should have filled out and answered the entire page.

Step 4 – Finish with a classroom discussion identifying the importance of freshwater and people who are affected by the loss of it.

Article 1:

Letter: ____

1. Summarize your article in a few sentences.
2. What was the problem described?
3. What is the cause of the problem and who is most affected?
4. Is there a solution provided to the problem? If not, what's your solution?

Article 3:

Letter: ____

1. Summarize your article in a few sentences.
2. What was the problem described?
3. What is the cause of the problem and who is most affected?
4. Is there a solution provided to the problem? If not, what's your solution?

Article 2:

Letter: ____

1. Summarize your article in a few sentences.
2. What was the problem described?
3. What is the cause of the problem and who is most affected?
4. Is there a solution provided to the problem? If not, what's your solution?

Article 4:

Letter: ____

1. Summarize your article in a few sentences.
2. What was the problem described?
3. What is the cause of the problem and who is most affected?
4. Is there a solution provided to the problem? If not, what's your solution?