

High Waters In Low Places

Objective:

The students will analyze the effects of environmental racism and develop a 4-minute scene that reflects on the problems and solutions of environmental racism.

Content Area TEKS:

§113.43.c.8.B analyze the consequences of extreme weather and other natural disasters such as El Niño, floods, tsunamis, and volcanoes on people and their environment;

Theatre TEKS:

§117.317.c.2.E write dialogue that reveals character motivation, advances plot, provides exposition, and reveals theme;

Recommended Grade Level:

11th

Bloom's Taxonomy Levels:

Create, Apply, Analyze, Synthesis

Multiple Intelligences:

Verbal/ Linguistic , Bodily/
Kinesthetic , Interpersonal,
Intrapersonal, Visual/ Spatial,
Mathematical/Logical

Time Required:

50 minutes

Materials:

- Popsicle Sticks
- Toothpicks
- Construction Paper
- Tissue Paper
- Scotch Tape
- 4 Large Bowls/Tubs
- Water
- Computer/Video Playing Device



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Focus Activity: (7 minutes)

At the beginning of class, the students will be divided into four groups. Each group will be given tape and one of the following items: tissue paper, construction paper, toothpicks, or popsicle sticks, each group receiving a different item.

Once the teams have their materials, they will have 3 minutes to construct a small boat using those items. The goal is for the students to create a boat that will be able to support 3 quarters while being placed in a bowl of water.

Once the students have constructed the boats, put them in the bowls of water and place the 3 quarters on the boats. After the next activity, the class will observe the state in which each boat is in after a short period of time.

Input/Information Share: (17 minutes)

Here is where the instructor will begin the introduction of environmental racism and discrimination. Begin by showing the following TEDx Talk by Cristal Cisneros about the Youth Perspective on Environmental Justice and Racism. Have the students take notes while they watch the video, and be sure to note that they should write down any ideas or topics in the video that they would like to discuss after. Following the video will be a class discussion on the topic of environmental racism and discrimination. Some things to look for maybe:

1. In your own words, what is the definition of environmental racism?
2. How does environmental racism impact communities?
3. What are some examples of environmental racism?

Video Link: <https://bit.ly/3KHxBuf>



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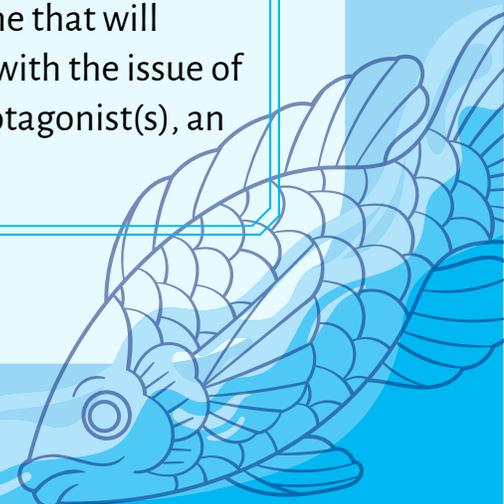
Modeling/ Examples: (5 minutes)

The class will return to the bowls of water that have their boats in them. Ask the students to describe what they see. Did their boat remain intact? How did the materials they used play a part in the structural integrity of their boat? Once the students have shared their observations, summarize the activity by explaining that the boats made with stronger materials were able to remain afloat, while the boats made with weaker materials succumbed to the environment around them. Here is a small script to guide your discussion:

“What can we notice about the relationship of the boats made with stronger materials? (Pause for student response.) Overall, the boats made with the stronger materials were able to withstand the natural challenges presented around them, like the water and the weight of the coins. In this same way, it is very important to make the comparison of the boats to the communities we live in; the communities that are affluent and receive more funding are often capable of enduring the changing conditions of the climate and the natural world around us.”

Guided Practice/ Check for Understanding: (15 minutes)

This activity will allow for the students to use the situations they have seen in both the TEDx Talk and the boat activity to create their own solutions for the problems presented. For this activity, the students will be given the task to create a plot structure for a short scene that will depict the story of a group of characters who are dealing with the issue of environmental racism. They must include a conflict, a protagonist(s), an antagonist(s), and both rising and falling actions.



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Guided Practice/ Check for Understanding (con't)

Provide for them paper and pencils to create scripts and generate their thoughts and ideas. Remind them they have to include a problem dealing with environmental racism and they must show how it can be solved.

Independent Practice/ Assessment: (3 minutes)

Once the students have completed their time to write down their plot structures, allow for volunteers to share their ideas. Whether a student only wants to share their main conflict, or if they want to explain their entire plot, it is important to support the students as sharing original work may be a challenge for some and easier for others.

Closure: (3 minutes)

The students will discuss the different plots that were presented by their fellow classmates, and they will share their observations on the content of the work. They will discuss the solutions to the problems faced in the plots and how they can apply them to their lives outside of the classroom.

Differentiated Instruction/Accommodations

- Students who are having difficulty creating their own plot structure can choose to work in a group with another person in the class, or the instructor can guide the student through verbally creating a plot together.
- If the students run into issues with creating a short scene, guide them using examples of natural disasters that can impact different communities, such as floods, freezes, or fires.

