



Community Meeting

Grade Level: 6-12
Length: 45-75 Minutes
www.pwsrcac.org/lessons

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NGSS Standards

HS-LS2-7 Design, evaluate, and refine a solution for reducing the impacts of human activities on the environment and biodiversity.

Crosscutting Concepts

Systems & System Models A system is an organized group of related objects or components; models can be used for understanding and predicting the behavior of systems.

Related Resources

Pair With GRS Priorities for Protection Lesson

Websites

<http://www.childrenofthespills.org/index.php/people>

Overview

Many important parts of ecosystems, economies, and communities could be changed by an oil spill.

Objectives

- Students will analyze and formulate opinions about the relative importance of protecting various components of local ecosystems.
- Students will discuss different values and priorities in the context of protecting local areas from oil pollution.

Materials

- Community Meeting Scenario Cards
- Whiteboard/Posterboard
- Pens or Pencils
- Science Notebooks or Paper
- Markers
- Excerpts from Interviews with Children Affected by Oil Spills
<http://www.childrenofthespills.org/index.php/people>
- Computer/Projector/TV/SmartBoard to View Videos

Background

In this activity, students participate in a mock community meeting in response to an oil spill. They have to identify and prioritize areas for protection based on their knowledge of the local areas.

Notes

Preparation

Visit <http://www.childrenofthespills.org/index.php/people> to choose excerpts of video interviews with children affected by oil spills. A DVD of video excerpts is also available upon request through the Children of the Spills website.

Introducing the Lesson

Briefly explain some of the facts of the Exxon Valdez oil spill and other oil spills. Ask students, “Could something like this happen here?” Explain that it could indeed happen, and in many places, it has happened in the past. Ask students, “If YOU were in charge, what places would you want to protect?” Explain to students that they are going to do a mock City Council or Village Council meeting to respond to an oil spill.

Activity

1. At this point, accept a nomination for one student to run the meeting (this will be the Mayor or Council President). Ask for a volunteer or assign a student to assist the mayor (this will be the Clerk or Council Vice President). Select a student with good handwriting to be the secretary and write ideas on the large paper pad. Everyone else will be council members.
2. Have volunteers read scenario cards 1, 2, and 3.
3. Proceed with a mock council meeting. Give students 5 minutes to develop their own list of priorities for protection. Then, the Mayor/President should call on all council members to speak in turn. The Secretary writes down ideas. The Mayor/President then provides an opportunity for discussion, up to 30 minutes. Provide scaffolds, as necessary, to assist students on building on each other’s ideas and respectfully disagreeing. After 30 minutes, a list of top 3 priority sites should be ready for submission to the response team.

Wrap-up

At the end, ask if anyone suggested protecting anything that wasn’t a beach, stream, marsh, etc. What about other things important in the community that could be affected by the spill and clean-up efforts? What about recreation? What about foods? What about children? Play video excerpts from interviews with children affected by oil spills that

highlight some of the less obvious effects. Ask students if they want to add anything to the list.

Look at the list that the class has chosen as priorities for protection. Have students create a list of ways that these areas are already protected or threatened. Have students brainstorm actions they can take to protect these places before an oil spill happens. Implement one (or more) of these ideas.

Assessment

Evaluate student collaboration, cooperation, and consideration of their peers' ideas during the community meeting. Listen during discussion for arguments based on evidence from their own life and science ideas. Students who successfully meet the performance expectation will work together throughout the course of the community meeting will design, evaluate, and refine a priority list that can help to reduce the impacts of human activities on the environment and biodiversity.

Pair With

Priorities for Protection Lesson Plan