

LESSON PLAN

Barbara Gugliotti – Havana, FL

Lesson Title: Yours, Mine, or Ours?

Grade Level: 6-8

Topic: Surface water pollution

Time Required: 90 minutes

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to identify pertinent information necessary to resolve a conflict.
2. Students will understand that choices involve consequences.

Materials: Per small group

One "Yours, Mine, or Ours" dilemma
Four position sheets
One resolution sheet

Procedure:

1. Begin a class discussion about healthy rivers and river management. General questions might be:

What types of river pollution are most common in Florida?
Name some rivers that have experienced serious pollution.
Why is the health of Florida's rivers a public concern?
How are Florida rivers used?
Have river uses changed in the past 100 years?
Who manages Florida's rivers?
Who owns Florida's rivers?
How are decisions made that affect Florida's rivers?
2. Explain to the students that varied uses sometimes create conflicts. Conflict is not necessarily undesirable.
"Constructive" controversy frequently results in thoroughly investigated issues and an extensive exploration of alternatives resulting in sound, workable solutions that meet everyone's needs.
3. Divide the class into small groups with an even number of members. Tell each group to divide themselves into two teams.
4. Read the dilemma to all groups.
5. After hearing the dilemma, the teams in each group are to select one of the "positions". Teams do not have to agree with

the position that they select, but they must act as if they do for the activity to succeed.

6. Once positions are selected, tell the teams within each group that they have 20 minutes to plan how to effectively argue their selected position using the facts presented in the dilemma and any others that they can think of which will support their position.
7. Each team should write a brief position statement clarifying the position and summarizing the principal reasons for their stand.
8. At the end of 20 minutes, allow each team 2.5 minutes to present their position to the other members of their group. Stress sticking to the facts and careful listening. Take notes when listening and clarify anything that they do not understand. To complete this activity, they will need to understand the facts that support both sides of the issue. Encourage groups to work together to get out all of the facts. Allow 10 minutes for advocating and refuting.
9. Tell groups that their teams must now switch positions. They must now argue their opponent's positions as forcefully and convincingly as they debated their original position. Encourage teams to think of any new facts their opponents might have overlooked. Allow five minutes for each team to regroup and present.
10. Tell groups their goal now is to find a solution that all members can agree upon. To do this, positions must be dropped. List the best arguments for both sides. Also list the facts about each point of view. Check for any other facts or viewpoints that might have been missed. When everyone is in agreement, write a brief report summarizing their decision and supporting information for that decision on the resolution sheet. Allow 30 minutes to resolve.
11. Ask each group to present their resolution to the other groups. Discuss similarities and differences among the resolutions. Explore reasons for differences.

The Bottesch River Dilemma

The Bottesch River begins at Bottesch Springs and winds through some of the most scenic and pristine areas of Maxwell County. Because of its natural beauty and abundance of wildlife that live in and near the river, it is a popular site for canoeing and wildlife watching. The Bottesch River also feeds the Tramontana Reservoir, the primary source of drinking water for Maxwell County. The County has purchased large tracts of land along the Bottesch River and designated them as preservation areas in an effort to protect this valuable resource and the County's drinking water supply. Preservation status requires that all lands be left in their natural state. No development of any kind is allowed.

Fifteen homes along Bottesch River are located within the land areas purchased by Maxwell County. Since all 15 homes were built more than 20 years prior to the County's land purchase, they were granted exception to the preservation status. Recently, however, it was discovered that 11 of the 15 homes had defective septic systems and that sewage was leaching into the Bottesch River. The Maxwell County Water Quality Assessment Board has issued citations to the homeowners to stop the flow of sewage into the Bottesch River with the recommendation that they connect to a public sewer system. The closest city with a sewer system, Carlton, is 20 miles away. The cost to connect each house is in excess of \$40,000.00. The homeowners insist that the condition of their septic systems was known when they were granted exemption from preservation status and have threatened to sue. The citations issued by the Maxwell County Water Quality Assessment Board state that the properties in violation will be condemned if the directive is not met.

Maxwell County officials, desiring to avoid a lengthy lawsuit and not wanting to evict long-time residents from their homes, are investigating the possibility of Carlton residents sharing connection costs with the Bottesch River residents. The Carlton City Council is considering taxing city residents to cover the connection costs if the Bottesch River residents will allow their properties to be annexed into Carlton City Limits. A number of vocal Carlton residents are objecting to any increase in taxes and say that they will fight the proposal. In addition, many Bottesch River residents are disputing annexation into Carlton.

POSITIONS:

Pro-Bottesch River Homeowners

Pro-Maxwell County Water Quality Assessment Board

POSITION SHEET

Bottesch River Dilemma

Group Member Names:

Your Team's Position:

RESOLUTION SHEET

Bottesch River Dilemma

Group Member Names:

Your Group's Resolution: