



We are Land and Water Protectors

Grade Level: 3-5

Purpose:

- Students will explore the topic of environmental urgencies/BELIEFS to protect the land and water.
- Students will share their experiences of exploring their usage of the land and water.
- Students will engage in text and media to deepen their understanding of nature and their responsibilities and relationships to it.
- Students deepen their understanding of Native American ideology and people; that the land is to be shared and cared for.
- Students will also understand that native ideology of the environment, who TO acknowledge, the relationships amongst all living and nonliving things in our world.

Enduring Understandings:

- Places have stories of how they came to be.
- Why and how the land, animals, plants, and humans share a specific place.
- Migration of humans and animals impacts the environment.

Essential Questions:

- What do you use water for? Why does water need protection?
- How does oil or chemicals get into our rivers and waterways? Why is it harmful?
- What does the “black snake” represent? What is an oil pipeline? HAVE YOU SEEN OIL SPOTS, WHERE?
- How is everything on Earth related to everything else? Why is that important to understand?
- How can/ARE you be a water or land protector?

Essential Skills :

- Students will be able to ??interrogate?? and explore the stories and teachings of their environment.

- Students will share about their personal experiences and stories, INVOLVING ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (RECYCLING INCLUDED).
- Students will examine themes such as culture, environment, and relationship.
- Students will reflect (writing/drawing/speaking) about water and land protection and human impact.

Cultural and Community Knowledge ([Link to Yosso, p. 78](#)):

- Resistant
- Familial

Ethnic Studies Principles Alignment ([Link to LESMC Guiding Principles](#)):

- Cultivate empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self-worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Black and Native People/s, along with all people of color.
- Center and place a high value on pre-colonial, ancestral, indigenous, diasporic, familial, and marginalized knowledge.
- Connect ourselves to past and contemporary resistance movements that struggle for social justice on the global and local levels to ensure a truer democracy.
- Conceptualize, imagine, and build new possibilities for post-imperial life that promotes solidarity and collective narratives of transformative resistance, critical hope, and radical healing.

Common Core Standards Alignment ([Link to California CCSS](#)):

- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.2 - Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.**
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.2 - Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.**
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2 - Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.**

Materials:

<p>PowerPoint</p> <p>Mixing water activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 plastic cups of water ● Cooking oil ● Salt ● Food coloring ● iron <p>Drawing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Markers ● Paper 	<p>Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>The People Shall Continue</i> by Simon Ortiz ● <i>The Water Protectors</i> by Carole Lindstrom ● YouTube Video of Water Protectors read aloud <p>Handouts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Time to Write and Draw ● Oil & Water ● Water Protectors Pledge
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Modifications, Accommodations, Resources for Multilingual Students :

Prior to teaching this lesson, make sure students understand the water purification process for disposing the water used in water mixing activity.	
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Critical Vocabulary:

CRITICAL VOCABULARY	Definition and Rationale for choosing this word, phrase, or concept
Oil Pipeline	A long pipe in the earth that transports oil and petroleum over long distances. The pipeline is humanly constructed, it is not natural.
Environmental Justice	A movement comprised of individuals who collectively work to protect the environment from human contamination and harming.
Protector	Someone who keeps a watchful eye on someone or something, who makes sure no harm comes to what they care for. A defender, guardian, support person.
Sacred	Something that is believed to be pure, important, or spiritual. Relating to thoughts or beliefs, not religion.
Courage	Summoning the strength and fortitude to enable someone to take a risk for something they believe in without fear or reservation.
Ancestors	Your relatives or relations who came before you, maybe a parent, Grandparents, great grandparents. It could also BE someone who left a legacy, cultural or historical impression ON YOU OR YOUR COMMUNITY.
Stewards	Someone who takes care of things for others.

C1: Cultural Ritual and/or Energizer

Cultural Ritual/Energizer: Land acknowledgement, ancestor acknowledgement and opening activity, sets the stage.

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Slide 1/2	Opening slide: Leave slide on until everyone is attentive.	
Step 1 SLIDES 3 & 4	Land Acknowledgement Take a minute to name the native lands that you occupy and describe one gift you will leave to improve the land you are a guest upon.	5 min
Step 2 SLIDE 5	Ancestor Acknowledgement: Nell Charlie	2 mins

Step 3 SLIDE 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Photo of one drop of water. ● Asked the students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What would you do with this single drop of water? ● Chart student responses. 	10 mins
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C2: Critical Concepts

We are Land and Water Protectors

Description: Children’s Book: We are Water Protectors, YouTube, short lecture using Simon Ortiz’s *The People Shall Continue*.

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Step 1 SLIDE 7	<p>Read the Story “<i>We are Water Protectors</i>”.</p> <p>Students may also listen to the story on YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqWTouyaQ-8</p>	5-10 mins
Step 2 SLIDE 8	<p>Time to Write: Students write short sentences, sequencing the descriptions of the water in the book. For example, “water is the first medicine” would be first.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● First, Second, Third, Next, Last. ● Use handout <p>Once sentences are completed, have students SHARE/check their work in small groups or teams of two.</p> <p> Water Protectors - Write & Draw</p>	15-20 mins
Step 3 SLIDE 9	<p>Time to Draw: Ask students to draw a picture of the most meaningful message TO THEM from the book.</p> <p>You can use the same document used above.</p> <p> Water Protectors - Write & Draw</p>	10 mins
Step 4 SLIDE 10	<p>Time to Talk - Ask students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What is an oil pipeline? ● What does the “black snake” represent? ● What is the connection between the oil pipeline and the black snake? <p>Provide a short definition of “oil pipeline”. An oil pipeline is a long pipe used to transport petroleum over long distances. IT CAN BE BUILT ABOVE OR UNDERGROUND OR BOTH.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask students to explain the connection between the oil 	3 mins

Step 5 SLIDE 11	pipeline and the black snake in the book.	
	Teacher shares the passage from Simon Ortiz's <i>The People Shall Continue</i> to further illustrate how people came from water. Simon Ortiz describes how the people came to be, what they did and most importantly the connection people had to the earth. You can either read the whole book or read the excerpt in the slides.	12 mins

C3: Community Collaboration and/or Critical Cultural Production

Title of Main Activity(ies): Mixing Water

Description:

Water mixing activity in small groups.

STEP	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Step 1 SLIDE 12	<p>Break up into 4-8 groups of no more than 3-4 per group. Each person in the group will be responsible for mixing one water and oil mixture. Carefully setting the mixture in a place for others to observe.</p> <p>Mix 1: Mix cooking oil in a clear cup of water. Mix 2: Mix salt in the second clear cup of water. Mix 3: Mix food coloring in the clear cup of water. Mix 4: Mix an iron object in the fourth clear cup of water.</p> <p>After each mix, the students should observe and record their findings. Here is the worksheet to record responses.</p> <p> Water Protectors - Oil and Water</p>	<p>3 – 5 mins per step</p> <p>A total of 15-20 mins</p>
Step 2 SLIDE 12	<p>Ask students to share their findings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happens to the water? • What does it look like? • Would you drink it? Would you bathe in it? Would you water your plants with it? <p>Ask students to put their heads together and come up with an explanation on how to undo the process and make the water clean. They can record their responses on the document.</p>	<p>20 mins</p> <p>10 – 15 mins</p>
Step 3	Return to the story and ask students to briefly reflect on	10 mins

	what the children can do about the black snake?	
Step 4	Ask students to respond to the following question: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this contamination took place in your community, what would you do? 	

C4: Conclusive Dialogue/Critical Circular Exchange

Step 1 SLIDE 13	A picture is worth a thousand words. Ask students to describe what they see and to respond to the question: Is it too late?	10 mins
Student activity SLIDE 14	<p>At the end of the story, the children ask us to be good stewards of the land and water.</p> <p>Ask the students to take the pledge at the end of the book.</p> <p>Ask students to list at least three things they will do to be better “stewards of the earth, water and people” and to create an educational poster for other children.</p> <p><i>Post on classroom walls.</i></p>	10 mins
SLIDE 15	Resources	

RESOURCES AND NOTES

Resources

- <https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com>
- **Worksheets and Handouts: Include links here.**

Lesson Plan Contributors: Marty Meeden, Mary Levi, Lupe Cardona & Theresa Montaña