

Teaching News Is Elementary September 18, 2015

Each week, this lesson will share some classroom activity ideas that use the newspaper or other NIE resources. You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a class discussion.

Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.

Materials you will need for this lesson: The Seattle Times e-Edition, pencil or colored pencils for sketching/drawing. Internet/library for research.

Article: A Clean Ride Shouldn't Lead to Dirty Water

Page: page A8

Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2015

Pre- Reading Discussion Questions:

Look at the title. Before reading any of the text, what message is this article sending? What do you think you will learn about car washes and the environment after reading the text bubbles?

Vocabulary:

Read the following quotes and determine the meaning of the word based on how it's used in the sentence:

“Even **biodegradable** soap can pollute our water.”

(capable of being slowly destroyed and broken down into very small parts by natural processes, bacteria, etc.)

“Dirty car wash water **contaminates** our waterways with petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals, phosphorus, nitrogen, and **sediments**.”

(contaminates: makes (something) dangerous, dirty, or impure by adding something harmful or undesirable to it)

(sediments: material (such as stones and sand) that is carried into water by water, wind, etc.)

“Soaps dissolve the protective **mucous** layer on fish and natural oils in the gills, making fish more **susceptible** to diseases.”

(mucous: a thin, wet layer of skin that is inside some parts of the body (such as the nose and throat) and that produces mucus)

(susceptible: easily affected, influenced, or harmed by something)

Journal Writing Prompts:

“Use a commercial car wash! Commercial car washes send dirty water to the sewer for treatment.”

What do you think happens to dirty water when it reaches the sewer for treatment? Draw a diagram to map out this treatment process. Explain in words what you think may happen at each stage in the process. Where can you learn more about sewer treatment processes? Some communities have local treatment plants which you can visit. See if this opportunity exists near you!

Discussion Questions:

Review the excerpt and discuss the following questions:

“Dirty car wash water contaminates our waterways with petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals, phosphorus, nitrogen, and sediments.”

What do you already know about the above contaminants? Do you think any of them are found in products in your home or garage? If so, which ones? What about them do you think is harmful to our waterways? Research the meanings of petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals, phosphorus, nitrogen and sediments and why they are harmful to the environment. Determine which ones are found in products you or your family may use.

Small group discussion and activity:

“Holding a fundraiser? Consider a fish friendly option like selling commercial car wash tickets.”

To review, why is it better to use a commercial car wash than washing your car in your driveway? In a small group, brainstorm how your class or school could hold a fundraiser that sells commercial car wash tickets. When and where would the fundraiser take place? Create a poster or flyer to promote the event.