

Teaching News Is Elementary

Date: **May 26, 2017**

Article: **Idaho science standards aim to appease state lawmakers**

Print Replica: **Monday, May 22, 2017**

Section: **MAIN, A1**

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 print replica, computer or smart board, pencils or pens, paper

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Objectives:

Students will read an article, and search for personal connections they see in their own lives.

Pre- Reading Discussion:

- How well do you take care of the environment? Share some examples of what you do.
- What are things that are hurting Mother Earth?
- How can the world do a better job? Our cities? Our neighborhoods?
- What are some links between humans and climate change?
- What are the negative effects of human behavior on the environment? Positive effects? Which one outweighs the other?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A *context clue* is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

Write your guess and then look up the definition and write it below your guess. How close did you come to the correct definition?

“Human activities can have consequences (positive and negative) on the ***biosphere***, sometimes altering natural habitats and causing the extinction of other species,” the standards now read.

Biosphere Guess:

Biosphere Definition:

Reading Comprehension:

1. Revisions to Idaho’s K-12 science standards downplay what? What group are they doing this for?
2. According to the new sections provided by the Department of Education, the tweaks suggest that humans can mitigate the effects of climate change and humans can also be a benefit to the environment. How does the science standard read now?
3. The language is now strikingly similar to what Rep. Scott Syme, R-Caldwell, used while leading the effort to do what?
4. The minority assistant leader was denied a chance to introduce legislation this session that would have created what?
5. The vast majority of peer-reviewed studies, science organizations and climate scientists agree on what?

Group Discussion Questions/Journal Prompts:

- What surprised you the most while reading this article?

“I think it’s unfortunate that the Idaho Legislature is more comfortable with watered down science,” said Rep. Ilana Rubel, D-Boise. “I’m a little baffled at the positive (effects) we need to teach our students.”

- Do you think students should be taught watered down science? Why or why not? What does watered down mean?

- Do you think the truth about human history should be taught in our schools? Why or why not?
- How can we better protect our environment?
- Do you believe the earth is warming up? Why or why not?
- Why do political groups not want to believe this is happening to earth? Who are the businesses/special interests that are being protected? Why?

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