

Global Voices Elementary Educator Resources

Note to Educators:

The following activities are designed to stimulate a current events discussion. Generative in nature, these questions can be a launching point for additional assignments or research projects. Teachers are encouraged to adapt these activities to meet the contextual needs of their classroom.

In some cases, reading the article with students may be appropriate, coupled with reviewing the information sheet to further explore the concepts and contexts being discussed. From here, teachers can select from the questions provided below. Activities are structured to introduce students to the issues, then allow them to explore and apply their learnings. Extension and conclusion activities are included to challenge students and finally, encourage them to reflect on the issues at hand.

Since these activities are designed as discussions rather than formal lessons, assessment strategies are not included.

Pre-Reading Questions:

In small groups brainstorm answers to the following:

1. What were some of the issues debated in our most recent federal election?
2. What would be your top five political priorities for Canadians?

After the groups share their answers, ask the students:

- Did clean water and sanitation make it on your lists? If not, why?

Post-Reading Questions:

1. What statistics most surprised you in the column?
2. What is the percentage of eligible voters in India who do not have access to drinking water (29%)?
3. What reasons are given for the lack of progress in providing clean water?
4. The authors make the comment that it is extraordinary that a democratic election is coordinated but not the provision of water to the population. What do you think is necessary to make this a priority?
5. What are possible long-term implications for a country where 200 million people do not have access to clean water (**Hint:** What do you think would happen in Canada if such a large percentage of the population was in the same situation)?
6. If there are 700 million people eligible to vote in India, why do you think water is not at the top of the political agenda?

Water and Sanitation Research:

Use an encyclopedia (on-line or hard copy) to research the following water borne illnesses: typhoid, dysentery and diarrhea. Answer the following:

- a) What are the symptoms of the disease?
- b) What ages are most affected?
- c) How is the illness transmitted?
- d) In which countries are these illnesses most prevalent?

In a computer lab with access to the Internet, explore the United Nations website for youth called Cyber School Bus (www.cyberschoolbus.org)

- a) Take the water quiz (link in the quizzes and games box).
- b) Compare Canadian and Indian statistics including water resources per capita and population by 2025 (link in resources box entitled "Info Nation basic").

Extension:

Some of your students may have seen the recent movie, Slumdog Millionaire. Discuss the images and implications of the lack of sanitation.