

Year 7 science

Water journeys guest speaker

Australian Curriculum links: Year 7 Science

Some of Earth's resources are renewable, including water that cycles through the environment, but others are non-renewable (ACSSU116)

People use science understanding and skills in their occupations and these have influenced the development of practices in areas of human activity (ACSHE121)

Sustainability cross-curriculum priority

In this activity students prepare questions they will use to interview a guest speaker from their local Council or water service provider about where their drinking water comes from and how it is treated to make it safe to drink.

Preparation

Arrange for a guest speaker to talk to the class about the water supply and treatment in your community including everyday aspects such as how the water comes from the street pipes to your house or how taps work.

If this is not possible, you or a colleague can simulate the role of the water supply 'expert'. The best source of information is your local council or water service provider. Ideally, the guest speaker could also talk about the work of the council to promote the Waterwise program in the community. Once the class has collated the final set of interview questions, send these to the guest so they can prepare. Ask the guest to bring photos or videos, if they can.

Activity steps

Interview preparation

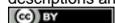
1. Before the guest speaker arrives, students could construct and record their questions in their journal. Encourage students to ask open-ended questions that require an explanation, rather than closed questions that require only a 'yes' or 'no' answer.
2. Use a think-pair-share strategy to refine the quality of their questions. Allocate a set time, such as two minutes, for each phase of the activity.

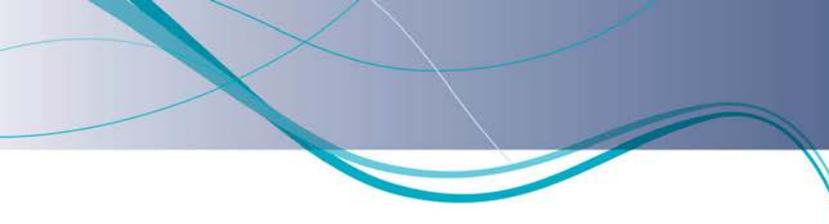
In a think-pair-share activity, students spend some time individually thinking about and recording their ideas. They then share their ideas with a partner and decide on the list for their pair. Two pairs of students form teams of four to develop a team list.

3. Ask a speaker from each team of four students to present their questions to the class; collate a class list of questions on an interactive whiteboard, whiteboard or butcher's paper. Students can add new questions to this list as they arise from discussions.

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Prompt students to ask questions about how the Council manages its water supply sustainably. For example:

Where does our water come from?

What do you do to it from there?

Why does it need to be treated?

4. Allocate the 'guest speaker' questions to individual students; ask them to record their question in their journal. Check that each student has a different question.
5. Students could practise asking their question with a partner to develop confidence. Remind students that they need to look at the guest when asking a question, and that the volume and pace of their voice needs to be appropriate.
6. Recruit a student to welcome the guest speaker, and another student to thank the guest speaker at the end of their visit. The student who welcomes the guest should prepare by asking the guest their name, title, and the type of work that they do. The student will present this information to the class in their welcoming speech.
7. The student thanking the guest should summarise a number of key points from the guest's presentation, state some ways in which the guest's presentation helped the class, and thank the guest for their presentation.

The interview

8. The nominated student introduces the guest speaker (real or simulated) to students.
9. Invite students to interview the guest speaker and ask their pre-prepared questions. You might need to ask the guest to clarify or expand on a particular point or to explain some unfamiliar terminology to the class.
10. Students record their notes and ideas from the interview in their student journal. Invite the speaker to share how the local Council Waterwise program works, and the strategies that the Council uses to promote water conservation in the community.
11. After the interview, review the answers that the guest gave to the students' questions. Display the main points on the board or screen in summary form. Identify any new words and reinforce the meaning of the new words.
12. Students write a factual report of the interview in their journal, using full sentences and the title, 'Water journeys in my area'.