**Promote Our River**

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| **Overview:** | Students will keep an observation journal while spending time at the river and its environs. They will then evaluate and discuss the importance of the river in their lives and community. |
| **Keywords:** | Wetland, resource, ecosystem, watershed, persuasive techniques |
| **Subject:** | English |
| **Age / Grade Range:** | Grades 11 and 12 |
| **Background:** | The teacher may need to discuss with students the concept of a watershed. Following is a definition provided by the EPA: “A watershed is the area of land where all of the water that is under it or drains off of it goes into the same place.” |
| **Common Core and Idaho Content Standards:** | Completely list and articulate the Common Core and/or Idaho Content Standards that are addressed in the lesson. |
| **Goals:** | Students will spend several hours hiking along the Boise (or local) river and making observations in a notebook (using Thoreau’s Walden as a model). They will then create a promotional brochure advertising the river.  Why would people want to spend some of their free time at the river?  What value do you get from spending time at the river?  How do you best convince others of that value? |
| **Objectives:** | * Students will keep a log book of their observations in order to help them organize their thoughts and categorize the kinds of observations they make. * Students will evaluate the effectiveness of the types of persuasive appeals and make decisions about which to use in order to promote the public use of the river. |
| **Materials:** | * Journals for each student * Butcher paper and markers for group brainstorming * Glossy paper and color printer for producing brochures |
| **Set up:** | Students should be prepared to log the hours spent at the river, and perhaps have it signed by parents as proof – or – permission slips if the class is able to go to the river as a field trip. |
| **Time/ Duration:** | 2 class periods of 90 minutes each (180) |
| **Introduction (Engage):** | The river is a valuable resource for the community, and can be enjoyed in a variety of different ways. Assuming that if people spend more time there, they will feel more of a sense of ownership and want to protect it, students will work to promote the use of the river by the community.  Students will begin with a guided read of sections of Thoreau’s *Walden*. Focus on the sections that included specific observations, often using data tables. After reading, the discussion should focus on: how does Thoreau record his observations? What does he choose to observe and why? How does he then use these specific observations to illustrate a larger point or statement? |
| **Activity (Explore):** | Students will spend a minimum of 2 hours at various areas of the river, either on their own or with a field trip group. They will make observations about their environment in their journals. Some examples for observation:   * How many people did they encounter? What were they doing? Did they seem to be enjoying themselves? * Did they encounter any wildlife? What kind? * What flora did they encounter? In what abundance? * What was the state of the environment? Was there litter/ pollution? How much and where? * What was their favorite thing to do there? Why? |
| **Explanation:** | Students, on returning to the classroom, will write up a summary of their experiences and observations. |
| **Elaboration:** | Students will form groups of 3 – 4 and produce a promotional brochure for “The River Experience.” They will need to accomplish the following:   * Discuss their observations, especially those concerning how, and in what ways, people enjoy the river. * Choose a specific angle, or selling point, to try to persuade people to use the river. * Decide which types or persuasion would be most effective for their pitch * Create a tri-fold brochure. The brochure should be colorful, professionally edited, clear and engaging, with multiple photos and illustrations. |
| **Evaluation/ Assessment:** | Groups will present their brochure and promotional campaign to the whole class. The class will discuss each presentation, along some of the following guidelines:   * Is the brochure visually appealing? * Did the group effectively use persuasive techniques? * Do you think this is an effective campaign idea overall?   The class will then vote on the best overall campaign. |

**Additional resources:**

[**https://parks.cityofboise.org/parks-locations/parks/greenbelt/**](https://parks.cityofboise.org/parks-locations/parks/greenbelt/)

[**https://parks.cityofboise.org/media/228316/15%E2%80%930324-greenbelt-map.pdf**](https://parks.cityofboise.org/media/228316/15%E2%80%930324-greenbelt-map.pdf)

**Family/ Community Connections:**

<http://www.boiseriversweep.org/>

<http://www.riverhelpers.com/>