

# About Aqua Times

## Description

This project is based on the principle that it is easier to teach good habits than to change bad behavior. Oklahoma Aqua Times looks at the complexities of preserving one of our most precious natural resources - water. The Oklahoma Aqua Times project is interdisciplinary, involving mathematics, science, language arts, creative arts, creative thinking, and social studies for looking at the quantity and quality of our water. The self-contained curriculum consists of a teacher's guide, five-unit video, and student newspapers. Oklahoma Aqua Times suggests ways to manage our water supply and solicits each person's commitment to conserve this natural resource.

The videos introduce each of the five units, with students interviewing professionals in the water science field.

The five issues of Oklahoma Aqua Times further develop the material introduced in each video. The newspapers include "hard news" and activities, all geared toward children between 8 and 11 years old. The articles and activities are a lively approach to the serious, complex subject of water conservation.

After completing Unit 5, students and teachers are urged to produce and distribute a newspaper that focuses on water quantity and quality. This newspaper can be distributed in the schools and community to increase awareness. Possible extensions of the Oklahoma Aqua Times program include poster contests, exhibits, and Oklahoma Aqua Times ambassadors. These activities can increase the visibility of the program and provide continuing education at the home and community levels.

## Suggested Approaches to Teaching Oklahoma Aqua Times

### Introducing the Unit: Suggestions for Whetting Students' Appetites

**Use the Video.** The video, which is available as part of each unit, is designed to be an audiovisually interesting entree to the entire topic of water conservation. It was developed specifically for your students with youth science reporters as role models who are interviewing professionals.

**Pick an Activity or Two.** Curiosity can be piqued before providing students with any information concerning water issues. The activities after each unit in the Teacher's Guide offer several intriguing choices.

**Start with the Big Picture.** Consider beginning with a short discussion of the water cycle and the importance of water quality in general. Students should understand how surface water, groundwater, and personal actions impact the quality of our water supply.

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# About Aqua Times cont.

## The Student Newspaper

**Introduce the Oklahoma Aqua Times Newspaper.** After you have shown a video

segment and led an activity to whet your students' interest in clean water, each student should have access to the 5-issue packet of the Oklahoma Aqua Times newspaper. Every classroom should have access to the five-part video to introduce the units. The video gives students a visual and auditory advantage in understanding the terms needed to discuss water issues.

Teachers can present the corresponding issue of the Oklahoma Aqua Times newspaper immediately after the video or at a later class. The first two pages of each issue contain news articles, thought-provokers, and editorials, all of which reinforce the material in that unit's video. Pages three and four of Units 1, 3, 4, 5, and pages 6, 7 and 8 of Unit 2 offer review activities.

## The Teacher's Guide

The teacher's guide for each issue includes teaching tips, background information for specific articles, and answers to the activities. Each unit is supported by hands-on activities to enhance the concepts introduced in each unit. The Bubble for Thought feature has questions students should ponder and discuss in class. Teachers are encouraged to let students introduce many ideas. There are no right or wrong answers, as there are trade offs in all situations involving water quality and quantity issues.

After completing each unit, encourage students to share the papers with their families.

**NOTE:** Pollution is used synonymously with contamination for this audience. In higher reading levels, the words would not be used interchangeably. More correctly, pollute means "to make physically impure or unclean." Contaminate means "to damage the quality of water by sewage, industrial wastes, or other matter." These are subtle differences at this age level.

## About the Final Newspaper Project

It is important that people learn to conserve water quantity and quality. The final project, a class-produced newspaper, provides a unique opportunity for students to apply the skills learned in other subject areas as well as to spread this important message through their schools and/or communities.

The teacher's issue of Unit 5 will help you understand more about the workings of a newspaper and how to create one in the classroom. The whole project is based on an interdisciplinary learning style. Consistent with that style, this final paper offers something for everyone.

## Learner Outcomes

Oklahoma Department of Education Learner Outcomes for the Oklahoma Aqua Times program are provided at the end of this Teacher's Manual. The Learner Outcomes are listed for the entire program by grade and subject. While this designation is offered, other outcomes may also be appropriate.

