

Interdisciplinary Ideas

LANGUAGE ARTS

1. Write a research report about an environmentalist who took action and helped to make the world a better place (e.g., John James Audubon, Jane Goodall, Rachel Carson, John Muir, Molly Bangs). Include Heartwood attributes you think the person displayed.
2. Read the book *Riverkeeper* by George Ancona. Write a paper comparing John Cronin and Marion Stoddart.

* Visit www.heartwoodethics.org and choose Teaching Heartwood, Culture Keys, for more on the history, culture, and geography of this book.

SOCIAL STUDIES

1. As a class, draw a time line for the story. Draw mini-scenes or stick figures to illustrate life at specific times. On the time line, mark when the Nashua River began to be polluted and when it was restored.*
2. Research and make a time line depicting use of the land and natural resources where you live. Mark changes that have taken place. If pollution is or was a problem, mark when it started and find out if it has been cleaned up. If both time lines are constructed, compare.

SCIENCE

1. Research acid rain. Report ways it affects water quality and ways to control its impact.
2. Invite a speaker from your state's Department of Environmental Resources to explain the local watershed, or visit a local water purification facility.

A River Ran Wild

Lynne Cherry
1992
San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace & Company

RESPECT
USA
History
Reading Time: 10 minutes

CONCEPTS

Respect
Courage
Hope
Commitment

SUMMARY

Lynne Cherry's true story of a river in Massachusetts depicts the vision and determination of one person, Marion Stoddart, and her undaunted supporters who persisted until the Nashua River was restored. This story is a testimony to the concept that one person can change the world for the better. In addition to full-page watercolors, the author includes more than 200 detailed drawings of wildlife, authentic tools, and historical events.

OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to define and discuss respect, courage, hope, and commitment as they apply to this story and will be encouraged to consider how he/she can make a difference in the world.

After the Story

A River Ran Wild

DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think the Native Americans settled along the Nashua River? How did they show respect for the land? Did the early settlers show the same respect? Why or why not?
2. What changes caused the river to become polluted? How did pollution affect the natural environment?
3. Marion Stoddart hoped to clean up the Nashua River, so she took responsibility for this project. How is hope related to commitment and action? What does her hard work tell you about the kind of person she is?
4. How would you feel if you had to talk to important people about something they were doing that causes pollution? Why would you need courage?
5. Do we still pollute? How can one person make a difference? What would you like to do to make a difference?

ACTIVITIES

1. Find Massachusetts on the world map. Locate the Nashua River.
2. In groups of three or four, list items for which you have assumed stewardship (e.g., pets, plants, stamp collection, baseball cards). Beside each item write what care is needed to keep it in good condition.
3. List environmental places you could care for around your school. Choose one of the places to clean up or beautify in some way.
4. Ask a librarian to help you identify someone who is making a positive difference in your community. Create a Respect poster.

HOME CONNECTION

1. Ask an adult what it was like in the neighborhood where he/she grew up. Ask how things have changed and whether the changes have been good, bad, or both. Report to class.
2. Talk about how your family keeps your home from becoming too messy or "polluted." Are you part of the problem? Are you part of the solution?

JOURNAL

1. Write a response to the story. If it reminded you of an environmental problem affecting your community, write about it.
2. Write an "I Dream of a World" poem. Begin by repeating the title, then listing images of a pollution-free environment (e.g., "where rivers run clear"). Add descriptive words to each phrase on your list to complete your poem.

VOCABULARY

Industrial Revolution
immigration
greenway

petition
gristmill
decomposed

stewardship
commitment