

Suzanne F. Pearl, Associate Professor
College Prep Department, Wolfson Campus

H2O: Bottled or Tap? That is the Question.

The following suggestions can be incorporated into the curriculum of either a REA 0002 or REA 0003 class as they address the course competencies of improving and advancing literal comprehension and critical comprehension in the following skill areas: determining author's bias; distinguishing facts from opinions, and summarizing materials.

1. As a homework assignment, students are to research why humans need water and write a short summary consisting of no more than a paragraph explaining their findings. During the next class session, they will break up into groups of 4 or 5 to discuss their findings, compile their findings into a list signed by all participants, and then have each group verbally share its list with the other groups. The teacher will collect all the summaries and each group's list and give students credit for individual summaries as well as credit for an in-class assignment.
2. The following video, found at www.storyofbottledwater.org, will be shown to the class. After viewing the video, students will be given ten minutes to write their reflections on the video followed by a discussion period to share reflections and additional comments. During this discussion period, the teacher will include commentary on "bias" and explore the bias in the different issues presented in the video.
 - Turning plastic containers, bottle caps, bags, and all plastic waste back into useable oil (where it came from originally) back into gasoline, kerosene, etc. can be found in the following video: [Http://www.flixxy.com/convert-plastic-to-oil.htm](http://www.flixxy.com/convert-plastic-to-oil.htm), an interesting companion piece to "The Story of Stuff."
3. The next assignment is comprehensive and the time period allotted is teacher dependent.
 - Students will find an article 2-3 pages in length on the Internet that explains the advantages and disadvantages of drinking tap water. After reading the article, write a summary of the article and then cite the website from which the article was found.
 - Students will find another article 2-3 pages in length on the Internet that explains the advantages and disadvantages of drinking bottled water. Write another summary as described above and bring both summaries to class.
 - After the summaries have been evaluated by the professor, they will be returned to the students. Once again the students will break into their original groupings to share the two articles they found on tap versus bottled water. Each group will now compile two lists; one list will contain all the advantages and disadvantages of bottled water, and the other list will contain all of the advantages and disadvantages of tap water.
 - Each group is now responsible for creating a collaborative finished product that will support either the use of tap water or the use of bottled water based on the information gathered and will present it to the class. The finished product can be in the form of a debate, a skit, a Power Point presentation, a YouTube video, an original song, a drawing or collage, or any other original endeavor to get the point across to the

viewers. Presentations should be between 5-7 minutes in length and include participation from each member of the group. Grading should be based on a teacher created rubric.

- Students will write a reflective piece on their experience with this assignment and explain how it influenced their position on tap versus bottled water.
 - Students will break into groups (4-5 a group) to help create statements that will be included in a multiple choice test on “fact and opinion.” Each group will generate five “fact” statements and five “opinion” statements based on the information they have gathered regarding tap water and bottled water. Selections from each group will be included in the test.
4. Students will learn geography while helping others in need of clean water when playing on the website, www.freepoverty.com. This is a complex game that tests the skill of the player in identifying the location of a place on a map once the name of the place is flashed on the screen. Accuracy counts here because a perfect match will result in the donation of 10 cups of water to places in the world where people are dying because of poor water quality. Less accurate answers result in fewer cups of water. This website could be linked with various service learning activities.

The Learning Outcomes covered by these four suggestions include the following:

- Learning Outcome 1: Communicate effectively using listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.
- Learning Outcome 4: Formulate strategies to locate, evaluate, and apply information.
- Learning Outcome 6: Create strategies that can be used to fulfill personal, civic, and social responsibilities.
- Learning Outcome 8: Use computer and emerging technologies effectively.
- Learning Outcome 10: Describe how natural systems function and recognize the impact of humans on the environment.