

# Social Studies Lesson One

## Pollution, Water and Population

Pollution can create an irreversible effect upon society. There are many factors that contribute to the pollution problem that the world, including Southern Nevada, currently faces. This lesson will provide the opportunity for the instructor and student to analyze some of those factors visually.

**Objectives:** After the presentation of this lesson students will be able to:

1. identify the main themes of a political cartoon.
2. assess the pollution problem in Southern Nevada.
3. work cooperatively to find the harmful effects of pollution on the Southern Nevada environment.

NEVADA CIVICS STANDARDS 1, 4, 5  
NEVADA HISTORY STANDARDS 1, 10  
NEVADA GEOGRAPHY STANDARD 6

**Materials:** overhead of a political cartoon on pollution (enclosed)

**Time:** One class period

### **Procedures:**

1. Begin with an opening activity that will introduce the unit theme. For example, the instructor may choose any political cartoon that will introduce the idea of pollution and its effect on the environment and water. (Suggested cartoon: "The Dumpster State" by Jim Day, 1998 *Las Vegas Review-Journal*.)
2. Place selected cartoon on overhead and lead students in class discussion.
  - a. Ask students to express the cartoonist's viewpoint in writing.
  - b. What is the cartoonist saying about pollution?
  - c. Who is the "target audience" of this cartoon?
  - d. What are some of the effects of pollution?
  - e. Are these effects properly portrayed by the cartoonist?
  - f. What would you add to this cartoon to make a more powerful statement?
3. Divide students into groups of four or five.
4. While students are in groups they should accomplish the following:
  - a. discuss writing samples of all group members.
  - b. list commonly held viewpoints.
  - c. group members will produce a group mind map that highlights the main ideas of the cartoon.

**Extension Activity:** Each group will choose a reporter who will "report" group opinions of the cartoon, as illustrated on the mind map, to the rest of the class.

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# THE DUMPSTER STATE