
TEACHER'S NOTES 2**WHAT'S IN THE NEWS?**

BACKGROUND

In recent years, articles about environmental issues ranging from global warming to radon exposure have dominated the print, radio, and television media. This increased media exposure can be attributed to increased scientific research and increased public awareness of environmental issues such as radon exposure in indoor air.

Note: In this lesson, you will need to provide articles on radon for your students. See Resources, Information Resources in the back of this manual for book and magazine references.

WARM-UP

Prior to distributing *What's In the News?*, read aloud a paraphrased version of a recent magazine or newspaper article pertaining to the radon issue (see Resources, Information Resources). Make sure the article is of high interest to students and, if possible, local in scope. The goal of this warm-up activity is to focus students' attention on the relevance and importance of the radon issue to the citizens of New Jersey.

TEACHING TIPS

Students will bring a variety of impressions and opinions to the classroom. It is recommended that you channel students' discussion toward defining the problem or generating a series of questions relating to the radon problem. Students' critical reading of the news articles should promote a variety of problem statements and/or questions.

Sample Questions:

- Can the radon problem go away?
- Why doesn't our government test all homes for radon?
- Should people be allowed to build a home in an area high in radon?

Sample Problem Statement:

- Radon is a major problem in some households in our state.
- People need to be more aware of potential radon problems.

GROUPING

A small group configuration (3 to 4 students) is suggested to promote healthy discourse about the substance or theme of the news releases. Such grouping will also promote increased synergy towards problem definitions and/or formulation of specific questions.

MINIMUM RECOMMENDED TIME ALLOCATION

One class period.

LEARNING PROCESS SKILLS

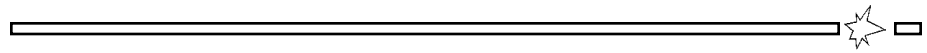
<u>Science</u>	<u>Math</u>	<u>Social Studies</u>	<u>Social or Group</u>
Communicating Inferring	Investigating Analyzing	Defining and classifying problems	Recognizing different points of view

STUDENT RESPONSES

Student responses will vary according to their background knowledge and familiarity with the radon issue. Sample questions might include: What is the extent of the radon problem in our state? or What is currently being done to encourage people to have their homes tested for radon?

EXTENDED ACTIVITIES

1. Have students create a collage to represent their impressions of the radon issue.
2. Have students explore potential biases in different newspaper articles. Have them bring newspaper articles to class and separate the content of each article under two categories: Facts and Opinions (see Resources, Information Resources).
3. Have students do a library research project for the radon problem they identified in the *What's In the News?* activity.





Radon Alert

Lesson Plan Evaluation Sheet

and FREE POSTER AND STORYBOOK offer

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection is happy to provide these lesson plans for use by teachers. In order to evaluate the use of the lesson plans, we would greatly appreciate your response to the following questions. All teachers who return these forms will receive a FREE RADON POSTER depicting information about radon in a colorful format and a STORYBOOK about a Native American child and his experience with radon in his home.

1. Which Radon Alert lesson plan(s) did you use?

2. How useful did you find it/them (check one) ?

- Not useful
 Slightly useful
 Moderately useful
 Very useful
 Extremely useful

3. Do you plan to use them again in the future? Yes No

4. In your view, what would make the lesson plans MORE useful:

Your name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Subject area: _____ Grade: _____

Mailing address:

To receive your FREE RADON POSTER and STORYBOOK, mail or fax this completed form to:

NJDEP Radon Program, P. O. Box 415, Trenton, NJ 08625

Fax: 609-984-5595.

(Questions? Call the Radon Program at 1-800-648-0394.)