

## Human Rights and the Rights of Nature

Analyzing Cause and Effect Relationships

Study Guide Theme: Rights of Nature

### Featured Photos:



Seal in Net



Cows Eat Garbage



Toxic Landscape

**Overview:** Students will learn how to develop cause and effect research topics with thesis statements. Analyzing the rights of nature will inform students of the various systems that help or hurt the ability of nature to gain rights similar to the rights included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This work towards a building a final assignment in which they review one company's environmental policies will help them argue whether or not companies DO consider the rights of nature when making decisions and policies.

**Grade level(s):** Postsecondary

**Subject(s):** Writing

### Corresponding National Standards:

North Carolina Community College System Combined Course Library:

- Demonstrate writing as a recursive process.
- Demonstrate writing and inquiry in context using different rhetorical strategies to reflect, analyze, explain, and persuade in a variety of genres and formats.
- Students will reflect upon and explain their writing strategies.
- Demonstrate the critical use and examination of printed, digital, and visual materials.
- Locate, evaluate, and incorporate relevant sources with proper documentation.
- Compose texts incorporating rhetorically effective and conventional use of language.
- Collaborate actively in a writing community.

### Corresponding Global Competency Skills:

[The Asia Society Competencies:](#)

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*This study guide was created by Dr. Holly Grant Whistler at Nash Community College as part of the 2018 World View Fellows Program:*

*The OVERBook Project on the Environment and Sustainability  
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1. Investigate the World
2. Recognize Perspectives

**Essential Questions:**

1. What is a direct and indirect cause?
2. What word choices can convey cause and effect relationships in writing?
3. How are human activities and nature connected? In what ways are the rights of nature connected to human rights?

**Specific Strategies and Activities by Grade Level:** These activities will lead students toward collecting information to answer the following research question in a cohesive essay: *Choose ONE global business and create an overview of a variety of mediums (articles, videos, social media, newsletters, infographics) to argue that it is or is not effectively balancing the rights of humans and the environment.* Students will have read the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) in order to understand rights as part of a core component of other course assignments through a jigsaw activity in class in which students are assigned a section to read and summarize.

This lesson will be comprised of four major steps: entrance ticket, table discussion, gallery walk, independent research

- **Entrance Ticket: Photo analysis strategy**
  - Students will brainstorm in groups about human activities that interfere with nature by analyzing ONE image, categorizing causes and effects as direct or indirect. Students will (in groups) create a cause and effect diagram to brainstorm what created the situation and the effects of the situation on humanity.
- **Table Discussion:**
  - In what ways do human activities indirectly and directly cause environmental disasters? How do those disasters impact humans? Students will discuss these answers at their tables, and we will then share out as a class to create a large list.
- **Gallery Walk:**
  - Students will then post on Padlet and do a Gallery Walk online, in which they look for connections between humans and nature and post responses to each other in the form of thesis statements. Students may want to use language from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
  - Students will learn ways to express cause and effect relationships in thesis statements by using a sample thesis statement to develop a claim about the impact of human activity on nature based upon the information on the Gallery Walk Padlet. Students will focus on seeing patterns, and will choose several causes and/or effects to build their thesis statements. The instructor will share out exemplars and review needed corrections.
- **Independent research:**
  - The instructor will review the essay assignment's research question (*Choose ONE global business and create an overview of a variety of mediums (articles, videos, social media, newsletters, infographics) to argue that it is or is not effectively balancing the rights of humans and the environment.*)
  - Students will reflect on work experiences and career knowledge, and write about the ways their habits impact natural processes. This will be done as a journaling activity, and will be shared with partners. Students will complete Step 2 of the Writing Process: Generating Ideas for homework by deciding on a business and choosing a text from the company's website that illustrates its environment stance.

**Materials:**

Images from *Overdevelopment, Overpopulation, Overshoot*  
Previous research on careers  
Word processing system

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## Sample cause and effect thesis statements

**Extension:** Have students visit a local business and observe how that business impacts the environment. Students can then interview employees or do research online to further understand that business's environmental policies to help understand how humans do or do not consider the rights of nature as citizens or business owners.

### References:

Garbage Cows [Photo]. (2015). *Overdevelopment, Overpopulation, Overshoot*. By Tom Butler. Goff Books; Novato.

Seal in Net [Photo]. (2015). *Overdevelopment, Overpopulation, Overshoot*. By Tom Butler. Goff Books; Novato.

Toxic Landscape [Photo]. (2015). *Overdevelopment, Overpopulation, Overshoot*. By Tom Butler. Goff Books; Novato.

UN General Assembly. "Universal Declaration of Human Rights." 217 (III) A. Paris, 1948.

<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/> (accessed September 6, 2016).