

Item 20.D. Additional activities examining the Three Gorges Dam

Read information on China's Three Gorges Dam.

Option 1: Stage a talk show in which experts on different facets of the dam will be interviewed. The interviews will conclude with a discussion of whether the construction of the dam was in the overall best interest of China as a nation, and moreover, whether it should serve as a “green light” for future efforts to harness nature for human benefit.

Recommended Resources:

See websites on Suggested Resources for current information on The Three Gorges Dam.

Berkman, Patience. “The Three Gorges Dam: Energy, The Environment, and the New Emperors,” *Education About Asia*. Spring 1998.

Three Gorges Probe News Service

<http://www.threegorgesprobe.org/tgp/index.cfm?DSP=content&ContentID=16941>

“Chinese River Dolphin Nears Extinction,” ABC News. December 2, 2006.

<http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory?id=2695335>

“Three Gorges Dam Holds Lessons for Green Activists,” Inter Press Service News Agency (IPS) <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=33327>

Online Video:

“Great Wall across the Yangtze” PBS <http://www.pbs.org/itvs/greatwall/story.html>

On-line Photo Essay:

“Time Asia: Three Gorges Dam Going Under”

http://www.time.com/time/asia/photoessays/three_gorges/

Roles:

anchorperson – will develop questions for interviewees

geographer – will describe the course of the Yangzi, location of the dam, key cities along the river, and other geographically important areas the river travels through

historian – will explain the evolution of the efforts to construct the Three Gorges Dam, as well as objections at the time the dam was constructed

government spokesperson – will describe historical damage and loss of life caused by the flooding of the Yangzi

Chinese civil engineer – will describe the structural dimensions of the dam

Chinese electrical engineer – will describe the power-generating capacity of the dam as well as the benefit of hydroelectric energy compared to the utilization of coal as an energy source

elderly peasant – will describe the impact of the dam on peasant life, particularly peasants who are attached to the land and forced to relocate to new areas

younger peasants – will describe the impact of having to move from the perspective of someone who is younger

cultural anthropologist/archeologist – will describe the potential for archeological loss with the construction of the dam

environmentalist - will describe the impact of the dam on the environment

activist - will explain why there has been controversy over the construction of the dam since completion

artist/poet - will discuss place of Three Gorges in China's history

Option 2: A Debate

After reading information presenting many different issues related to the construction of the dam, choose a position and debate: Was the construction of the dam in the best interest of China as a nation and should it should serve as a green light for future endeavors to harness nature for human benefit?