Out of the Blue
Civics Module
Desalination Survey

To the teacher

This activity is designed to help students

‘Explore ideas and issues in depth through research on issues important to them, their community and their nation. Through active investigation, they learn about and practise the skills and values required for democratic participation – including working with others, organising, solving problems, respecting other points of view, defining areas for investigation, collecting evidence, analysing data, thinking critically, presenting points of view based on evidence and evaluating the effectiveness of their work.’
(VELS Civics years 9 & 10).

and

‘develop generic skills such as collecting relevant information, researching, questioning, using creativity and analysis, rehearsing, elaborating, organising, judging and applying. They will have developed the capacity to plan and apply these generic skills to enhance learning across a variety of domains. Teachers can enhance learning by providing opportunities for student participation in projects that occur over extended periods and are learner directed. Students will be able to construct a planned learning framework that allows a task to be successfully completed.
(VELS Personal Learning years 9 & 10).

INSTRUCTIONS

This is a group activity in which students:

• Prepare for the survey and make central design decisions as a class.
• Conduct their survey in pairs.
• Collate data as a class and interpret data individually.

It is based upon a survey that is to be undertaken by questionnaire. A sample of the questionnaire is set out on the next page.

BEFORE conducting the survey students need to decide, as a class about:

• The size of the sample.
• The age and gender groups to be targeted.
• The kind of subjects to be chosen – strangers, friends and relatives, members of the school community for example.
• The duration of the survey.
• The questions to be asked.

Once these decisions are made students should duplicate their share of the the survey form and collect responses according to the deadline decided.

The questions on the next page are designed to get you started designing a questionnaire for use by the entire class. It is centred around the Victorian Desalination Plant.
DESALINATION SURVEY

Excuse me would you be able to help me by answering a few simple questions for my school civics project? It is about the city’s water supply and will only take a few minutes.

Age group:  15 - 30;  31 - 50;  over 50.  Gender:  M  F
Voting Intention:  Labour  Liberal  Nationals  Green  Other  Not committed.

1 Reverse osmosis seawater desalination uses:
   A Filtration and treatment chemicals to separate freshwater from seawater
   B Heat and treatment chemicals to separate freshwater from seawater.
   C Reverse osmosis to separate freshwater from seawater.
   D Filtration and reverse osmosis and treatment chemicals to separate freshwater from seawater.

2 If an Olympic swimming pool holds 3,125,000 litres, the volume of freshwater that will be produced by the Victorian Desalination Plant every day is equal to:
   A 100 swimming pools
   B 25 swimming pool.
   C 175 swimming pools
   D 350 swimming pools.

3. The proposed location of the Victorian Desalination Plant is best described as
   A A light industrial area.
   B Barren coast
   C Undeveloped coastal dunes
   D Busy seaside town.

4. Before the 2006 election the government said of desalination
   A It had no immediate plans to build a large scale plant
   B As presented by the opposition the idea of desalination was a hoax
   C It is expensive and uses excess energy
   D All of the above.

5. The governments main reason for committinig to a desalination plant is
   A Melbourne needs a rain independent source of water.
   B Water supply options must meet strict sustainability criteria
   C Every other mainland state is doing it
   D It’s the lowest cost, least polluting option.

6. I think seawater desalination
   A Is the best solution for Melbourne at present
   B Is not necessary for Melbourne at present
   C Should be undertaken after all other options have been used up
   D Should never be required if water is well managed.

Do you have any thoughts about desalination for Melbourne?  __________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your time and support.