

Tap vs. Bottled Water: Reading & Writing Project

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Reading Selections for this Project

“Bottled Water Matters.” *Bottled Water Reporter*: 23 and C4. International Bottled Water Association, Feb./Mar. 2011. Web. 30 Sept. 2011. PDF file.
<<http://www.bottledwater.org/content/455/bottled-water-reporter>>.

“The Story of Bottled Water.” Fox, Louis. Leonard, Annie. Sachs, Jonah. *The Story of Stuff Project/Bottled Water*. 22 March 2010. Web. 30 Sept 2011. Free Range Studios. <<http://storyofstuff.org/bottledwater/>>.

United Nations. Economic and Social Council. *General Comment No. 15 on The Right to Water*. Geneva, 29 Nov 2002. Web. 30 Sept 2011. [Adapted]
<[http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/a5458d1d1bbd713fc1256cc400389e94/\\$FILE/G0340229.pdf](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/0/a5458d1d1bbd713fc1256cc400389e94/$FILE/G0340229.pdf)>.

Week 1: Activities 1 – 10

Week 2: Activities 11 – 18

Week 3: Activities 19 – 30

Reading Rhetorically

Prereading

Activity 1: Getting Ready to Read

Take a small survey. Ask a random sampling of 20 people whether they prefer drinking tap water or bottled water. Record your results below.

Tap Water	Bottled Water

Comment on the results of the survey. Are you surprised? Why or why not? What reasons do you think are behind the majority's response?

Activity 2: Thinking Actively about the Topic and Key Concepts

	True	False
1. Bottled water tastes better than tap water.		
2. Bottled water is safer than tap water.		
3. Plastic bottles are recyclable.		
4. Bottles of water are a convenient and easy way to drink water.		
5. Bottled water is a cheap enough source of clean water.		

Read each statement, and decide whether you believe it is true or false. Then check ✓ the box that represents your answer.

Rewrite each of the above statements as a question.

Example: *Does bottled water taste better than tap water?*

Activity 3: Concepts and Terms

Each of the opinions in Activity 2 represents key issues important to the debate about tap vs. bottled water. The important signal words in the five statements above are:

- taste
- safer
- recyclable
- convenient/easy
- cheap
- clean

➔ The argument that arises from tap vs. bottled water pits individual preference against social and economic needs.

Important Definitions

Social: something or someone relating to society (how groups or communities of people interact and relate to each other). A social issue matters to society. An individual issue matters to a person.

Economic: something relating to money or making a profit. Economic issues can relate either to an individual or to society. An economic issue can also relate to a corporation or business.

Where should the “signal words” listed above be placed in the chart that follows? Does each word on the list represent a social value, an individual value, an economic value, or some combination?

Social	Individual	Economic

4. Read the quote below taken from the script:

“This story is typical of what happens when you test bottled water against tap water” (4).

In this sentence, “test” is not a noun; it is a verb, and water is the object of the verb. What does it mean to test one type of water against another?

5. What do you predict the script will be about? Write down your prediction.

Activity 5: Understanding Key Vocabulary

In pairs or individually, read each quote from the text. Then choose the best meaning for the bold word or words by circling the letter of your choice. Finally, explain in your own words the meaning of the vocabulary word or words.

1. “Is it cleaner? Sometimes, sometimes not: in many ways, bottled water is less **regulated** than tap” (5).
 - a. In this excerpt, **regulated** means having a regular and uniform shape.
 - b. In this excerpt, **regulated** means controlled by rules or laws.

Explain in your own words the meaning of **regulated**:

2. “Yet people in the U.S. buy more than half a billion bottles of water every week. That’s enough to circle the globe more than 5 times. How did this come to be? Well it all goes back to how our **materials economy** works and one of its key drivers, which is known as **manufactured demand**” (8).
- a. In this quote, **materials economy** means a system of buying, selling, and managing money based on the value and use of raw materials, like oil, water, and trees.
 - b. In this quote, **materials economy** means fake paper money, like in Monopoly.

Explain in your own words the meaning of **materials economy**:

- c. In this quote, **manufactured demand** means anything that is made and then bought.
- d. In this quote **manufactured demand** means a made-up demand, made-up by or manufactured by advertisers to convince people to buy something they want, but may not really need.

Explain in your own words the meaning of **manufactured demand**:

3. “So how do you get people to buy this **fringe product**? Simple: You manufacture demand” (11).
- a. In this quote, **fringe product** means something with a decorative tassel.
 - b. In this quote, **fringe product** means something for sale that is different or unconventional.

Explain in your own words the meaning of **fringe product**:

4. “When we’re done,” one top water exec said, “tap water will be **relegated** to showers and washing dishes” (13).

- a. In this quote, **relegated** means demoted or devalued.
- b. In this quote, **relegated** means to follow rules.

Explain in your own words the meaning of **relegated**:

5. “They’re trashing the environment all along the **product’s life cycle**. Exactly how is that environmentally responsible?” (16)

- a. In this quote, **product’s life cycle** means the time period for the life of a bottle from its production to its decomposition.
- b. In this quote, **product’s life cycle** means the time period between when a bottle is produced and when it is purchased.

Explain in your own words the meaning of **product’s life cycle**:

Activity 6: Making Predictions and Asking Questions

- 1) Rewrite each of the following statements in the form of a question.
- 2) Answer each with a “yes,” “no,” or “I don’t know.”
- 3) Tell what you already know or explain what more you need to know in order to persuade someone else to agree with you?

1. Bottled water is safer to drink than tap water.

Question:

Answer:

Facts:

Activity 8: Reading for Understanding: “The Story of Bottled Water”

Now, carefully read the script for “The Story of Bottled Water,” jotting down any responses or questions that you have as you read right on the text itself.

Activity 9: Vocabulary Self-Assessment Chart

The words listed in the vocabulary self-assessment chart are important for understanding the argument inside Leonard’s movie/script.

Review the vocabulary from “The Story of Bottled Water,” and note how well you understand the meaning of each word or phrase by checking the appropriate column. Then, under your teacher’s guidance, record the correct definition for each word or phrase.

“The Story of Bottled Water” vocabulary (paragraph #)	Definition	Know It Well	Have An Idea	Don’t Know It
pristine (1)				
campaign (2)				
regulate (5)				
sustainable (7)				
consumer demand (7)				
manufactured demand (8)				
designer product (10)				
relegated (13)				
environmentally responsible (15)				

product's life cycle (16)				
landfill (19)				
downcycle (20)				

Activity 10: Understanding the Main Idea

Before more deeply analyzing or challenging the text, it is important to succinctly articulate the main idea in the text.

Write one sentence that notes the essential who, what, when, where, and why of Annie Leonard's "The Story of Bottled Water." Use the sentence starter provided.

Annie Leonard's "The Story of Bottled Water" argues that

Activity 11: Analyzing Stylistic Choices; Annotating and Questioning the Text

Leonard wants her audience to respond a certain way and to do so uses three main rhetorical devices in her argument: 1) She *tells stories* to make her points more personally appealing, 2) she *asks questions* to engage the viewer and reader and involve them in the argument, and 3) she *makes strong points that she repeats over and over* throughout the article.

Complete the activities below to notice these stylistic features of Leonard's writing and the ways she uses them to try to persuade her audience

*	?	!
Telling Stories	Asking Questions	Repetition of Points

Telling Stories:

Re-read “The Story of Bottled Water.”

Mark the start and end of every “story” within the article with a big asterisk ^{*}. The three stories to look for are:

- Story about bottled water and manufactured demand
- Story about mountains of empty plastic bottles in India
- Story about how consumers can fight back

Asking Questions:

1. Skim the script and write a question mark symbol for each question the author poses in the margin next to the question.
2. Near each question mark that you add, write how you think the author wants you to answer? Yes? No? Or, I don't know, but tell me more?
3. Does Leonard ever ask a question and then answer it? If you think Leonard answers one of her own questions, draw an arrow → from the question to the answer.

Repetition of Points:

Leonard addresses four main points repeatedly throughout the argument: affordability, health, taste, and environmental responsibility.

1. Highlight or underline text that helps to explain each point. Choose the two quotes that you think help to explain her point best and copy them into the graphic organizer that follows.
2. The, in one to two sentences, summarize the assigned point.

Cornell Note Style Graphic Organizer

Main Point	Text Support
<i>Affordability</i>	
Summary:	
Main Point	Text Support
<i>Health</i>	
Summary:	
Main Point	Text Support
<i>Taste</i>	
Summary:	

Main Point	Text Support
<i>Environmental responsibility</i>	
Summary: 	

Postreading

Activity 12: Summarizing the Text

Using the summary guide below, write a summary of Leonard’s “The Story of Bottled Water” that includes her purpose for writing, her main points, the problem, and her proposed solution.

Summary Guide for Annie Leonard’s “The Story of Bottled Water”

The Parts and Structure of this Guided Summary

Sentence One: Name the author and title of the script and the author’s purpose for writing this story.

Sentence Two: Retell the beginning of the story by listing three points in the campaign for bottled water.

Sentence Three: State if and how the bottled water companies were successful with their ad campaign.

Sentence Four: State a possible problem associated with bottled water.

Sentence Five: State three points that support tap over bottled water.

Sentence Six: Construct a concluding statement presenting Annie Leonard’s point of view.

Summary Sentence Frames for “The Story of Bottled Water”

Sentence One

The central focus of _____’s article, _____
(author’s first and last name) (“title of article” – in quotation marks)
is about how bottled water _____
(author’s purpose for writing)

Sentence Two

_____ starts by saying that if advertising companies
(author’s last name)
could persuade people to believe tap water _____,
(point one)
_____, and _____,
(point two) (point three)
then more people would choose to drink _____.

Sentence Three

The ad campaign for the bottled water company was _____
(successful or unsuccessful)
because people now believe _____
(explain how the campaign was or was not successful)

Sentence Four

According to _____, the bottled water companies
(author’s name)
may not have told the truth about how bottled water _____

(problem with bottled water)

Sentence Five

Tap water may be better than bottled water in that _____
(point one)
_____, and _____
(point two) (point three)

Sentence Six

In conclusion, _____ believes tap water may be
(author's last name)

(Leonard's point of view regarding positive benefits of tap water)

Activity 13: Thinking Critically—PAT (Preliminary Analysis of Text)

“Bottled Water Matters” is a one page public press release sponsored by the bottled water industry promoting bottled water. It addresses the same issues discussed in Leonard’s “The Story of Bottled Water,” but from an opposing point of view. It presents a counterargument.

Upon first glance, what do you notice when looking at “Bottled Water Matters”?

Activity 14: Thinking Critically—The Writer’s Purpose

Read and study the text. Discuss the following questions (if you are in a class or group setting) and write answers to them:

1. Who wrote this? What do we know about the author or writers?

2. Does the writer or do the writers seem trustworthy? Why?

3. What do the writers claim bottled water is?

4. Is the writing serious or funny? Why?

5. Does the writing make you experience any emotion (laugh, feel sad, anger, etc.) How and/or why?

Activity 15: Assessing Believability

Let each “chunk” of “Bottled Water Matters” be a section. For each section, choose one claim about bottled water you find particularly believable. Similarly, record a claim that you find hard to believe. If for any of these you find nothing believable or nothing hard to believe, explain why not.

Section Name	Believable Claim	Hard to Believe
“A Healthy Beverage Choice”		
“A Strictly-Regulated Food Product”		
“Packaged in Safe Containers”		

<p>“An Efficient Use of Natural Resources”</p>		
<p>“Important in Times of Water Emergencies or Disasters”</p>		
<p>“A Local Option”</p>		

Activity 16: Using Logic, Emotion, and Expertise to Craft Powerful Statements

Final Text: The Economic and Social Council of the United Nations declares the human right to clean and affordable drinking water. This text neither endorses nor opposes bottled water. Instead, it makes a case for drinking water being more than a consumer product.

In a group or individually, examine each sentence by completing the following activities:

1. Read sentences 1-6 from the United Nations’ introduction to “the right to water.”
2. **UnPAC** (paraphrase, annotate, connect)
 - a. Paraphrase: restate the sentence using everyday words the best you can.
 - b. Annotate: underline the words you think are key to understanding the sentence.
 - c. Connect: What is the purpose of the sentence? Why does it matter?

Sentence	UnPAC
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

3. Questions for discussion:

- a. Is the sentence an emotional or logical statement? Why?
- b. Are there counterarguments or claims? Why?

Activity 17: Assessing Believability

Return to the chart in Activity 18 and use your notes to add a believable and hard to believe claim for Leonard and for the United Nations' statement on "the right to water."

Text	Most Believable Claim	Hardest to Believe
"Bottled Water Matters"		
"The Story of Bottled Water"		
United Nations "Right to Water"		

Stage a debate if you are working a group or class setting. Each of you will be assigned a role. One student is the moderator. One student represents "The Story of Bottled Water." One student represents the bottled water industry. One student represents the United Nations. The moderator chooses a claim or hard to believe claim and gives each actor a chance to defend or attack the claim.

Activity 18: Reflecting on Your Reading Process

Before you move to the more formal writing assignment, reflect on your experience reading the texts:

- In what ways have your reading and understanding of these texts improved as a result of your work with them?

- What reading strategies helped you most to deepen your understanding of the texts and the issues involved?

- How can you apply these reading strategies to other texts in other classes?

Connecting Reading to Writing

Discovering What You Think

Activity 19: Considering the Writing Task

Write a letter to the City Council stating and explaining your choice for drinking water in your community.

A new school city policy has been written that says every classroom in every school and every meeting room in city buildings will have drinking water available. Students and employees voted on their drinking water preference.

Choices were:

1. Drinking fountain that uses tap water
2. Water dispenser (or water cooler) that uses bottled water
3. Individual bottles of water

The votes came in, and there is a **three-way tie!**

All concerned parties have decided to write a letter to the City Council stating and explaining their choice of drinking water. They will read the letters and then make their decision.

Your letter will be evaluated on these criteria:

- Your response to the topic bottled vs. tap water
- Your understanding of the topic
- Your organization and development of ideas
- Your production of a formal error-free letter

Your letter could be the difference!

Activity 20: Taking a Stance—What Is Most Important to You?

Below are the main issues involved in the tap vs. bottled water debate. Rank each issue 1-5, in order of importance to you.

Main Issues	Order of Importance
Environmentally Responsible	
Health and Safety	
Affordability	
Convenience	
Consumer Preference	

Activity 21: Taking A Stance — Quickwrite

Which do you prefer? Should the city provide 1) drinking fountains using tap water, 2) bottled water dispensers using bottled water, or 3) individual bottles of water?

Take five minutes to write a quick response to the question and to explain your choice.

Activity 22: Gathering Evidence to Support Your Claims

Find quotes from the three texts to support your position and to help explain each issue.

For your two most important issues, fill in the chart below with supportive quotes, the sources, a paraphrasing of each quote, and words that make you sound like an expert on the topic.

Main Issues	Quotes	Who Says It and Where?	In Your Own Words	Domain-Specific Vocabulary
<p>Example: Environmentally Responsible</p>	<p>“Each year, making the plastic water bottles used in the U.S. takes enough oil and energy to fuel a million cars.</p>	<p>¶17 Annie Leonard in “The Story of Bottled Water”</p>	<p>Leonard accuses the bottled water industry of wasting oil and energy to make plastic water bottles that could instead be used to provide gas for millions of cars a year.</p>	<p>material economy sustainable</p>

Main Issues	Quotes	Who Says It and Where?	In Your Own Words	Domain-Specific Vocabulary

Writing Rhetorically

Entering the Conversation

Activity 23: Composing A Draft

Follow the letter-writing guide and begin composing a draft, referencing the prewriting work you have done in Activities 20-22.

A Letter-Writing Guide in Four Paragraphs:

Date

- Write month, day, and year

Salutation

- Begin with “Dear City Council Members” (add the name of your city/community)
- Follow with a colon

Paragraph 1: Introduction

- State the reason for writing
- State your position

Paragraph 2: Body

- Explain two issues that show you understand the topic.
- Include quotes, who says it and where, and then explain it in your own words.
- Use as much domain-specific vocabulary as you can.

Paragraph 3: Body

- Present the counterargument (the point of view that is opposed to yours).
- Explain it
- Tell why your position is better

Conclusion

- Restate your position and why it matters to you
- Leave room for a catchy phrase!

Activity 24: Composing a Draft—Making Your Voice Stand Out!

So that your letter ends on a strong note, try to come up with a catchy slogan which represents your choice. Even though advertising campaigns make it look easy, writing a catchy simple slogan is a difficult task. The first step to writing a clever slogan is to choose the issue you believe is most important and frame it as something that if you want it, you can have it.

An example could be: *Save money! Lap from the top and support drinking fountains now.*

Revising and Editing

Activity 28: Critiquing and Revising the Draft

Working closely with the draft you just wrote and the assessment guide below, identify the strengths of your draft as well as opportunities for continued improvement. Use check marks, pluses, and minuses, as well as comments. Your self-assessment of the effectiveness of your letter is an important step in your revision process. At this stage, focus your attention on issues of content and purpose, rather than on mechanics.

Ask your partner to read your letter aloud. If your partner pauses, look to see if spelling, sentence structure, or punctuation might be the problem. Ask your partner to read as if she were a member of the City Council. Is the letter convincing? Do the same for your partner. After revising and then editing, write a final draft of your letter.

	Self-Assessment	Partner Assessment
<p>Format of Letter</p> <p>Date and Salutation Opening includes purpose of writing</p> <p>Opening includes position statement</p> <p>Concluding statement in closing</p>		
<p>Organization and Support</p> <p>Body paragraph contains supporting reasons</p> <p>Reasons are convincingly ordered</p>		

<p>Response to Topic The writer demonstrates understanding of the topic and important topic issues</p> <p>The writer addresses the counterargument clearly and convincingly</p>		
<p>Command of Language Grammar, spelling, and punctuation</p>		

Activity 29: Assessing and Editing the Final Draft of the Letter

Review your letter one last time before you consider it to be complete. Look for spelling, sentence structure, and/or punctuation issues that need to be corrected.

Make any final, needed improvements.

Activity 30: Reflecting on Your Writing Process

Now that you have completed your letter, please respond to the following questions:

What do you think are the strengths of your letter?

What aspects of your letter, if any, could be stronger?

Grade 7 Expository Reading & Writing Project

In your own words, what do you think this letter writing assignment intended to teach you about writing? What did you learn about the writing process from writing this letter?

Were there any stages leading up to your final letter that you found to be the most helpful and would consider using when you write future letters or papers in this or other classes? Explain.