



Center for the Environment at Catawba College

Campaign for Clean Air

Clean Air in the Classroom

Stage 2 Activity 1

Clean Air Index

Overview

This activity is a very simple activity to help the students learn about the Air Quality Index. It also provides the students with posters to display during the media blitz section of the “no-idling” campaign.

North Carolina Standard Course of Study

This lesson meets seventh grade science competency goals 3.03 and 3.04.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to reproduce the Air Quality Color Code.

Materials

- Computer Lab to access <http://www.airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=aqikids.index>
- Lab Guide to Air Quality Index available on the website
- Six pieces of large poster board in these specific colors:
 - Green
 - Yellow
 - Orange
 - Red
 - Purple
 - and your choice of the last, blue is recommended
- Class set of scissors
- Dark colored markers
- Stapler
- Masking tape

Procedures

1.) Take the students to the computer lab. Have them use this website <http://www.airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=aqikids.index> to fill out their Lab Guides. After they have finished their questions, and if time allows, there are some air quality games on the site above that can serve as a fun review of what they have learned.

2. Now that they have learned about the air quality index, students can make a poster that recreates the index. This poster is extremely effective because it can be displayed outside during the media blitz week. Sort the students into groups, six groups being the optimum, since six posters will be made.
3. Have the students divide and cut each poster board into six equal sections. Then have the class sort out these sections of poster board so that each group has a section from each color.
4. Now, have each group assemble their poster pieces in the order of the air quality index.
5. Have the students attach these sections with staples on each side and reinforce the back with masking tape. The blue section (or whatever color you chose) should be at the top to save some space for the title.
6. In their best penmanship, have the students label each color in large letters with the dark markers according to this chart. As mentioned, the chart they have made does not include maroon.

AQI Colors	Health Word(s)
Green	Good
Yellow	Moderate
Orange	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups
Red	Unhealthy
Purple	Very Unhealthy
Maroon (usually not shown)	Hazardous

7. Have the students display their posters after school in the car rider line.

Assessment

- 7.) Grade the answers the students provided on the computer Lab Guide.
- 8.) Grade their poster for neatness and accuracy.