

Town Meeting Scenario  
Student Activity #3

As the population grew and the use of irrigation ditches expanded to meet the needs of agriculture and domestic water requirements, the amount of water diverted for Colorado needs was of concern to the people of Kansas who claimed that excessive withdrawal diminished the flow in the Arkansas River. These reductions had economic consequences and resulted in Kansas filing a lawsuit against Colorado in the Supreme Court of the United States.

Use the Colorado Historic Newspaper collection to research positions of various interest groups in this controversy. Present your findings in a town meeting. Explain how decisions in this case could affect you. In addition to the role playing assignments listed below, a student should be assigned as Mayor of the city to facilitate the meeting, call on speakers, maintain the orderly conduct of the participants and conduct a question session following or during the presentations. A timekeeper should also be assigned to limit presentation times and questioning sessions. The following positions should be researched and represented in your discussions.

1. Colorado Ditch owners
2. Colorado Farmers
3. Kansas Farmers
4. Water engineers (Federal, Colorado or Kansas)
5. Lawyers representing the case

A second, follow-up town meeting will be held for the purpose of explaining the decision of the Supreme Court. Several lawyers should be appointed to provide the community with this information.

Researching involves keyword searches. Your ability to find information depends on your ability to ask the questions in multiple ways. Brainstorm keywords and combinations of nouns that will help narrow your search. For example: irrigation, irrigation ditches, agriculture, water. Think about the words (nouns) that will appear in the article. Read through the search tips. Be sure to place a check mark in the search all publications box.

**Preparation for Town Meeting:**

Before the presentations, generate a class chart defining what is meant by the goal of active speaking, active listening and active participation. Specifically, define behaviors that demonstrate and do not demonstrate the goal. Post these in your classroom to remind students of desired behaviors.

**Assessment:**

This section of the assignment evaluates the student's ability to locate primary source documents, identify facts and opinions, and document the sources of information. Students will find articles, review the article and make a list of facts and opinions that they can use in their role playing discussions. The source for each fact or opinion needs to be cited.

Group Represented:		
Facts	Opinion	Source



<b>Town Hall Meeting Rubric</b>				
	Unsatisfactory	Partially Proficient	Proficient	Advanced
Active Speaking	The speaker's voice was not loud enough to clearly hear the content. Enunciation of words was unclear. Eye contact was missing. Notes were read.	Only those students near the speaker could clearly hear or understand what he/she was saying. Reading of notes was distracting.	Infrequent instances of unclear speech or insufficient loudness. Some notes were read directly. Eye contact with the audience was sporadic.	Speaking was clearly understandable, adequately loud and the speaker retained eye contact with the audience. Notes were not read and only referred to infrequently
Content	Presentation had no factual basis and was inaccurate	Research of content weak.	Research of facts presented was adequate but lacked depth.	Content of presentation was based on well researched, primary source material.
Ability to answer questions	The student was not able to answer any questions	The student's response was vague and brief. The student appeared unsure.	The student's response was complete and accurate but did not elaborate in detail.	The student seems knowledgeable regarding the question and gave a detailed response
Active Listening	The student was rude to the speaker(s) by having sidebar conversations, was inattentive and/or disruptive.	The student appeared uninterested but was not directly rude or disruptive to other presenters.	The student was attentive to most groups but did not actively participate in the town meetings in any session beside their own presentation.	The student was attentive to all speakers, actively participated in questioning periods and was respectful to other while they were presenting.
Active Participation	Non-participatory behavior was observed such as head being down, engaging in reading non related material or drawing activities.	Participated as a listener during the presentations. Did not ask questions or provide other groups with comments	Assumed the role of a listener in other presentations. Participated infrequently in question and answer sessions.	Participated fully in all the presentations. Showed appropriate acknowledgement to others. Gave positive comments. Participated in question and answer sessions.