



## Relationships to Water

### Organizational Info:

**Title:** Relationships to Water

**Summary:** Students evaluate passages and images related to water and predict what perspective they are from. Students then compare and contrast the Indigenous and Western scientific views and understandings of water.

**Inquiry Question:** Inquiry Question 1a: According to local Indigenous groups, what is water, where did it come from, and why is it important?

**Duration:** 40 minutes

**Learning Environment:** Classroom, outdoor

**Season:** Summer, Spring, Fall, Winter, All

**Materials:**

- Notebook/paper for each student
- Gallery Walk.pdf
- Gallery Walk Answers.pdf
- Tape or tacks
- Computer/projector

### Meta Data:

**Content Type:** Activity, storytelling

**Bundle:** Water

**Theme:** Contaminants in the Environment

**Subject Area:** Art, Biology, Environmental Education, Outdoor Education, Science, Social Studies

**Curriculum Focus:** 8

**Curriculum Links:**

Science and Technology: A3.3, E1.1, E1.2

1. Teachers show students video segment embedded in ten-minute video accompanying the Water Bundle of Ojibwe and Odawa Knowledge Keepers Shirley Williams and Liz Osawamick discussing the relationship the Anishinaabe have to the water.

- Teachers can also show the following videos:
  - Anishinaabe: <https://youtu.be/KC2FHciQ0sU>
  - Kanyen'kehá:ka: <https://youtu.be/9MvNaFWcQf4>

2. Teachers display images and passages around the classroom or outside that depict both the Indigenous and Western scientific understanding of and relationship to water (**Gallery Walk.pdf**). Have students circulate and categorize the images and comments as belonging either to the Indigenous or Western scientific worldview.

3. Teachers debrief activity by revealing how the passages and images are categorized (**Gallery Walk Answers.pdf**). Discussion should reveal that while there are fundamental differences (for



instance, for Indigenous people water is gifted from the spirit world and is the lifeblood of mother earth) in many ways Indigenous groups and Western scientists (esp. community ecologists and biologists) view water in similar ways. An effort should be made to show distinctions but not set up a false dichotomy between the Indigenous and Western scientific view of water.

Please note that the learning represented in these activities reflects Big Idea C. in the Indigenous Knowledge Learning Bundle: “Reciprocity, Interdependence, and Holism are at the Heart of Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being”. To help your students learn more about these foundational concepts check out the Learning Activities titled: *Holism*, *The Honorable Harvest*, and *Our Responsibilities* found in the *Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Being with the Natural World* Learning Bundle (Grades 7-10).