

PULSE: The Future of Energy (Oil dependence and Global Warming)  
September 19<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>

In his State of the Union address in January 2006, President Bush acknowledged an important truth: “We have a serious problem”, he said, “America is addicted to oil.” This addiction is shared with the rest of the planet. Consider this: developing nations such as India and China are projecting a 60% growth in energy usage by 2025, most of it produced with fossil fuels!

This massive consumption of fossil fuels comes with serious consequences such as air pollution and global warming (not to mention higher oil prices). Most scientist agree that the average global surface temperature could rise 1-4.5°F in the next fifty years, increasing intense rainstorms and raising the sea level up to two feet along most of the U.S. coast.

How do we find a balance between our insatiable appetite for energy while preserving the environment? In this two-part videoconferencing series, students will take a hard look at their daily energy consumption, learn the facts about global warming and discuss alternative energy options for the future.

**On Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>** up to 4 classes at a time will compare (through videoconferencing) ways they consume energy on a daily basis, and offer suggestions to cut down. They will also express their thoughts on the role the US should play in the Future of Energy. This informal round table conversation will be moderated by David Macquart, co-founder of the Global Nomads Group.

**On Thursday, September 21<sup>st</sup>** up to 5 classes at a time will interact with Yerina Mugica, an Energy expert at the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), one of the leading environmental groups in the US. Yerina will open the conference with a brief expose on the potential of various renewable energy sources, and then answer students’ questions directly.

RECOMMENDED PREP RESOURCES

We recommend that you prepare your students with the following lesson plans:

**Lesson Plan 1:** *Global Warming: What should we do about it?* (1 class period) - [http://www.crf-usa.org/bria/bria18\\_4b.htm](http://www.crf-usa.org/bria/bria18_4b.htm)  
*From the Constitutional Rights Foundation.*

**Lesson Plan 2:** *Chilling Out: Considering Alternative Sources of Energy to Prevent Further Global Warming* (from the New York Times Learning Network)  
Link: <http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/20031104tuesday.html>

(You’ll need to hand out the following New York Times article, *As Earth warms, the Hottest Issue is Energy* – see “nyt article”)

Finally, we recommend that you engage your students in a class discussion on the issue of Oil Dependence and Global Warming. We've created a list of sample questions (see below) that will closely reflect the discussion during the first videoconference, on September 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Sample question list**  
**For Class Discussion**

To what degree do we Americans depend on oil? Use examples.

List 5 things you do on a daily basis that consume energy.

What effect might global warming have on the earth's inhabitants?

Would global Warming affect you personally? Explain.

What every day things do you do/can we do to help conserve energy?

What do you think is sensible for the United States to do at this point?

Do you think this global warming is an issue that needs to be addressed? Explain your answer.

Although America makes up just 4% of the world's population, we produce 25% of the carbon dioxide from fossil-fuel burning. The U.S. emits more carbon dioxide than China, India, and Japan combined. Do you think we have a responsibility towards the rest of the world to limit our consumption of fossil fuels?

These questions are examples only. We encourage you to ask more and have students ask their own