Stakeholder Debate: Ethics and Lead

Purpose

To integrate all the knowledge from the Soil and Lead AMBIENT Module by creating a presentation taking a particular ethical stance or point of view.

Overview

This is the culminating experience of the Soil and Lead AMBIENT Module. Students will be asked to work in teams to develop a presentation and handout representing a particular point of view in a Lead Debate. This experience will require the students to synthesize their varied knowledge of lead and its issues, organize this knowledge, and present it persuasively to their peers.

Time

3-5 two hour block class periods with team homework in between; the session is to start the students, the second is to evaluate their progress, and the third is for them to present their debate/role play. This experience should involve time in and out of the classroom to collect, organize, and create the Team Presentations.

Key Concepts

This section particularly focuses on the ethical issues engendered by lead. There are many different points of view in the lead debate, ranging from health and social to economic. There is also the issue of limited public resources to solve environmental problems, as well as how to prevent similar environmental problems in the future.

Skills

Students will work in teams to synthesize their Lead knowledge to represent a particular point of view persuasively. They will create handout and presentation materials to help communicate this knowledge and point of view. Finally, using these materials, they will practice public speaking to present their work.

Materials

Computer access to presentation software such as PowerPoint would be useful, but not essential since transparencies could be used to illustrate the speaking points. Although software (such as Microsoft Work or PowerPoint) would facilitate the creation a Brochure, Rap/Song or Poem or a Play, or Poster, these could be done purely on hardcopy incorporating pictures and text. Creation of a video would require video camera equipment.

A transparency projector or slide or LCD projector for presentation of transparencies, slides or computerized PowerPoint presentation.
Facilitator Preparation

You will need to divide the students into groups or teams representing different sides of the debate questions or as individuals/teams representing different roles. Knowledge of and facilitating access to the computerized software with training will optimize this session. Prior knowledge of the Soil/Lead Primer, as well as other modules, will prepare you for the range of issues addressed in this section.

It is recommended that Facilitators initially organize the students into group representing a particular debate or role playing point of view. The facilitators should meet with each group to evaluate their progress in deciding the type of handout, the medium, and the different parts in the presentation. Facilitators should encourage the groups to practice their presentations before and keep to the time limits.

Background

What are the various issues raised by lead as an environmental pollutant? As an economic product? As a political, historical and ethical issue? What does a society do if there are limited resources to correct an environmental issue? How does a society prevent this sort of environmental disaster from occurring in the future? What is the role and responsibility of the individual when faced with an environmental issue?

Other aspects are teamwork of the students in synthesizing, creating and presenting data and a particular point of view. If available, the use of various software packages can be incorporated to enhance presentations. Effective communication is one of the objectives of this section.

Procedure

Organize a Lead Debate, taking opposing points of view as starting points to discuss the different issues raised by lead. Have each group develop a Power Point Presentation (or similar software) as part of the debate to organize and illustrate while they talk. Have the rest of the students participate as an audience representing US Citizens, Politicians, Scientists, or any of the roles suggested below.

In opposing groups, Possible Debate Issues include:

- Lead is the single most important environmental health problem of our time. **Vs.** Poverty is the single most important environmental health problem of our time.
- Lead is an example of industrial greed. **Vs.** Lead is a useful and necessary industrial substance.
- We must remove all the lead from our environment. **Vs.** We cannot afford nor do we need to remove all the lead from our environment.

Have each group in the debate develop a Brochure briefly describing the health effects and differing issues of lead from their debate point of view. Alternative work products could include: making a Video, creating a Web page, making a Rap/Song or Poem or a Play, or creating a Poster to communicate their position on lead issues.
The debate could also involve **Role-Playing** using some of the following roles to illustrate different views in the Lead Debate:

- Scientist against lead
- Scientist for lead
- Community Organizer against lead
- Small Business owner using lead like a Painter or Car Battery mechanic
- House owner with lead in paint and soil
- Rental Property owner with lead in paint and soil
- Parent with small children
- Owner of a lead battery recycling shop
- Physician or nurse working in a poor neighborhood
- Owner of a lead removal business
- Politician with limited monies and resources for public and environmental health
- Oil company executive
- Ceramic artist using lead paints
- Construction worker involved in lead paint removal
- Lawyer representing US Cities suing the Lead Industry
- Lawyer representing the Lead Industry
- Day care teacher in a poor neighborhood
- Director of the health department
- Citizen of developing nation where lead products are being dumped by the US and other industrialized nations
- Traditional ethnic healer who has used lead in remedies for years

**Further Investigation**

Students can use their handouts and presentation to discuss lead as an environmental issue for other students, families, and neighborhood organizations.

What would the student(s) do to rectify this issue if it occurred in their own neighborhood or family? What can one individual do? What can a group of people do? How can this situation be prevented for lead and for similar environmental issues?

Students can assess environmental issues for their own neighborhoods, prioritize these issues, and create plans of how to address these issues to either remediate or prevent them.

**Student Assessment**

Give the following presentation design components to each student team as a guide to their group presentations:

- Decide what facts are important to include to support their particular view point on the lead issue
- Design a Handout that summarizes this information and their point of view (i.e. Brochure, Video, Web page, Rap/Song, Poem, Play, Poster)
Practice and keep their presentation within the time allotted
Each group member should take part in the Presentation, even if it is just to read or explain one piece of the presentation
Each group member should answer at least one question from the audience at the end of their Group presentation.

Assign points for the following components of the Team Presentation:

- Were the handout and presentation easy to read/effective at communicating the facts and the particular point of view?
- Were pictures/maps/illustrations used?
- Were proper science terms used?
- Was each group member actively involved in the presentation?
- Did the group report their sources?