



“As World’s Population Booms...” Teacher’s Guide

Overview: When discussing population dynamics and sustainability, we often wonder about the carrying capacity of our planet. While scientists estimate Earth can sustain 9-10 billion people, students are generally curious about how scientists calculate human impact.

This National Geographic article gives insight to the effects of human overpopulation, how we can measure it, and how we can address those issues. The accompanying article questions can be shared digitally, used for classroom discussions, and/or as an emergency sub plan.

Materials:

Article, worksheets

Resources:

- [As World’s Population Booms, Will Its Resources Be Enough for Us? | Nat Geo](#)

Suggested Pacing: (1-2 days)

Day 1 - warmup on overpopulation | annotation review | independent student work

Day 2 - review & discuss questions

Pacing w/ Teacher Notes:

Day 1 - To introduce the article, I start class with a warmup asking my students what they think are problems with overpopulation/under-population. I create a list but I don't go into details; as it's something I like to refer back to after they finish their article.

Before starting the article, if my students have not done annotations recently, I review it with them and write down general annotation tips that they can refer to. As they work on their articles, I periodically check in with EL students or anyone who may struggle with reading comprehension.

Day 2 - Depending on your next topic, it may be useful to review and discuss questions from the article. You can go back to the list of issues they created prior to reading the article and adjust/expand on those ideas. It directly builds on their prior knowledge and can prompt better questions. After reviewing, this assignment can transition nicely into watching NOVA's "World in Balance: The People Paradox," as it looks at the effects of growing and shrinking fertility rates in different countries.

Credits:

National Geographic