

Book Review

Water*

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Resource kit developed by the Inner City Education Centre, with support from the Water Board, NSW.

Two booklets: K-6 by Susan Israel; 7-12 by Karen Plummer

Available free of charge from the Water Board's Corporate Marketing Department.

This kit comprises two books: the K-6 book looks at issues such as water quality, water usage, its care and conservation. The 7-12 book is divided into three study areas - Science, English and Aboriginal Studies and covers issues such as water pollution, packaging, home chemicals, and supply of water to Aboriginal communities.

One of the best features of the kit is the integration of issues regarding water conservation with an Aboriginal perspective on the use of water.

However, there is little evidence in the books of an understanding of educational objectives, of good written expression, or of editing. This is particularly evident in the K-6 book. A number of activities are very poorly described and at times the expectations from the information given is absurd (eg. "Using a globe or class map of the world ask the children to point to where you find water. List places. The list could include rivers, lakes, ponds, creeks mangroves, streams, swamps, wetlands". !!) Many of the activities involve information gathering (mostly from secondary sources) with almost no evidenc of development of action proposals based on this information - the activities are forever asking for lists to be made and little more!

The objectives written for each activity show a poor understanding and considerable confusion between Concepts, Processes/Skills and Feelings/Values - and the objectives for many of the activities are virtually the same. It would have been more constructive to have well considered objectives for each section rather than attempting unsuccessfully to write separate objectives for each activity.

The secondary booklet is clearer and encourages more active student participation. My major criticism of this book is a common problem found in teaching resource material - it is not clear whether the book has been written for the teachers or the students.

Both books will be a useful resource for teachers to refer to, and an excellent example of ways to include Aboriginal perspectives - however this resource indicates a need within the profession for better reviewing and refereeing from an educational as well as an editing perspective - we must be able to do better!