

Water in the Murray-Darling Basin: A revision activity

Twenty questions

1. Name the town at the confluence of the Murray and Darling rivers.
2. What is meant when the Murray River is described as a "regulated river"?
3. On which river are the Menindee Lakes situated?
4. What is an "environmental flow"?
5. Describe the geographic characteristics of the Murray-Darling Drainage Basin.
6. Explain how human activities within the Murray-Darling Basin have contributed to salinity problems.
7. Arrange the following towns in order from closest to the Murray mouth to closest to the Murray source: Morgan, Echuca, Goolwa, Renmark, Swan Hill, Wentworth, Mildura and Albury.
8. What are the three (3) sources of water for the Murray-Darling River system?
9. Describe the distribution of rainfall in the Murray-Darling Basin.
10. Name the states that make up the Murray-Darling Basin and arrange them from largest in area in the basin to smallest area in the Basin.
11. Describe a location where there has been a conflict over water use in the Murray-Darling Basin and explain the nature of this conflict.
12. Name two (2) policies that operate in the Murray-Darling Basin and state the aims of each one.
13. Explain how an environmental flow can improve the environment. Do this for a specific location.
14. Select one (1) factor and explain how it has influenced the use of water in the Murray-Darling Basin.
15. List six (6) uses of the water in the Murray-Darling Basin.
16. Give the names of three (3) of the six (6) significant ecological sites targeted by the Living Murray Initiative.
17. What are the barrages found at Lake Alexandrina and what is their purpose?
18. This year has seen the Federal Government propose changes to the way in which the Murray-Darling Basin is managed. What does the Federal Government want to do and why has the proposal caused controversy?
19. Which organisation presently manages the Murray-Darling Basin?
20. In your opinion, is it appropriate that water in the Murray-Darling Basin was selected as the compulsory regional resource for all students undertaking VCE Geography Unit 3 Regional Resources? Give reasons for your opinion.

Instructions

From the list of 20 questions above:

- a. Select five (5) that you feel confident about answering without reference to your textbook or notes. Answer these five (5) questions. You can not change your answers later. (5 points)
- b. Select another five (5) questions that you believe you can answer after you have checked your notes and textbook. Look for the information you need and write down your answers. (5 points)
- c. Of the remaining 10 questions select one (1) question that you can speak to the class about for at least one (1) minute without any preparation or reference to notes. (2 points)
- d. Of the remaining questions, select one (1) question that you would find most difficult to answer. Can you identify where you could find the

necessary information to answer this question? Answer the question when you have found the information you need. (2 points)

- e. Create five (5) other questions for your classmates to answer. These may be about specific case studies your class has investigated or water use in the Murray-Darling Basin generally. Use your notes and textbook to help you.
- f. Stump the teacher: select one (1) question for your teacher to answer. (1 point if he/she is incorrect.)

Some suggested answers: Teachers might consider a supply of rewards and pick a point score required for students to score a chocolate etc. Compile the questions created by your students from Instruction E and have your class try to work these answers out.

1. Wentworth.
2. Its flow has been controlled by dams and weirs.
3. Darling River.
4. Allowing enough water in the river to maintain a healthy environment so that plant life in rivers and flood plains is healthy etc.
5. The Murray-Darling Basin contains 14 per cent of Australia's land, wide variety of environments, 10 per cent of Australia's population lives within it etc.
6. Removal of deep-rooted native vegetation, use of irrigation.
7. Goolwa, Morgan, Renmark, Wentworth, Mildura, Swan Hill, Echuca, Albury.
8. Rainfall, groundwater, diversions.
9. Rainfall totals range from more than 800mm to less than 300mm per annum. It is wetter in the east and drier in the west. Approximately 5–10 per cent of the basin receives more than 800mm per year and approximately 30 per cent of the basin receives less than 300mm per year.
10. NSW, Qld, Vic, SA, ACT.
11. Students should state a specific location, who the conflict is between and what it is about.
12. Responses will be determined by the case studies undertaken in a school.
13. An "environmental flow" is the water regime provided within a river, wetland or coastal zone to maintain ecosystems and their benefits where there are competing water uses and where flows are regulated. Responses will be determined by the case studies undertaken in a school.
14. Students will probably select a SHEEP factor and elaborate.
15. Agriculture, irrigation, hydro-electric power, domestic and industrial water supply, mining, recreation, fishing industry, environmental, manufacturing.
16. Barmah-Milewa forest, Gunbower and Koondrook–Perricoota forest, Hattah Lakes, Chowilla Floodplain, Murray mouth (Coorong), Murray Channel.
17. Barrages (locks) keep the tides out of the lakes; preserve the freshwater for Adelaide's water supply.
18. Federal Government control over water in the region with a national plan; states will lose management of the river systems. Victoria has not accepted the proposal.
19. Murray-Darling Basin Commission.
20. An opinion needs to be well justified.