



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2015 Volume III: Physics and Chemistry of the Earth's Atmosphere and Climate

Political Debates over Climate Change

Guide for Curriculum Unit 15.03.06
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This curriculum unit was prepared in collaboration with another program participant, with the net goal to provide students in our co-taught course with the scientific and other skills needed to hold a debate on whether global warming and climate change are real. Students will consider potential main causes of climate change and how we, as humans on earth, can help prevent negative effects of climate change in the future. Working closely with the scientific content provider, my unit describes the philosophy and structure of effective debate strategies. Mastering these skills will allow our students to become better citizens by allowing them to understand what actually is happening in a civil debate. Thomas Hager's *The Alchemy of Air* will be the first text we examine. Then we will focus on James Hansen's TED talk "Why I must speak out about climate change," *Scientific American*'s "Behind the Hockey Stick," "The Nitrogen Cycle," and "What Do Farmers Think about Climate Change?" In conjunction with the readings, I will ask our students to keep a journal of vocabulary words and facts, so they will be well prepared for their debate.

(Recommended for English and Science through Literature, grades 9-12)

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