



Social Studies Virtual Learning

Geography

COVID Pollution

April 15, 2020

Geography
Lesson #18- 4/15

Objective/Learning Target: I can connect the impact COVID 19 has had on pollution around the world.

Warm Up

Review the following pictures on the next slide. These photos were taken in New Delhi, India and demonstrate the impact of pollution on their country. After reviewing the pictures, find five examples of how the two pictures are different. Write these five examples on a piece of paper.



November 3, 2019



March 30, 2020



Lesson Activity

The impact of the coronavirus on countries around the world has led to a drastic drop in pollution emissions. Countries that have implemented nationwide shutdowns, such as China and India, have seen air pollution levels drop. However, can these declines in pollution around the world hold once the coronavirus is eradicated?

In theory, this sharp decline in pollution and carbon emissions is a positive development for the planet and the humans who live on it. For one, air pollution contributes to **millions of deaths** across the globe every year, aggravating cardiovascular disease and respiratory health. Clearer air may also deliver some brief relief to those suffering from COVID-19, making it easier to breathe for patients who are struggling, though health experts say that years of exposure to pollution has likely made many people more susceptible to the disease. “The damage is already done,” said Sascha Marschang, acting secretary general of the European Public Health Alliance in a statement. “Years of breathing in dirty air from traffic fumes and other sources will have weakened the health of all those who are now embroiled in a life or death fight.” The decline in emissions may also seem like a win for the fight against climate change. Climate scientists have warned that global carbon emissions need to peak in the coming years for the world to have even a remote chance of keeping temperatures from rising more than 1.5°C by the end of the century, a **level** that would likely bring a range of dramatic consequences from mass climate migration to the loss of the world’s coral reefs. As a coronavirus-related economic fallout, carbon emissions could decline in 2020. But, without a concerted effort, they’re unlikely to stay down.

<https://time.com/5812741/air-pollution-coronavirus/>

Practice

Using the same sheet of paper from the Warm Up Activity, watch the following video from the *Wall Street Journal* and answer the following questions:

1. List two reasons that reduced pollution in China during the coronavirus outbreak.
2. How has coal consumption changed since the coronavirus in Wuhan, Hebei, and Shandong, China?
3. On the other hand, why has pollution remained an issue in Beijing, China?
4. Explain the connection between industry and pollution in China.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/coronavirus-lockdowns-clear-the-air-but-the-green-effect-could-be-fleeting-11586095204>

Practice Answers

1. List two reasons that reduced pollution in China during the coronavirus outbreak.
 - a. Less cars on street & factories closed down
2. How has coal consumption changed since the coronavirus in Wuhan, Hebei, and Shadong, China?
 - a. After the Lunar Year celebration that never occurred, coal consumption has remained low and air pollution has not impacted these industrial cities, keeping emissions low.
3. On the other hand, why has pollution remained an issue in Beijing, China?
 - a. Steel production did not shut down during Lunar Year holiday, so factories kept making steel during shutdown.
4. Explain the connection between industry and pollution in China.
 - a. Industry could equal economic success in China. If industry ramps back up, levels of air pollution will increase as well.

Reflection

Take a look at the graffiti mural by Banksy. Answer the following discussion questions.

1. How does air pollution impact society?
2. How will COVID-19 change how countries view pollution? In your opinion, will anything change?

