

Option 2 - Book Resource Review
SCED 541- Fall 2018
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The Power of Water
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Robby is a troubled ninth grader. School isn't something he takes very seriously and he goofs off in class just to get a few laughs. Then one day he goes too far. In a prank inspired by his teacher's "life is hard" stories, Robby inadvertently seals his own fate.

It might not have been so bad had it been his teacher, Mr. Frang, who found the grasshoppers and earthworms in his desk drawer, but it wasn't. Instead, the prank befell a poor old substitute who, screaming and stumbling, slipped on water Robby had tracked in to the classroom, and broke her arm. At this point, Robby knows he's crossed a line, but he lacks remorse and isn't willing to take any responsibility for what he's done.

Robby's mom decides it's time he learns a little something about respect, so Robby's next stop is Camp Windpipe, a wilderness camp in the mountains of Montana.

When Robby gets to Camp Windpipe, he finds out that the program has a theme: "The Power of Water, The Power of Me." It's from here that Robby begins his journey and finds out exactly how water has the power to change lives.

The Power of Water is a science resource intended for 5th - 8th grade students. Interwoven throughout the story are opportunities for learning about Earth's water, how it interacts with other Earth systems, and the impact it has on humans.

My class has been learning about the Earth's systems and their interactions. This story is a great way to introduce river systems as part of the hydrosphere. I used it as a read aloud and my class loved it! The character, Robby, was very relatable to upper elementary students and they were able to identify the subtle changes in attitude that occurred in him throughout the story.

The quote in the story, by the camp counselor Nina, was a great discussion starter. Before reading, we discussed the implications of the statement and how it applied to my students. It called on them to ponder something they

likely had never considered, while also activating prior knowledge and providing a guide for new learning.

“You think that you are more powerful than water... You think you have the power over water. If you are so powerful then how is it that water can exist without you, but you cannot exist without water?”

Students completed a concept map to categorize new information, and used the parts of the Camp Windpipe program, Mountain Water, Running Water, and Solo on the Missouri, to guide them in the acquisition of new information from each section. During reading, we stopped to discuss important information from the text, such as the characteristics of water as it changes depending on the environment, and how it effects the environment. Some of the concepts we noted were how elevation affects the form water will take, how water moves, and how it shapes the landscape. The maps in the story were helpful visuals for building understanding about river systems, and how the Great Divide determines which direction river waters flow.

The Power of Water is a long story and might be difficult for students who are struggling readers. It worked well as a read aloud, but it would be great to have the actual book and resources that were created for it, so it would more available for student use in the classroom. Overall, based on my students' reaction to the story, I think it is an excellent way to guide students in learning about key concepts related to water on Earth.

Some of the Next Generation Science Standards addressed include:

Earth Science 5-ESS-2/MS-ESS-2 Earth's Systems

Earth Science 5-ESS-3/MS-ESS-3 Earth and Human Activity