



Education and Research: Testing Hypotheses

## Should We Stay or Should We Go?

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### Summary

Students will research and create a debate based off of Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner's poem at the Climate Summit 2014 and a quote from the US Ambassador to the Marshall Islands. The class will be split into teams and will debate whether Marshallese and other Pacific Island communities should move to the US in the face of climate change. Should they become climate refugees? Or should they stand and fight for their nations? The purpose of this activity is to get students to formulate arguments based on evidence as well as introduce themselves into the politics of climate change.

*[TAGS: climate, carbon.]*

### Key Concepts

- Climate Change Politics
- Climate Change Refugees
- Sea Level Rise
- Adaption vs Mitigation
- ESS3: Earth and Human Activity
- ESS2.D: Weather and Climate

### Objectives

- SWBAT communicate an argument effectively
- SWBAT demonstrate good research techniques
- SWBAT identify primary and secondary sources
- SWBAT organize information logically

### Materials

- Computer/wifi, website/printed out articles (if wifi access is limited), Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner video

### Procedure

1. Introduce prompt: "There are not that many of you, we can just move you to the US and solve the problem easily" –US Ambassador to the Marshall Islands
  - Show video: [Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner Climate Summit 2014 Poem and Statement](#)

2. Quick write: students respond to quote and video—How did Kathy’s speech contrast with the statement by the US ambassador?
3. Introduce debate
  - Introduce affirmative vs negative sides to argument and adaption and mitigation (climate change terms)
4. Break down sections/how to organize research: Refer to the Debate Image Format and have students begin to prepare their statements by themselves for each part of the debate
5. Split class into quarters—2 groups working on affirmative, 2 groups for negative
  - Provide resources for research
    - Wifi, prepared articles/printouts, website links, example speeches, climate change statistics and research, religious ties—as a Christian nation
      - Negative side research suggestions: Refugee crisis internationally—what is it like to enter a country as a refugee, economic impacts, livelihoods, cultural ties to island—place based culture, climate change activism
      - Affirmative side: Kiribati “dignified move”, US Ambassador quote—easier to move than to address issue head on, also science suggests that by 2050 these islands will be lost to the ocean
6. Do research!
7. Organize research into clear debate format
8. Practice
9. Debate!
10. Reflection
  - Quick write: students reflect on what arguments from each side resonated with them—what made those points strong? The facts? Opinion? What worked and what didn’t work?
  - Which side did you connect with and why?

## **Assessment**

- **Performance**—students will research, write, and perform an organized debate based on their research
- **Product**—debate and written reflection
- **Rubric** (included at bottom)

## **Additional Resources**

[Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner Climate Summit 2014 Poem and Statement](#)

[Debate Format Image](#)

## Extensions or adaptations

This lesson plan could be used as a wrap up for a climate change research unit. Related topics: sea level rise, changing global weather patterns, etc.

Grade level could be changed by switching the prompt—simplifying the prompt would make this suitable for lower grade levels.

If this lesson is going to be used in an English Classroom, try to focus the reflection portion of the exercise on identifying key words and language that they associated with the most persuasive and compelling arguments.

### Rubric

	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Understanding</b>	Understood material in depth and presented argument clearly	Understood material in depth	Understood the main points	Unclear understanding of material
<b>Organization</b>	Well organized material and presentation	Organized material and presentation	A bit disorganized presentation	Disorganized material and presentation
<b>Evidence</b>	Three pieces of evidence clearly addressing each point	Two pieces of relevant evidence for arguments	One piece of relevant evidence, some arguments may not be fully supported	Evidence is non-existent or irrelevant to argument
<b>Delivery (Eye contact, slow and clear voice, enthusiasm, persuasion)</b>	Clear and effective delivery of arguments—succeeded at all 4 delivery goals	Clear delivery—met 3 out of 4 delivery goals	Somewhat unclear delivery—met 2 out of 4 delivery goals	Unclear and ineffective delivery—met 0 or 1 delivery goal
<b>Teamwork</b>	All group members contributed equally and participated in debate	Most group members contributed equally and participated in debate	Some group members contributed and participated in debate	There was little to no teamwork