

Hollywood High 2011 AP Language Research Paper Abstract/Prompt (April 2011)

“The welcome storms this winter have eased **short-term** water management challenges as we continue to advance a historic **long-term** solution to the water system/ecosystem crisis in the **Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta**. “ The quote continues, “The additional water supplies, combined with tremendous conservation and water use efficiency efforts throughout the region, have allowed Metropolitan to significantly replenish its storage.” This was an excerpt from a quote by Jeff Kightlinger, General Manager of the **Metropolitan Water District of Southern California**. The quote was in response to California’s **Governor Brown** declaring that the three-year **drought** was officially declared over.

If you parse the words, notice the mention of short-term and also the mention of long-term challenges. As the *San Gabriel Tribune*, on April 4, also stated, “...Although the drought may be over, there is still a water shortage.” This is the historical challenge and contradiction in California. The “wettest” winter since 1970, was certainly a gift from the water gods, but, the reality is that droughts are a result of weather patterns that come and go. Add to that ongoing issues of **population growth, development, legal and environmental restrictions and the emerging impact of climate change** and you have, as Mr. Kightlinger said, a situation where, “The long-term challenges remain ahead of us...”

To meet those long-term challenges, sustaining an ongoing commitment to water conservation will remain important. Case in point, while the drought may be over, the 2009 legislative mandate to lower per capita water use through local conservation measures that will help achieve a **20% statewide reduction in water use by 2020**, remains.

While current local conservation efforts have been successful in prompting people to do what they can to be being more water smart by **improving their own wasteful habits**; by investing in more **water-efficient appliances** (e.g. - front-loading washers) and by planting **native plants**, more can and will have to be done.

Becoming advocates within your own home and with your neighbors; encouraging your community to **reduce water use on outdoor landscapes**; increasing **recycling** efforts to reuse water, and continuing **public outreach** efforts will be essential.

The goal and challenge for citizens of Southern California and all other Californians is to develop, for individuals and cities, farms, businesses and the environment, **sustainable solutions to our long-term water challenges**.

What the Students will be doing in the Board Room?

- **First Segment:** Five (small group) students will be presenting a “defense” of their seven-page research paper based on the abstract above:
 - Through PowerPoints they will attempt, in about seven minutes, to paint the big picture challenges revolving around proposing/encouraging water conservation policies that will provide sustainable solutions to our long-term water challenges in Southern California and the state, in general. Challenge: Making the case despite having just had the “wettest” winter since 1970.
 - They may, in some cases, bring the problem and proposed conservation solutions down to the “local” level and how to convince the public and other stakeholders to continue water smart practices.
 - The panel will evaluate and score the presentations based on Mr. Carmicle’s (teacher) scoring rubric
- **Second Segment:** The large panel of students (all 17), representing the public, agricultural, business and environmental interests, and some, but not all, municipalities and/or member agencies of Metropolitan’s service area, will:
 - Present an array of conservation measures, that in their area of responsibilities (personal or regional) will help maintain efforts to save, per capita, about 36 gallons of water a day (individual) or larger scale efforts (regional) that help maintain the momentum to help meet the “20% by 2020” legislative mandate.
 - Points can be discussed and debated on the basis of practicality of factors such as reasonableness, cost, environmental impacts, total water savings, etc.
 - The session can be more of a refining of presentation points (rather than point/counterpoint) to make each proposition more realistic and plausible as a contributing solution to the whole

The Purpose of the Metropolitan Panel of Water Experts is to:

- Ask follow-up questions
- Gently challenge some assumptions (e.g. - “Have you thought about the Cost?”)
- Compliment
- Provide other ideas or elements the students might have considered
- Encourage to continue research; to continue asking questions; to be a part of the solution, etc.