Continual Education Reflection

The documentary *Gasland* by Josh Fox is a firsthand account of the impacts of hydraulic fracturing. The filmmaker travels across the country to discover the effects of hydraulic fracturing, after he has received notification that a company wants to drill on his land for natural gas. Through his journey, he meets several people whose well water began showing signs of contamination following the drilling. He discovers the health effects that these people are experiencing, as well as the effects their animals are experiencing. From his experiences, Fox decides not to allow the company to drill on his land. He tries many times throughout the film to contact someone at any of the drilling companies, but no one will speak to him. At the end of the film, he meets with the Department of Environmental Protection and reveals his findings. This documentary informed my understanding of the impact of human characteristics on natural features. It helped me understand that humans are often in a rush to take advantage of the natural resources they poses, and do not think about the consequences for the ecosystem that surrounds the area they impact. *Gasland* also helped me understand how important it is to teach students about the impact that people can have on the environment, and how important it is to teach them to be responsible citizens and take care of the environment.

The article “Humans: The Real Threat to Life on Earth,” explains the authors view on the evolving damage that humans are causing to the Earth, and its natural resources. Emmott explains how population increase is causing an increased need for water and other resources, as well as the amount of influence the population increase is having on the amount of air pollution. Emmott explains that the increased air pollution is causing an increase in climate. He goes on to explain how these impacts are going to affect us in the future. Emmott then explains that the only way to prevent the dreadful future is to radically change our habits by consuming less and conserving more. Emmott’s article informed my understanding of the severity of the consumption of humans. It also helped me see the importance of informing myself, as well as my students of the impact that we have on the land around us. The article informed my understanding of the social issue by helping me understand how severe the problem is. For example, Emmott explains that it takes 3,000 liters of water to make one hamburger. Before reading this article, I never would have thought about the use of water in hamburger production, but now I will think about it every time I eat one.

In “Positive Effects on the Environment from Going Green,” Lake provides multiple examples of ways to be more environmentally conscious. She explains that there are many ways to help preserve the environment, including reducing pollution, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, conserving resources, producing less waste, and preserving wildlife. She goes into detail about how to decrease human impact in all of these areas. This article informed my understanding of the social issue by increasing my understanding of ways that I could change my impact on the environment. The other pieces of work explained how human characteristics were damaging the environment, but they did not go into detail to explain how to change human impact. This article provided me with a variety of ways that I can decrease my impact on the environment, which will help me inform my students about ways they can decrease their impact.