

## What impact do citizens have on the environment and on our government?

<b>Content</b>	<p>This instructional task engages students in content related to the following grade-level expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 8.1.1<sup>1</sup> Produce clear and coherent writing for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences by:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Conducting historical research</li> <li>○ Evaluating a broad variety of primary and secondary sources</li> <li>○ Determining the meaning of words and phrases from historical texts</li> <li>○ Recognizing varied points of view within historical context</li> </ul> </li> <li>• 8.5.1 Describe how natural phenomena impact the physical environment of Louisiana</li> <li>• 8.5.2 Analyze and predict consequences of environment modifications on Louisiana and its inhabitants</li> <li>• 8.8.1 Describe ways in which citizens can organize, monitor, or influence government and politics at the local, state, and national levels</li> </ul>
<b>Claims</b>	<p>In this instructional task, students develop and express claims through discussions and writing which examine the causes and consequences of environmental issues in Louisiana, and how we as citizens can affect our government.</p>
<b>Unit Connection</b>	<p>This instructional task helps students explore and develop claims around the content from unit 5:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why might citizens want to make changes to a law? What is the process? How is it impactful? (8.8.1)</li> <li>• What are the rights and responsibilities of a Louisiana citizen, and how can we as citizens influence our government on a local, state, and national level? (8.8.1-2)</li> <li>• What are possible consequences of environmental modifications for Louisiana and its inhabitants? (8.5.2)</li> </ul>

Supporting Question 1
What are the causes, impacts, and possible solutions for environmental issues in Louisiana?
Formative Performance Task
Students will conduct research to analyze an environmental issue in Louisiana.
Featured Source
<b>Source A:</b> Various sources for independent research

Supporting Question 2
What does a bill look like; how is it worded?
Formative Performance Task
Students will read and discuss an example of an environmental bill in the state of Louisiana.
Featured Source
<b>Source B:</b> <a href="#">Louisiana Environmental Bill for Disposal of Tires (House Bill No. 746)</a> , Louisiana State Legislature

Supporting Question 3
What is the process for how a bill becomes a law?
Formative Performance Task
Students will analyze how a bill becomes a law at the state level.
Featured Source
<b>Source C:</b> <a href="#">How a Bill Becomes a Law in Louisiana</a> , Louisiana State Legislature from <i>The Shreveport Times</i>

<b>Summative Performance Task</b>	Using the sources and your knowledge of Louisiana history, propose a bill to your state legislator that addresses an environmental issue and gives possible solutions.
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<sup>1</sup> This GLE contains multiple parts, which should be taught over the course of several units in grade 8. The GLE requires students to “produce clear and coherent writing for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.” The parts of this GLE addressed in the task are the first, second, and third bullets.

## Formative Performance Task 1

<b>Supporting Question</b>	What are the causes, impacts, and possible solutions for environmental issues in Louisiana?
<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	Students will conduct research to analyze an environmental issue in Louisiana.
<b>Featured Source</b>	Various sources for independent research
<b>Content and Claims</b>	This formative performance task requires students to conduct research and find a current environmental issue affecting the state of Louisiana.

### Featured Source

**Source A:** Various sources for independent research

### Steps

1. Divide the class into pairs using an established classroom routine.
2. As a class, discuss major environmental issues affecting Louisiana. Possible topics include, but are not limited to: coastal erosion, flooding, endangered animals, and introduction of invasive species to our wetlands (water hyacinth, nutria, and carp).
3. Write student ideas on a white board, chart paper, or using a projection device.
4. Explain to students they will conduct research as a pair to locate an article on one of these issues.
5. Provide directions and model using a sample topic how students should conduct their research:
  - How they will select a topic?
  - Where they will access articles (i.e., school library, laptops in the classroom, use a search engine to locate their article or go to a particular site/database, such as a Gale database, etc.)?
  - How they will determine the credibility of articles they are selecting?
  - How they will document the article they locate using a common format for citation?
6. Ask each pair to conduct research to find an article that addresses a current environmental issue affecting Louisiana. Provide pairs with a copy of the research organizer on the next page.
7. Guide students toward credible sources while conducting their research, such as governmental websites, educational/university websites. If your school has a librarian, work with the librarian for the best process for locating sources and creating a bibliography. Possible credible sites:
  - <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/louisiana/>
  - <http://www.tulane.edu/~bfleury/envirobio/enviroweb.html>
  - <http://www.deq.louisiana.gov/portal/>
  - <https://www.lsuagcenter.com/en/environment/>
  - <http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/stories/trackingla.html>
8. Once pairs have located an article, use a sample topic and article and model how to read the article and brainstorm the causes and impacts of the environmental issue as well as possible solutions.
9. Then have students read the article in pairs and list the causes, impacts, and possible solutions of the environmental issue. Direct students to brainstorm at least 3 solutions and write a summary of which solution they consider most feasible and why.

**Research Organizer for an Environmental Issue**

Environmental Issue	
Causes and impacts	
Solution 1	
Solution 2	
Solution 3	
What solution do we most support and why?	

**Student Look-Fors**

1. Students can be directed to the [Citation Machine](#) to help with creating a bibliography of sources used in their research.
2. Students should properly identify the cause of the environmental issue. For example: There are several causes of flooding, both natural and man-made causes (hurricanes, levee system, water diversion projects, and failure of these projects).
3. There may be more than one impact of the environmental issues as well, and students should list all impacts. For example: Possible impacts of flooding include displaced wildlife, personal property loss, loss of life, and damage to plant life/geography of Louisiana.
4. Students should provide possible solutions. They will have to list these solutions when proposing their bill for the culminating task. There will be more than one option or solution, but the student should be strongly in favor of one particular solution. Students should justify their solution by mentioning costs associated, departments associated, civic involvement, and people affected by the solution.

Environmental Issue	Erosion of Louisiana’s coastline
Causes and impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nutria eat marsh plants</li> <li>• hurricanes</li> <li>• man-made structures (dams, levees, canals, etc.)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LA is losing 25 to 35 square miles of wetlands per year</li> <li>• People and animals lose their homes</li> <li>• Less protection from storms/hurricanes</li> <li>• Hurts major businesses in Louisiana (oil, natural gas, fishing, etc.)</li> </ul>
Solution 1	Create jetties or breakwater structures to allow waves to break offshore and reduce the impact of the waves as they move towards shore.
Solution 2	Relocate the Mississippi River to its normal route
Solution 3	Create sediment diversions and put dredged material where it can help build coastal land habitats
<p>What solution do we most support and why?</p> <p>Since the sediment from the Mississippi River is valuable in many ways, the most appropriate solution for helping to protect Louisiana’s wetlands is to dredge the sediment and use it to help the wetlands. The sediment from the river is picked up along the way down the river’s path; it is full of important nutrients helps make soil more fertile. Right now, the sediment from the Mississippi River is deposited into the Gulf of Mexico. If we dredge the sediment and transfer it to the wetlands, there would be two major benefits. First, the sediment would help build up the land there which creates a natural habitat as well as a barrier to hurricanes. Second, the nutrients would help to support the ecosystem of the area which would help plants, animals, and humans</p>	

## Formative Performance Task 2

<b>Supporting Question</b>	What does a bill look like; how is it worded?
<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	Students will read and discuss an example of an environmental bill in the state of Louisiana.
<b>Featured Source</b>	<b>Source B:</b> <a href="#">Louisiana Environmental Bill for Disposal of Tires (House Bill No. 746)</a> , LA state legislature
<b>Content and Claims</b>	In this formative performance task, students study the content and structure of an environmental bill in the state of Louisiana.

### Featured Source

**Source B:** [Louisiana Environmental Bill for Disposal of Tires \(House Bill No. 746\)](#), Louisiana State Legislature

### Steps

1. Have students work in the same pair as the previous task.
2. Give each pair a copy Source B: Louisiana Environmental Bill for Disposal of Tires (House Bill No. 746).
3. Define the following terminology for students: *regular session*, *environmental*, *task force*, *enact*, *amend*, *promulgate*, *engrossed*, and *Environmental Protection Agency*.
4. Ask pairs to mark or highlight the words on the bill as they are defined.
5. Then walk the whole class through the organization of the bill: the session, the bill number, the representatives who played a part in the bill, the overview, definitions, sections, and signatures needed.
6. Next, read aloud the introduction to the bill as pairs follow along:

To amend and reenact R.S. 30:2412(4), (5), (5.1),(5.2), and (6.1) and Section 3 of Act No. 323 of the 2013 Regular Session of the Legislature and to enact R.S. 30:2412(5.3), (16.1), (24.2), and (31) and 2418(H)(10), relative to waste tires; to provide for the waste tire program; to provide for definitions; to provide for expedited approval of certain customary end-market uses; to provide for the authority of the Department of Environmental Quality; to provide for the Department of Environmental Quality's rules and regulations; to provide for the Waste Tire Program Task Force; and to provide for related matters.

7. Conduct a whole-class discussion based on the introduction. Possible questions include:
  - What does “relative to waste tires” mean? What is the focus of this bill?
  - What does this bill intend to do?
  - To *expedite* something means to speed it up or make it go more quickly. What does this bill want to *expedite*? How would expediting that help with the environment?
  - When someone is given authority, it means they have the decision-making power as well as the responsibility to follow the law. Who has the authority granted by the legislature? What kind of authority do they have? Where would we find that information?

8. Have students work with a partner to read §2418. Waste tires, Section 2, Section 3.A, and Section 3.B.
9. Conduct a whole-class discussion. Possible guiding questions include:
  - What is the role of the Waste Tire Program Task Force?
  - What role do citizens play in the Waste Tire Program Task Force? What is their impact on the governmental process?
  - Why do we need a bill for the disposal of tires?
    - What would be the impact of tires being disposed however citizens were inclined?
    - What harmful condition could they create? Consider wildlife.
    - Are tires made of a substance that can break down?
    - What does their make-up do to the soil, water, etc.?
  - What is a possible solution for the disposal of tires that you could propose to your Congressperson?

## Student Look-Fors

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1. Students should identify the focus of the bill: to determine “end-market uses” for tires that are being disposed, give the DEQ authority in this matter regarding rules and regulations, and provide a task force for the disposal of tires. Other possible answers for guiding questions include:
  - “Relative to waste tires” is referring to procedures, rules and regulations regarding tires that are being disposed of and are considered “waste.”
  - The intention of the bill is to repurpose used tires so that they are not automatically waste after it has fulfilled only one purpose.
  - This bill wants to expedite the process of repurposing used tires. This would help the environment because there would be less waste from used tires filling up landfills, as well as no need to manufacture a material and create more waste for the tire’s second purpose: i.e. playground flooring.
  - The Department of Environmental Quality has the authority to make decisions, rules, and regulations according to the legislature. This information can be found in the introduction.
2. After reading §2418. Waste tires, Section 2, Section 3.A, and Section 3.B., students answers to guiding questions should include:
  - The role of the Waste Tire Program Task Force is to “study, report, and make recommendations on the Department of Environmental Quality’s waste tire program, including the laws, rules, and regulations governing the program and the fee structure and financial obligations the program, and to submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment and the Senate Committee on Environmental Quality annually.”
  - Citizens could potentially be a part of the Waste Tire Program Task Force. Citizens play a role in the governmental process by proposing ideas for bills, reporting potential hazards to their legislators, and being an informed, concerned citizen.
  - A bill is needed for the disposal of tires because if tires were only dumped into landfills after their primary use in automobiles landfills, it would eventually be overburdened since the tire material does not easily decompose. Other alternatives to landfills are simply dumping them on the side of road or somewhere else not intended for disposal. This would have a detrimental effect on the wildlife and ecosystem.
3. Students should indicate that environmental bills, like the tire bill, are needed to protect our environment. Our environment needs to be preserved and conserved so the resources that we have will be available to future generations. If people disposed of tires in their backyards or in a landfill, they

could cause a breeding ground for mosquitos and rodents. Tires do not breakdown quickly, and the rubber is not made of an organic substance.

4. Students should propose another use for the disposed tires such as playground flooring, construction materials, materials used to make theme parks, etc.

## Formative Performance Task 3

<b>Supporting Question</b>	What is the process for how a bill becomes a law?
<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	Students will analyze how a bill becomes a law at the state level.
<b>Featured Source</b>	<b>Source C:</b> <a href="#">How a Bill Becomes a Law in Louisiana</a> , Louisiana State Legislature from <i>The Shreveport Times</i>
<b>Content and Claims</b>	This formative performance task requires students to understand the process of how a bill becomes a law at the state level.

### Featured Source

**Source C:** [How a Bill Becomes a Law in Louisiana](#), Louisiana State Legislature from *The Shreveport Times*

### Steps

1. Project the flowchart on how a bill becomes a law.
2. Read aloud the steps of flowchart to students.
3. As a class, roleplay the process of how a bill becomes a law using [House Bill No. 746](#).
  - Assign roles to students:
    - Divide the room in half. Have one half be the House of Representatives and one half be the Senate.
    - Designate an “Environmental Committee” (2-3 students in both sections, House and Senate)
    - Designate a student to serve as the governor.
  - Designate areas of the room:
    - Designate a spot on each side for a “representative” to read the bill.
    - Designate a spot for the “floor.”
  - Provide directions to students:
    - Explain to students that each chamber (House and Senate) meet and deliberate separately.
    - Say: “Once a bill is proposed it is read it is introduced or read for the first time.”
    - Show students where this will occur in the classroom for the House.
    - Say: “Then the bill is read a second time and referred to a committee in the House.”
    - Say: “After the bill has gone through a committee hearing it is sent to the whole House.”
    - Say: “Then, the bill is debated on the floor.”
    - Show students where this will occur in the classroom for the House.
    - Say: “Following the debate, the members of the House or Senate vote on the bill. Bills which receive a majority (over half) “yes” votes passes the chamber and moves to the next house, where the process repeats. If a bill passes both chambers, it goes to the governor for a signature into law. A bill is engrossed when it is officially listed as a bill and assigned a number.”
  - Conduct the roleplay:

- Ask the House representative to read the following portion of the bill:  
“A permitted waste tire processing facility shall be paid a minimum of seven and a half cents per pound of waste tire material that is recycled or that reaches end market uses or per pound of whole waste tires that are recycled or that reach end market uses. A permitted waste tire processing facility shall be entitled to fifty percent of the total payment at processing and the remaining fifty percent of the total payment once waste tire material reaches end market uses. This payment shall be made to the facility on or before the twelfth day of the month following the submission of the request for payment and shall be conditioned on the facility providing to the department any documentation, including but not limited to manifests, statements, or certified scale-weight tickets, required by law or by rules and regulations promulgated by the department.”
  - Allow time for students in the House to debate the bill.
  - Then conduct the vote.
  - If the bill passes, repeat the process with the Senate.
  - If the bill passes the Senate, have the governor sign the bill.
4. Conduct a class discussion. Possible guiding questions include:
- Why do you think the process for how a bill becomes a law is so detailed?
  - Do you think the process is beneficial to citizens or harmful? Explain.
  - Who can suggest ideas for bills?

### Student Look-Fors

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1. Students should relate to the fact that the process is so detailed so that we do not have a plethora of laws that are irrelevant or do not really help the citizens.
2. Students should identify why the process is beneficial: because of the length of time it takes and the amount of people involved.
3. Students should know who can propose an idea for a bill: anyone can suggest an idea for a bill: representatives, senators, governors, and every-day citizens like us.

## Summative Performance Task

<b>Compelling Question</b>	What impact do citizens have on the environment and on our government?
<b>Summative Performance Task</b>	Using the sources and your knowledge of Louisiana history, propose a bill to your state legislator that addresses an environmental issue and gives possible solutions.

### Teacher Overview

In this summative performance task, students are asked to write a response to the compelling question using evidence from the sources they explored throughout the four formative performance tasks.

Throughout this instructional task, students have explored environmental issues affected Louisiana, as well as the process for how a bill becomes a law; this information will be an essential part of a well-developed essay. Before the summative performance task, it may be helpful for students to review the sources provided and the writing/graphic organizers created during the formative assessment tasks. Doing so should help them to develop their interpretations and to highlight the appropriate examples and details to support their writing.

### Student Prompt

Using the sources and your knowledge of Louisiana history, write a bill that you could propose to your state legislator that addresses the environmental issue you researched and gives possible solutions.

Include:

- The year
- The bill number
- The author of the bill (you)
- An introduction, which identifies the environmental issue, the cause of the environmental issue, the effects of the environmental issue, and a statement of your proposed solution
- The contents of the bill, such as definitions and the steps taken to carry out your proposed solution
- Space for the necessary signatures

### Student Look-Fors

- Scoring notes
  - An exemplar response may include but is not limited to:
    - An environmental issue affecting Louisiana: coastal erosion, flooding, endangered animals, and introduction of invasive species to our wetlands (water hyacinth, nutria, and carp), etc.
    - A list of the causes of the environmental issue: Example: There are several causes of flooding, both natural and man-made causes (hurricanes, levee system, water diversion projects, and failure of these projects. The cause of introduction of harmful species may only have one cause, such as a certain person or group bringing it to Louisiana.
    - A list of solutions. There should be more than one option or solution, but the student should be strongly in favor of one particular solution. The students will also need to

- justify their solution by mentioning costs associated, departments associated, civic involvement, and people affected by the solution.
- The appropriate sections, using House Bill No. 746 as a reference: year, bill number, author, name of bill, issue, causes, effects, definitions, solutions, parties involved, and a signature section.
- A strong response:
  - References documents appropriately.
    - Environmental issue plaguing Louisiana (Source A)
    - Language and structure of environmental legislation (Source B)
    - The process for how a bill becomes a law (Source C)
  - Applies the provided evidence as well as additional information on Louisiana’s environmental issues and our government.
    - All citizens can suggest ideas for bills, and we as citizens can even vote to approve amendments to our state constitutions.
    - The process for how a bill becomes a law is similar at the federal level.
    - The process is defined in our Constitution.
    - Students should have a general understanding of many different environmental issues plaguing Louisiana. Students could share their “bills” with the class to elicit a general understanding of many issues and solutions.
    - We elect our representatives, senators, and governor. We should be diligent when voting to identify the candidates that are consistent with our values and beliefs so that they vote the way we would on issues.
    - Several ideas for bills are proposed, but few actually become laws.