

The Nile River, Dams, and Changing Waterways

Part 1

In this lesson, students will explore the importance of the Nile River, identify relationships between the new dam, rainfall, and flooding, analyze different perspectives about the GERD, and propose ideas for how countries can work together to solve water challenges.

Grades: 6-8		Subject(s): ELA/Science/SS
Focus Standard(s)	RI.6-8.3 – Analyze how individuals, events, and ideas interact in a text. RI.6-8.4 – Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including technical terms. MS-ESS3-1 – Construct a scientific explanation based on evidence for how resource availability has influenced human activity. MS-PS3-3 – Apply scientific principles to design, construct, and test a device that converts energy from one form to another. D2.Geo.4.6-8 – Explain how cultural patterns and economic decisions influence environments and the daily lives of people in both nearby and distant places. D2.Geo.8.6-8 – Analyze how human–environment interactions affect places and regions.	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to: - describe the importance of the Nile River for people in Africa. - explain what a dam is and how hydroelectric dams work.	
Materials/Resources	Ethiopia Builds Africa’s Biggest Dam Flooding from the Nile River Reader’s Notebook (or plain piece of paper) Exit slip (sticky note)	
Vocabulary	development: growth hydroelectric: related to power that is made with water Renaissance: burst or expansion of art and culture supply: total amount of goods architects: designers of buildings	
Anticipatory Set	Think-Pair-Share Ask students, “Why do people build cities and farms near rivers? What might happen if a river floods too much or too little?” Show a map of Africa and trace the Nile River. Point out Ethiopia, Sudan, and Egypt.	
Mini-Lesson	Read the first article together (<i>Ethiopia Builds Africa’s Biggest Dam</i>), clarifying vocabulary words as needed. Then lead a discussion using the following questions: 1. What does the new dam do? 2. Why did Ethiopia build it? 3. Why are Egypt and Sudan concerned about it?	
Guided Practice	Show a simple diagram or animation of a hydroelectric dam. Have students draw a simple sketch in their Reader’s Notebook showing:	

	● river flow ● dam wall ● turbines generating electricity
Closure/Assessment	Exit Ticket Ask students, “What is one reason Ethiopia built the dam?”
Differentiation	Adjust lexile® levels as needed; answer questions as a whole group; use accessibility features or read-to-me feature as needed; print copies of article

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Part 2

In this lesson, students will explore the importance of the Nile River, identify relationships between the new dam, rainfall, and flooding, analyze different perspectives about the GERD, and propose ideas for how countries can work together to solve water challenges.

Grades: 6-8		Subject(s): ELA/Science/SS
Focus Standard(s)	RI.6-8.3 – Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text, including relationships such as cause/effect and problem/solution. RI.6-8.6 – Determine an author’s or speaker’s point of view and explain how it is conveyed in the text. MS-ESS3-4 – Construct an argument supported by evidence for how human activities and natural processes can cause changes to Earth’s systems. D2.Geo.12.6-8 – Explain how global changes in population, resource use, and environment may result in problems that require solutions.	
Learning Objective(s)	Students will be able to: • identify cause-and-effect relationships between the new dam, rainfall, and flooding. • analyze different perspectives about the GERD. • propose ideas for how countries might work together to solve water problems.	
Materials/Resources	Ethiopia Builds Africa’s Biggest Dam Flooding from the Nile River Reader’s Notebook Cause-and-effect chart/worksheet	
Vocabulary	nutrients: building blocks that plants and animals need to live and grow donated: gave away monsoon: period of strong winds and heavy rain reckless: acting without caring about bad effects	
Anticipatory Set	Think-Pair-Share Think: Ask students to consider why Ethiopia built the GERD and what happens when areas flood. Pair: Have students turn to a partner and share their ideas. Share: Invite pairs to share their thoughts with the whole class, discussing both the benefits of the dam and the challenges of flooding.	
Mini-Lesson	Tell students that today they will explore the causes and effects of flooding along the Nile River. Explain that floods can result from multiple factors and often have serious impacts on both land and people.	
Guided Practice	Have students read the second article independently, with a partner, or in small groups. As they read, they should answer the following questions in their Reader’s Notebook:	

	• Why is the Nile River important for farmers? • How did rainfall and the new dam affect the Nile in 2025? • Why did officials in Egypt accuse Ethiopian officials of being “reckless”? After reading, ask students whether the building of the dam affected all people equally. Discuss the perspectives of: Ethiopian leaders, Egyptian officials, and the people in Sudan.
Independent Practice	Following the discussion, have students complete the accompanying worksheet using information from both articles to identify causes, effects, and differing viewpoints.
Closure/Assessment	Collect students' work to assess understanding of cause-and-effect and perspectives.
Differentiation	Adjust lexile® levels as needed; answer questions as a whole group; use accessibility features or read-to-me feature as needed; print copies of article

Name: _____

Date: _____

Articles: Ethiopia Builds Africa's Biggest Dam; Flooding from the Nile River

Directions: Fill-in the chart using information from both articles. Then answer the questions below in complete sentences.

Cause and Effect Chart

Cause	Effect
Heavy monsoon rains in Ethiopia	
	Millions of people in Ethiopia will get electricity
Sudden water releases from the dam	
Flooding in Egypt and Sudan	
	Egyptian officials are worried about water supply and flooding

1. What benefits do building dams bring to communities or countries?
2. How have some countries been affected by the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)?
3. Why is it important for countries to work together when using Earth's resources?
4. What solution(s) would you propose to prevent future flooding of the Nile River?

Name: Answer Key

Articles: Ethiopia Builds Africa's Biggest Dam; Flooding from the Nile River

Directions: Fill-in the chart using information from both articles. Then answer the questions below in complete sentences.

Cause and Effect Chart

Cause	Effect
Heavy monsoon rains in Ethiopia	The Nile River swells or rises
Building the GERD	Millions of people in Ethiopia will get electricity
Sudden water releases from the dam	Adds pressure to dams in Sudan; flooding downstream
Flooding in Egypt and Sudan	Many people are displaced
The opening of the GERD	Egyptian officials are worried about water supply and flooding

1. What benefits do building dams bring to communities or countries?

Dams provide electricity, store water for farming, and help control flooding.

2. How have some countries been affected by the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD)?

Ethiopia gained electricity, but Egypt and Sudan have faced flooding and worry about less water.

3. Why is it important for countries to work together when using Earth's resources?

Sharing resources fairly prevents conflicts and helps protect the environment for everyone.

4. What solution(s) would you propose to prevent future flooding of the Nile River?

Countries could plan water releases together, build stronger flood barriers, and improve early warning systems.