Representing Global Warming Discussion Guide

There are many different ways to represent global warming, but not all representations achieve the same effects. For example, some representations may more clearly and accurately depict certain aspects of global warming than others, and some texts may evoke more emotions than others.

As part of this assignment, you are going to see and hear written words, spoken words, photographs, video footage, graphs, music, diagrams, pie charts, and different combinations of these—all of which are designed to represent the phenomenon of global warming. As you watch and read, please notice which representations are the most convincing, the most informative, or the most well-suited to convey certain content.

This assignment involves three steps:
>   *(1) viewing websites on global warming in each discussion section*
>   *(2) discussing the questions with your group*
>   *(3) writing one insight from each section you want to share with the class*

Discussion Section One

Websites to View

What Is Global Warming?
http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/global-warming/gw-overview.html

Global Warming: Causes and Effects
http://chronicle.augusta.com/images/headlines/080402/Global_Warming.jpg

After reading and examining the above websites, please discuss the following in your group:

(1) What connections can you make between these two illustrations? What are the similarities between them? How do they connect to other representations we've seen, such as the photographs of the melting glaciers?

(2) What if the designers of these websites wanted to change their webpages to include only written words? Would their representations be as effective? Please explain your answer.

(3) Both of these representations include diagrams or illustrations of the earth, rather than actual photos of the earth. Why do you think the designers used an illustration of the earth to show absorption, rather than taking a photograph of the earth in space to show absorption?

(4) In your opinion, which representation most clearly represented global warming? What made it more informative and easier to understand than the other one?

(5) Do you have any other comments, questions, connections, or insights related to these representations?

On a separate sheet of paper, please write one insight from this group discussion that you want to share with the class.

Discussion Section Two

Websites to View

Rainy Day in Georgia
http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0409/feature2/zoom5.html

Future Temperature Changes
http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/science/futuretc.html

After reading, viewing, interacting with, and examining these websites, please discuss the following questions in your group:

(1) What are the differences and similarities between these texts?

(2) Which source was the most engaging to you and why?

(3) From which source did you learn the most? Why do you think you learned the most from that source? What did you learn?

(4) Which of the representations best allowed you to measure and compare specific changes over time?

(5) Would you have guessed that the photograph was related to global warming without reading the caption? Do you think it might have rained in Georgia even without global warming occurring? Do you agree with the words that the photograph is related to global warming?

(6) Do you have any other comments, questions, connections, or insights related to these representations?

On a separate sheet of paper, please write one insight from this group discussion that you want to share with the class.

Discussion Section Three

Websites to View

View the Ads – Fight Global Warming
http://www.fightglobalwarming.com/viewads.cfm?video=tick
http://www.fightglobalwarming.com/viewads.cfm?video=train

After viewing these websites, please discuss the following questions in your group:

(1) How are these videos similar to each other? How are they different from the websites you viewed earlier?

(2) Why do you infer both videos featured young children instead of adults?

(3) Why do you infer both of these videos included close-ups of people's faces?

(4) What did you notice about the sounds in each of the videos? Why did you infer the designers of the video included these sounds?

(5) Do you have any other comments, questions, connection, or insights related to these representations?

On a separate sheet of paper, please write one insight from this group discussion that you want to share with the class.

Discussion Section Four

Websites to View
An Inconvenient Truth, Trailer
http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=2078944470709189270

Global Warming Hoax
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Io-Tb7vTamY

After viewing these websites, please discuss the following questions in your group:

(1) What specific words did you notice that were designed to evoke emotion in the first video clip?

(2) What other aspects of the first video were designed to evoke emotion?

(3) In the second video clip, newscaster Glenn Beck challenged Al Gore's use of the line graph in the first clip. On what grounds did he challenge the line graph?

(4) In the first documentary, there was video footage of a man crying over a woman lying on a stretcher. If you saw this image outside of the documentary, would you infer that this scene was related to global warming? What other images, sounds, or words cause you to think that this scene is related to global warming?

(5) People can help to sway your opinions by the information they include and the information they leave out. According to the second video clip, what important information is left out from the first video clip?

(6) After viewing these websites and comparing what you learned to them from other sources, what is your overall opinion of global warming? To what extent is it a danger? From what sources have you formed this opinion?

(7) Do you have any other comments, questions, connection, or insights related to these representations?

On a separate sheet of paper, please write one insight from this group discussion that you want to share with the class.