



Fracking: Find out for yourselves

Fracking is a major issue. On one side is energy production; on the other, human health. Start a student investigation by having the class watch [Gasland](#), a past nominee for an Academy Award for best documentary. (For a free alternative documentary on gas drilling through shale view this shorter video: [After the Gas Rush](#).)

Activities at three levels:

Flashlight: Show the class [ProPublica's investigative music video on fracking](#). Discuss: What is fracking? Do you think this story has been covered well enough? Why or why not? Class activity: Tell the story of fracking using only pictures. See how [Pennsylvania artists did it](#) and look at the [YouTube fracking videos](#) for inspiration.

Spotlight: Ask students to use web resources to try to answer these queries: Do you live in area where fracking is taking place or is being considered? What are the issues? Must a state government agency give natural gas companies permission to extract by fracking? Consult this [Los Angeles Times](#) story for context.

Searchlight: Here are three different views: the [Earth Justice map of skulls showing fracking](#) locations, the [American Enterprise Institute's article about the benefits of fracking](#) and a nonprofit investigation into [how industry funds college researchers studying shale](#). Imagine you are a city council deciding what to do about fracking. Research your state's laws and news reports on the issue. After you vote, look up the results of the same debate in Pittsburgh, the first city to take a stance on fracking.