## Why Were They Built? Dams in Arizona

Students will learn how dams have modified natural resources.

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<tr>
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<td>Duration</td>
<td>1 class period</td>
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### National Geography Standards

**ELEMENT FIVE: ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY**

14. How human actions modify the physical environment.

### Arizona Geography Strand 4

**CONCEPT 5 Environment and Society**

PO 1 Identify ways (e.g., farming, building structures and dams, creating transportation routes, overgrazing, mining, logging) in which humans depend upon, adapt to, and impact the earth.

### Arizona Math Standard

**STRAND 1 Number Sense and Operations**

**CONCEPT 1**

**GRADE 3**

PO 9 Order three or more whole numbers through six-digit numbers (least to greatest, or greatest to least).

### Overview

An important way in which people have modified natural resources is by building dams. Many dams have been built on Arizona rivers. Students should know why people have built dams and will see that Arizona has a long history of dam building.

### Purpose

In this lesson students will gain a better understanding of how people modify a natural resource in their environment by building dams. Students will also place the dates of construction of Arizona's dams in order from earliest to most recent.

### Materials

- Important Dams in Arizona map
- Important Dams in Arizona map transparency
- Student reading - "Dams in Arizona"
- Student Worksheet and answer key
- Colored pencils, 4 different colors per student

### Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Explain the purpose of dam building.
2. Locate dams on rivers in Arizona.
3. Order the construction dates of dams from earliest to most recent.
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Procedures

*Students should have experience in ordering numbers.*

1. Introduce the subject of dams. Have students share their ideas about why dams are built and if they know of any dams near where they live.

2. Students read (alone or as a group) the handout on Dams in Arizona. Identify the reasons why people build dams.

3. Give students a copy of the map, Important Dams in Arizona. Teacher could also have a transparency of the map to show and model the work.

4. Students locate the Colorado, Gila, Verde and Salt Rivers on the map. Trace these four rivers using four different colors. Identify the dams built on the 4 rivers by using a pencil line across the river where the dams are located.

5. Identify the dates listed as dates of construction and explain that the numbers 1, 2, and 3 in the key identify dams on the Salt River.

6. Give the worksheet for students to complete.

7. Review the reasons for building dams in Arizona and how they still benefit people today.

Assessment

The student worksheet can be used for assessment purposes. It is a combination of short answer and multiple-choice questions. Items 1 - 6 can be used to assess geography.

Extensions

Have students locate the dam that is nearest to their hometown. Research this dam to find the purpose of the dam and any benefits their town receives from it.

Sources

The following website gives more information about dams:
www.pbs.org/wgbh/buildingbig/dam/