



Year 5
Geography
Dams – Holding back the flood
[Week 6]

Aim

- I can explain the impact of damming rivers.

Success Criteria

- I can tell you what a dam is.
- I can give you at least two reasons why dams are built.
- I can tell you the location of one major dam.
- I can identify the advantages and benefits of building a dam.
- I can identify the disadvantages and risks of building a dam.

What Is a Dam?



What do you think has happened to the river at the points shown?

A dam is any barrier built to hold back water.

Water held behind the dam is usually held in a reservoir.



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Why Do We Build Dams?



Why might people want to block the flow of a river?

- To control the flow to prevent flooding.
- To generate power.

Watch this [video](#) which explains how hydroelectric power is generated.



Where Have We Built Dams?



Is It All Good News?



Questions

Watch this [video](#) showing a controlled breach of a dam.

What might the effects have been if this breach had been unplanned?

- Severe flooding
- Damage to properties
- Loss of life

For Better or For Worse?




Activity

- Read the case study notes about the dam building project.
- Identify the benefits and the risks for each category.
- Discuss whether you think the project should go ahead.
- Be ready to share your opinions and three reasons with the rest of the class.

Three Gorges Dam

The Hoover Dam



| | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| When was it built? | 1931 - 1936 |
| Where is it located? | In the USA, on the Colorado River. |
| Why was it built? | To control floods, power. |
| Impact on people | The then small town of Panguitch was flooded. Up to 1 mile behind the dam. |
| Impact on animals | 4 species of fish. |
| Impact on the environment | For 6 years after the dam was built, the water was smaller freshwater-saltwater mixing zone. |

Debating Dams

| | Benefits | Disadvantages |
|----------------------|----------|---------------|
| People | | |
| Animals | | |
| Plants | | |
| Economy | | |
| Environment | | |
| Other factors | | |

On balance, we think that the building of the dam was a good/bad idea because:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What Do You Think?



Questions

1. Tell us the main facts about the dam you studied.
2. What are the main benefits of building the dam?
3. What are the main disadvantages?
4. Do you think building the dam was the correct decision in this case?

