



Great Lakes and Great Plains Virtual Book Club

The Death and Life of the Great Lakes by Dan Egan

7 PM CT/8 PM ET on April 22nd, 2021

Meeting Dates and Chapters

- LAST MEETING! April 22 - Chapters 9 and 10 and ideas for the classroom
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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Chapter 8 – Plugging the Drain: The Never-Ending Threat to Siphon Away Great Lakes Water (pages 247-276)

1. How does Benjamin Franklin's quote, "When the well is dry, we know the worth of water" from 1746, still hold true today?
2. Much of the discussion in the book about "moving water" centers around solving economic problems, but let's look at the Aral Sea and the Ogallala Aquifers and the environmental problems.

Chapter 9 – A Shaky Balancing Act: Climate Change and The Fall and Rise of the Lakes (pages 277-299)

1. Chapter 9 focuses on the changes of lake water levels. What do you think is the major cause of the water level changing?
2. Should we focus more on stopping the large swing of water level change OR adapt to the changes?
3. The dredging has been happening for so many years, is there a way to reverse this and if we do, what problems could that cause?
4. The engineers built a model to try and solve the problem (pages 288-290), but it was put on the shelf. Thoughts on why it was never used and if it would have been successful or not.
5. In the chapter there is discussion about what will happen if threats to the Great Lakes aren't addressed, such as implications for property owners, shipping, drinking water and sewage treatment. How could it affect us, if at all?

Chapter 10 – A Great Lake Revival: Charting a Course Toward Integrity, Stability and Balance (pages 300-321)

1. Thinking back in the book, we have read how salmon were brought in to aid the commercial fishing industry and the thought that the alewives would be a great food for them, but in this chapter, we find that the two really cancelled each other out. What can we learn from this?
2. Should we allow nature to correct the problems with invasive species or should humans step in?
3. What does the book suggest can be done to protect the future of the Great Lakes?
4. What do you think Egan is trying to tell us in the book’s final scene with his son?

Closing

Pick #BookBento image(s) for this meeting.

