



GROUND WATER CONTAMINATION

"A CIVIL ACTION"

▶ Grades 7-12 ◀

▶ OBJECTIVES

- Gain a new perspective from a compelling real-life story about people in Woburn, Massachusetts, who seek justice when their lives are turned upside-down as a result of exposure to contaminated ground water. Through an epic courtroom showdown, students will find out how the pieces come together (or don't come together) in a case where two large corporations are accused of causing the deaths of children.

▶ INTERDISCIPLINARY SKILLS

English, Earth Sciences, Social Studies

▶ MATERIALS

- Copies of the book *A Civil Action* by Jonathan Harr. Vintage Books, a division of Random House, Inc., New York. September 1996.

TEACHING STRATEGY

Have students begin reading this book at the beginning of this section or even earlier. Ideally, they should be prepared to discuss the book as a class when they have completed the ground water contamination activities at the end of this section. *A Civil Action* ties in well with the material in this section and should be more and more meaningful to the students as they learn about the fate and transport of contaminants and the determination of responsible parties. The book poignantly drives home the paramount importance of clean water in our lives. This activity could be coordinated as an English class reading assignment.

