

## Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

STORY

### Hot Weather Sparks Deadly Wildfires

06/13/2012

[http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/world/jan-june12/blackhistorymonth\\_02-16.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/world/jan-june12/blackhistorymonth_02-16.html)

Estimated Time: One 45-minute class period with possible extension

**Student Worksheet** (reading comprehension and discussion questions without answers)

PROCEDURE

#### 1. WARM UP

Use initiating questions to introduce the topic and find out how much your students know.

#### 2. MAIN ACTIVITY

Have students read NewsHour Extra's feature story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions on the student handout.

#### 3. DISCUSSION

Use discussion questions to encourage students to think about how the issues outlined in the story affect their lives and express and debate different opinions.]

INITIATING QUESTIONS

1. **What is a forest fire?**

2. **What does the term "prescribed burn" mean?**

3. **What are the differences between a forest fire caused by human accident and a prescribed burn?**

4. **What is the U.S. Forest Service? What are some of this agency's responsibilities?**

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS – **Student Worksheet**

1. **How many states are battling wildfires?**

Nine

2. **According to the story, how many large fires are burning?**

Nineteen

3. **How many firefighters are battling the fire in New Mexico?**

1,500 fire fighters

4. **How did the fire in Colorado start?**

The fire in northern Colorado started with a camp stove

5. **According to investigators, who started the fire?**

James Weber, a 56-year-old mental health counselor at Colorado State University started the fire.

6. **Will Weber face any charges or citations?**

The Forest Service issued Weber a citation for causing a fire without a permit. He faces a \$300 fine, and perhaps more depending on how much damage is caused.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

**1. What is a fire-prone area? Do you think people should be allowed to build homes or own property on areas designated as “fire-prone?”**

**2. Discuss how weather conditions might affect the strength of a forest fire. How might weather conditions affect those fighting the fire?**

**3. Do you think there is a connection between global warming and the fires burning in the Western part of the United States? If so, do you think global warming might be making these fires more severe?**

**Extension Activity**

Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra ([extra@newshour.org](mailto:extra@newshour.org)). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.



STUDENT WORKSHEET

**Hot Weather Sparks Deadly Wildfires**

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How many states are battling wildfires?
2. According to the story, how many large fires are burning?
3. How many firefighters are battling the fire in New Mexico?
4. How did the fire in Colorado start?
5. According to investigators, who started the fire?
6. Will Weber face any charges or citations?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. What is a fire-prone area? Do you think people should be allowed to build homes or own property on areas designated as “fire-prone?”
2. Discuss how weather conditions might affect the strength of a forest fire. How might weather conditions affect those fighting the fire?
3. Do you think there is a connection between global warming and the fires burning in the Western part of the United States? If so, do you think global warming might be making these fires more severe?

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