



# The Binoculars

## Teacher Worksheet

Using the process introduced here, students will make connections from something “out there” to how it affects or could affect their lives. This may be used with any age of student with any subject matter. The steps below will help you to tailor it for your purposes. It is intended primarily as a brainstorming activity, to get the juices flowing and help with the creative process. Please adapt as you see fit.

### The Big Picture

- Things out there have effects on other things. We will call these *Events*. Eventually the effects may come our way.
- At some point we encounter these things-- sometimes when they directly affect us, and other times through hearing or reading about them in advance or through other sources of data. We will call the encounter an *Observation* or a *Data Source*.
- Sometimes our *Observation* comes first, other times the *Event* comes first.

Observation/ Data Source	Event
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An experience, a field trip</li> <li>• An article or other reading</li> <li>• An activity or lesson plan</li> <li>• A task or project</li> <li>• A comment that was heard</li> <li>• A video or audio clip</li> </ul> <p><i>List some others:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An event or change</li> <li>• A current event, political, civic, or economic change</li> <li>• An issue or problem that has come up</li> <li>• A situation that has or will develop</li> </ul> <p><i>List some others:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

So we make an Observation of an Event, or an Event causes us to make an Observation. Sometimes we see the effect it has on us easily, other times we have to look more deeply. This activity should help the process of looking more deeply.

Places Affected	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My city, school, home or family</li> <li>• My career plans</li> <li>• My health</li> <li>• My personal finances</li> </ul> <p><i>List some others:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A change to my situation</li> <li>• A change in my behavior or actions</li> <li>• A change in my knowledge or skills</li> <li>• A change in my attitudes or the way I think about things</li> <li>• A change in the choices I make</li> </ul> <p><i>List some others:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> <li>•</li> </ul>

In a cause-effect map, it might go like this:

Observation/ Event →An Effect TO Something→Resulting Change

Or

Event/ Observation →An Effect ON Something→Resulting Change

You can see there are multiple permutations here. Let's use some examples:

- You take a class field trip to the courthouse. Legislators OBSERVED voting on some issue (EVENT). How do laws or policies (PLACE of EFFECT) affect homes and families (RESULTS)?
- You read an article (DATA SOURCE) on recent high temperatures (EVENT). Is there global climate change (EVENT)? How will higher global temperatures affect my town (RESULT)?
- In what ways has our society been affected by Shakespeare? How about my family?
- How does pop culture affect our families?
- In what way does the economic situation in Greece affect American taxpayers?
- How does trash on the street affect wildlife?
- How will improving natural gas extraction processes affect my ability to barbecue on July 4<sup>th</sup>?
- What would we do without a telephone?
- Does the erosion of soil into the Mississippi River have any effect on me?
- How does drinking a soda affect my health?
- How does photosynthesis contribute to the greenhouse effect? What does the greenhouse effect have to do with my family vacation?

Where you need to move your students is to see inside the black box that resides between the Observation/ Event and the Effects. These are the arrows up above or the *Connections*.

### Steps

1. Identify the *Observation/ Data Source* (lesson, article, video, class trip)
2. Identify the *Event* (what they noticed, or what you want them to notice). You may ask them to note their observations.
3. Choose a *Place* of the effect, and what *Results/ Changes* you would like them to focus on.
4. Write a series of questions to elicit this kind of thinking, with an emphasis on students noting the *Connections*.

### Sample questions

- From the (trip, lesson, article), are you able to identify any underlying or overarching issues that influence the situation?
- What could be done to change this condition?
- How, if at all, does this newfound knowledge alter your future behaviors/attitudes/and career choice?
- How is (your health, family, your school) impacted by what is going in the larger political/social sphere?
- How is this situation likely to change in the future?
- If possible, create an outline, chart, matrix, or concept map to show the overall structure.
- How are these things related? Why are they that way? When did they come to be?
- Explain the cause-effect relationships of the \_\_\_\_\_. How does \_\_\_\_\_ affect \_\_\_\_\_?
- Explain the framework or context or conditions in which \_\_\_\_\_ happens or happened.
- Explain in terms of something you already know. Use an example from your own life.
- Within the (event) how are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ similar? What are the differences?

- Between each (event), how are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ similar? What are the differences?
- Across all (events), how are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ similar? What are the differences?
- How are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ alike?
- What do you think would happen if \_\_\_\_\_?
- In what way is \_\_\_\_\_ related to \_\_\_\_\_?
- How does \_\_\_\_\_ affect \_\_\_\_\_?
- Compare \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with regard to \_\_\_\_\_.
- What do you think causes \_\_\_\_\_?
- How does \_\_\_\_\_ tie in with what we have learned before?

### **Grammar Note**

- In this context, the word “affect” is a verb and could be used in place of the word “influence.”
- In this context, the word “effect” is a noun and could be used in place of the word “result.”  
Usually preceded by “the,” as in “the effect” or “the effects.”