

## Preparing for the Panel Discussion: Could the Dust Bowl Happen Again?

### Objective

Students will learn essential arguments around the possibility of a modern Dust Bowl and its contemporary causes. Students will practice extracting key messages from text.

### Procedure

Once the students are familiar with the history of the Dust Bowl, introduce them to the organizing question for the panel discussion: Could the Dust Bowl happen again? As an introduction, show students [the video of a dust cloud](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBJ_hyuLjXY) [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KBJ\_hyuLjXY] enveloping Phoenix, Arizona in 2011. Assign students or groups of students to read the selected articles, or to research on their own to determine how contemporary scientists are responding to this question. Provide students with the causes and effects sheet below to record basic information on what could cause another Dust Bowl and the major arguments for or against the possibility of such an event. Have students present their findings to the class.

Next, have students consider who they think might be on a panel discussion about this issue. Who are the major stakeholders? What might their perspectives be? Ask students to consider what kinds of perspectives they would expect to see on this topic. Have students read each speaker's biographical sketch and discuss why they might have been selected and what perspective each brings. Then, ask students what other voices the students think could have been included on this panel.

### Summary

Finally, explain that the second central question for the panelists will be, "What are you doing to prevent a future Dust Bowl?" Discuss what information they found in their articles about options for preventing drought and dust storms. Brainstorm as a class why an event like a contemporary Dust Bowl is a national and a global event. How does this affect people beyond the immediate area? What effect do the actions of individuals outside of the Dust Bowl region have on an event like this? What could we do to prevent another Dust Bowl?



## Suggested Articles

[“The Dust Bowl: 2012 vs. 1930s”](http://www.weather.com/news/dust-bowl-20120718) [<http://www.weather.com/news/dust-bowl-20120718>] from The Weather Channel offers a basic introduction to the causes of the Dust Bowl in the 1930s and a comparison of contemporary conditions, and includes short video clips on the 2012 drought.

[“How Can We Prevent Another Dust Bowl?”](http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/07/25/how-can-we-prevent-another-dust-bowl)

[<http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/07/25/how-can-we-prevent-another-dust-bowl>] A *New York Times* “Room for Debate” feature with six opinions from policy makers and experts in environmental science.

[“US Farmers Fear the Return of the Dust Bowl”](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/8359076/US-farmers-fear-the-return-of-the-Dust-Bowl.html)

[<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/8359076/US-farmers-fear-the-return-of-the-Dust-Bowl.html>] from *The Telegraph*, includes a discussion of the depletion of the Ogallala Aquifer and its relationship to dust storms.

[“The Great American Drought: Climate Change? The New Dust Bowl?”](http://www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2012/07/16/the-great-american-drought-climate-change-the-new-dust-bowl/)

[<http://www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2012/07/16/the-great-american-drought-climate-change-the-new-dust-bowl/>] from *Forbes* argues that it is premature to predict another Dust Bowl and references specific differences between farming practices today and in the 1930s.

[“Widespread Drought and Water Shortages.”](http://thedianerehmshow.org/shows/2012-07-18/widespread-drought-and-water-shortages) [<http://thedianerehmshow.org/shows/2012-07-18/widespread-drought-and-water-shortages>] from *The Diane Rehm Show* on NPR includes a short introduction to some of the techniques farmers are using to reduce the impact of drought.



## Drought News Article Analysis

### BEFORE READING

Title of Article:

---

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Publication Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Author:

---

### DURING READING

As you read the article, note **key points** in the bulleted list below:

- 
- 
- 
- 

In a sentence or two, explain what the article suggests about the possibility of a modern Dust Bowl:

---

---

### AFTER READING

What questions do you have? Based on your reading, how would you answer the question of whether the Dust Bowl could happen again?

---

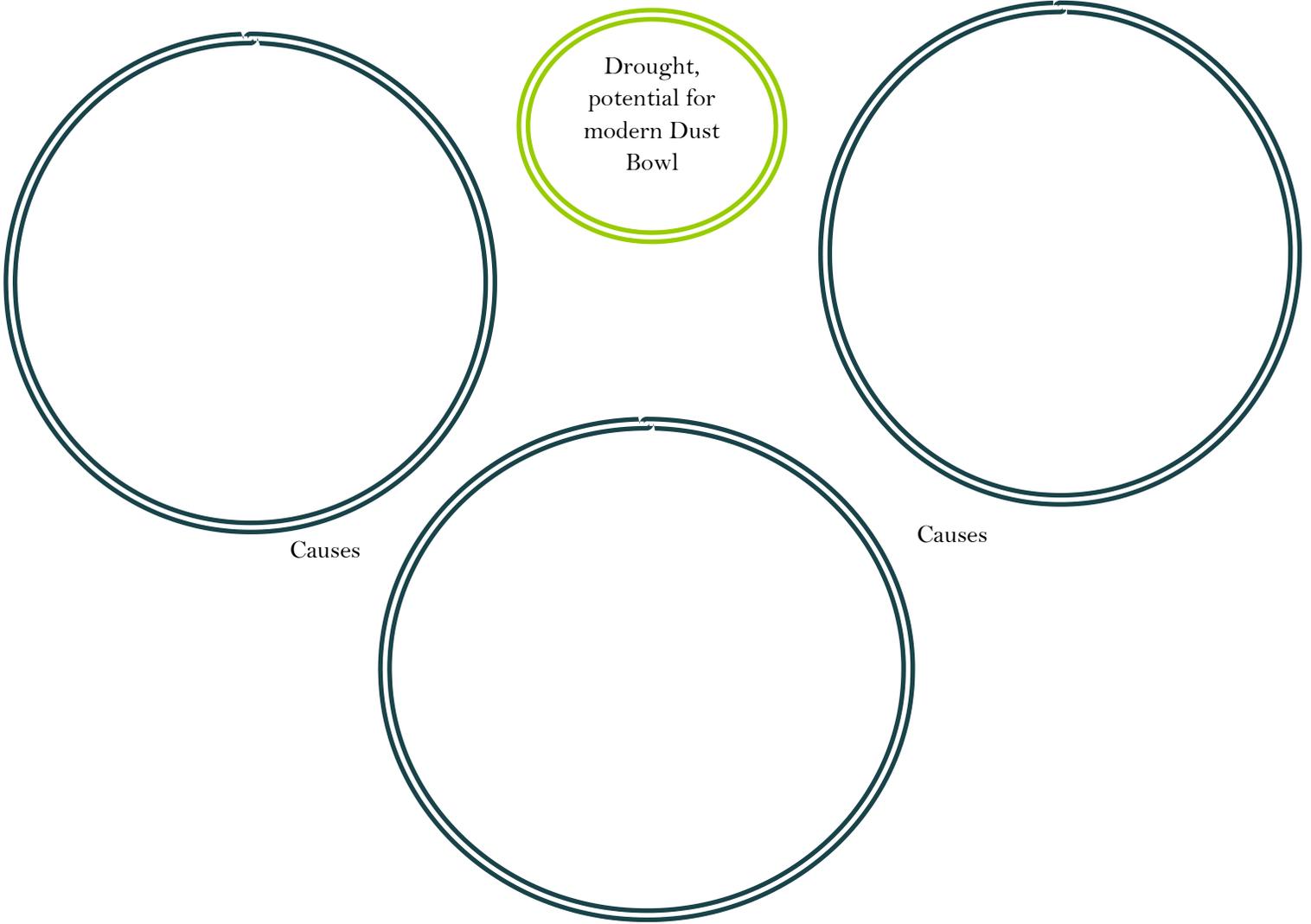
---

---



## Drought News Article Analysis, continued

If you do believe the Dust Bowl could happen again based on your reading, what is causing the threat?



## Dust Bowl National Youth Summit Panelists

**Moderator: Cara Santa Maria** is the science editor for the Huffington Post and has taught university and high school biology and psychology. Her research interests range from clinical psychological assessment to neuronal cell culture techniques and the mechanics of neurogenesis in the zebra finch. Her passion for science education has led to appearances on Larry King Live (CNN), Parker/Spitzer (CNN), Geraldo at Large (Fox News), I Kid (TLC), as well as a pilot for an HBO science program that she co-produced and hosted.

**Speaker: Glenn Roberts** is a former historical preservation consultant from Charleston, South Carolina. In 1998, Glenn followed a dream to resurrect the antebellum Southern cuisine that comprised the Carolina Rice Kitchen, by founding Anson Mills. He began by producing a 30 acre crop of the nearly extinct Carolina Gourdseed White corn, a species that had dated back to the 17 century. After extensive research on growing and milling practices of the antebellum era, Roberts has managed to resuscitate over a dozen heirloom mill corn species, as well as Carolina Gold Rice and “Thirteen Colony” Red May wheat.

**Speaker: Debra Peters** is an Agricultural Research Service scientist for the USDA in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Her research seeks to improve the science of predicting catastrophes, ranging from forest fires to desertification and global warming. Some of her research projects include: Management Technologies for Arid Rangelands and Rangeland Management and Technologies. She has also written many articles on the topics of managing grassland ecosystems, wind erosion, the effects of climate change, and the possibilities of reversing desertification.

**Speaker: Roy Bardole** is a fifth generation farmer from Rippey, Iowa. Along with his two grown sons (Peter and Tim) and his wife Phyllis, Roy farms about 1,400 acres of soybeans and corn. An innovative and progressive farmer Roy was an early adopter of precision and no-till practice. He is active in the promotion of American soybeans domestically and internationally serving as the Chairman of the United States Soybean Export Council and a Director of the United Soybean Board.



Why do you think these panelists were chosen? What other perspectives might you want to include, if you were to design a discussion on this topic?

---

---

---

---

---

---