

*We Are Water Protectors*  
**Discussion Guide**  
Grades 3-6

**Before Reading: to activate schema, build background knowledge, and set a purpose.**

- Discuss the importance of water in everyday life. How do you use it (flushing toilets, washing dishes, fire fighters, watering plants, etc.)? Where does it come from? Make a list of student generated responses on an anchor chart or whiteboard.
- What does it mean to protect? Why do you think water needs to be protected in the story?
- Build background knowledge by showing pictures of an oil pipeline and discussing what it does.
- Build background knowledge by flipping through illustrations in the book and discussing who the Standing Rock Sioux People are. Who are the indigenous people who live near you today and who are the people who lived in this place before you? Discover with [Native-Land.ca](https://www.native-land.ca) | [Our home on native land](https://www.native-land.ca)

**During Reading: to engage students, check for understanding, and make connections.**

- What are some of the examples of how water is sacred in the story?
- What does the black snake represent? What is it doing to the plants, animals, water, and land?
- What are the people in this story doing to try to protect the environment?
- How is nature described throughout the story? What are some examples from the illustrations or text?

**After Reading: to summarize, question, and reflect.**

In the story, the narrator talks about fighting for “those who cannot fight for themselves.” What are some natural resources that need to be protected in your community? How can you help?

Extension: On the last page of the story the people are gathered for a march. Some are holding signs. Design your own march sign for a natural resource that needs to be protected.

If your students enjoyed this book...

- Encourage them to continue to discuss it and refer to it in other lessons and conversations.
- Let them explore more about the topic by reading other books with similar themes, structure, characters, or content.