

<b>SECTION-TOPIC</b>	<b>AGRICULTURE – DRAINING THE EVERGLADES</b>
<b>SUNSHINE STATE STANDARD</b>	<p><b>Standard 3:</b> <i>Analyze the transformation of the American economy and the changing social and political conditions in response to the Industrial Revolution.</i></p> <p><b>SS.912.A.3.13:</b> <i>Examine key events and people in Florida history as they relate to United States history.</i></p> <p><b>SS.912.G.5.4:</b> <i>Analyze case studies of how humans impact the diversity and productivity of ecosystems.</i></p> <p><b>SS.912.G.5.6:</b> <i>Analyze case studies to predict how a change to an environmental factor can affect an ecosystem.</i></p>
<b>VOCABULARY</b>	<b>Everglades, Cultivation, Silt, Reclamation, Fertile</b>
<b>REQUIRED MATERIALS</b>	<b>Draining the Everglades Article</b>
<b>DURATION</b>	<b>1 – 50 minute period</b>

**DO NOW OR PRE-READING –**

- Teacher will instruct students to take the first 5-10 minutes of class to complete the **What I Think I Know** portion of the following chart.
- Students will give a definition of what they think the following words mean.

	<b>What I Think I Know</b>	<b>What I Learned</b>
<b>Everglades</b>		
<b>Cultivation</b>		
<b>Silt</b>		
<b>Reclamation</b>		
<b>Fertile</b>		

## LESSON –

- Teacher will print out and make copies or project the following article onto a projection screen for students to read.
- Students will read the following article, *Growing Things in the West: Draining the Everglades*.
- During the reading students will complete the **What I Learned** portion from the Do Now Chart when they learn the meaning of the vocabulary words from above.
- Following the reading the teacher will lead a class discussion about the reasoning behind the effort and the pros and cons associated with the act.

### Growing Things in the West: Draining the Everglades

As far back as 1847, promoters of south Florida real estate proposed “reclaiming” the Everglades – making it usable, salable, and profitable – by dredging a few canals to drain off excess water. In 1881 Hamilton Disston purchased 4,000,000 acres of land from the State of Florida for \$1,000,000, or 25 cents per acre. Disston planned to drain the land, which stretched from Orlando to south of Lake Okeechobee, to expose the fertile muck that was perfect for growing crops. This purchase started wheels turning that did not stop through lawsuits, government resolutions, land grants, studies, and contracts made and cancelled. The many players included several determined Florida governors, the railroad companies of Henry Flagler and others, and a series of government groups formed to be stewards of the land or to monitor the others who were involved.

Although the U.S. Congress had granted the Everglades land to the State of Florida in 1850, it wasn’t until 1903 that a patent solidified their title. The governors believed in their obligation to drain the wetlands for cultivation and settlement, and each one contributed to its progress, beginning with William Bloxham in 1881, although Napoleon Bonaparte Broward is most often remembered for beginning the actual drainage.

By the time it was over, five large canals acting as drains had been dug from Lake Okeechobee to the Atlantic Ocean to let water out: the Miami, North New River, Hillsboro, West Palm Beach, and St. Lucie canals. For each mile of canal that was cut, about 900 acres of land was drained.

The canals also supplied a new means of transportation. Settlers used them to reach their new land, and farmers used them to ship their produce to the eastern towns with larger populations and connections to the railroad. However, the canals easily got clogged with silt (dirt), so when roads and railroads connected to Lake Okeechobee, travel on the canals stopped. Canals continue to serve an important function today by holding the overflow of rainwater. Draining the swamps created rich farmland, but also left the area prone to flooding.

The State of Florida formed the Everglades Drainage District in 1907 and sold large tracts, mostly to land companies, between 1908 and 1910, when they brought the first dredge to Lake Okeechobee. Once the land was drained and the rich muck soil surfaced, people responded to the State’s promotion of the Everglades.

## ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION -

- After completing the reading assignment, students need to complete the **Pro and Con Chart (see attached)** and answer the questions.
  - Students need to use the Draining the Everglades reading to complete the **Pro and Con Chart**
  - Both the **Do Now Chart** and the **Pro and Con Chart** are due at the end of the period.

# PRO AND CON CHART

## DRAINING THE EVERGLADES

PROS	CONS

**ANAYLSIS** – Answer the following question below, using the information from the chart.

1. Choose a side. Make an argument either for or against draining the Everglades. Use at least 3 pros or cons to support your argument.