

ACTIVITY 2: READ ABOUT THE MINERAL ROAD SALT

In this activity, students will read about how researchers are looking at vegetables and juices for alternatives to road salt to combat icy road conditions in the Great Lakes winters. In part, road salt causes damage and deterioration to roads, but it also poses concerns for the environment. And that's why scientists are seeking to find alternative ways to de-ice the roads.



In this activity, students will use a **Think Pair Square Protocol** for discussing what they will read about this very topic.

First, have students partner up and distribute the article [Road Salt](#) by Kathy Johnson from *Great Lakes Now*. Allow time for students to individually read the article, and have them jot down three things they took away from the article using the **Rose Thorn Bud Protocol**—in their notebook or using the handout.

Then, give students time after reading to discuss the article that they read with their partner. Have students share their rose, thorn, and bud with each other, including how those points connect to each other. The pair should come up with a statement to summarize all of their article takeaways.

Next, have two student pairs join up, standing near each other to form the four corners of a square, to discuss the article and what they talked about in their pairs. Encourage them to come to a consensus about which point they found most important or interesting in the article.

Last, have each group craft a summary statement of the most important point from their discussion and ask for a volunteer in each group to share that key point with the whole group. As student groups share their most important point, record their ideas on the board and have students copy the list of student ideas down into their notebooks. Once the shareout is complete, ask students to return to their groups and discuss one last question based on the article:

How should we balance the benefits and consequences of using the mineral road salt versus alternatives for de-icing the roads in winter?

You can keep this as a class discussion based on the article itself, or this can be extended into a writing assignment, presentation project, or further research on the topic to allow students to engage more deeply with the issue.

Teaching Tip:

If the reading level of the article is going to be tough for some students to read individually, have partners or small groups read the article together aloud while each follows along.