



# THE TEST TUBE

WITH DAVID SUZUKI

## USER GUIDE

What has been the human impact on our planet? We have become accustomed to using force to manipulate nature, but in doing this, how are we damaging the earth? In the documentary *Force of Nature*, scientist, educator and environmental visionary David Suzuki delivers his legacy lecture at the University of British Columbia on this very topic. *Force of Nature* will be available, from the National Film Board of Canada, to educators in the fall of 2011.

To demonstrate the devastating effects of exponential growth on humanity, in *Force of Nature* David Suzuki uses the analogy of a test tube filling up as bacteria multiply in the space of an hour. They use up more and more available resources, yet at the 59th minute, the test tube is only half full, and the bacteria still have the space and food to thrive. However, just a minute later it is packed, and there is nothing left to sustain the population within. Suzuki and many members of the scientific community believe that at the rate we humans are populating the planet and consuming its resources, we are already in our 59th minute as a species.

So what will we do with our next minute? On *The Test Tube with David Suzuki* website at [testtube.nfb.ca](http://testtube.nfb.ca), students can type in whatever comes to mind (sleep, party, shop...), and their response will connect with Twitter updates from around the world on the

same subject. As David continues to talk about the test-tube analogy on screen, they will see the space around him fill with multiplying “bacteria,” representing other people’s real-time tweets on the topic they chose. This is a neat way to illustrate human connectedness: to remind students that they are not unique, and they are not alone. They can keep trying new answers to see the results. When students realize how pressed we are for time, they’re likely to think more carefully about what to do with that final minute to defuse our global crisis.

This interactive game was designed to help facilitate class discussion and inspire students to participate in educational activities related to their experience.

### DISCLAIMER

It is important to note that this interactive tool connects with unmonitored global Twitter feeds, which can result in inappropriate findings if the facilitator does not carefully instruct students throughout the use of the site. Using a selected list of verbs closely related to your topic of instruction will yield more constructive results.



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## CLASSROOM USE

1. Experience *The Test Tube* as a group (one computer, in a group setting).

Using a projector or large screen, facilitators can explore the site with a group and focus the discussion on a particular subject. The facilitator can ask for suggestions while exploring the site together with the students.

2. Experience *The Test Tube* in small groups or individually (on multiple computers).

If multiple computers are available, facilitators can allow students to explore the website individually using a predetermined set of verbs. After completing the online exercise, students should be guided to expand upon the results of their particular journey.

## CLOSING

On completion of *The Test Tube* exercise, students can reconvene with the entire group and discuss their thoughts. The results of this process can be briefly presented, or an activity can be assigned (written exercises, artistic interpretations, crafts, etc.).

And after experiencing the interactive game, students can explore other components in the next interface screen:

**START OVER** → gives students the chance to type in a new keyword and see what other people are tweeting on the subject.

**ABOUT THE TEST TUBE** → offers a clear and succinct breakdown of the message David Suzuki hopes to get across about the global environmental crisis we face today.

**ABOUT THE MOVIE** → provides a synopsis, trailer and screening dates for the film *Force of Nature*, which inspired the interactive website and game.

**MOST COMMON MINUTES** → shows the most popular words used in the game.

**RELATED NFB FILMS** → proposes follow-up material to view and discuss.

**SHARE** → allows users to invite friends to try the activity via a range of social networking sites.

**MUTE** → cuts the sound.

**FULL SCREEN** → expands the image.

