



4.5 The Tree of Life

Handout from Blanca-Tropical Forest Trunk/Theme III: Conservation

Summary:

In Social Studies during the Lumberjack Unit the students will discover how Wisconsin's people used their lumber and forests in both past and present times. This activity "The Tree of Life" will show the students how other human groups from different parts of the world use their forests and the threat modern society has created for these forest living societies-how can we help them?

Background:

In the late 1800's the forests of Wisconsin were thought to be an inexhaustible resource like a giant pillowcase full of Halloween candy. In 1889, Wisconsin was producing more lumber than any other place in the world with the idea that they could continue as the leading lumber producers forever. The evidence of how prosperous they were was seen through lumbering towns like Stillwater, where the grand houses of the Lumbergiants still stand today. Sustainable forestry was nonexistent. Lumber companies did not replant trees and had poor harvesting techniques in addition to their extensive clear cutting.

Background of Activity:

Approximately 300 million people on this earth live in forests. Many societies have lived exclusively in forests for centuries. The largest problem faced by these forest cultures is the impact that modern societies have on their way of life.

Trees have many uses: (students will brainstorm)

- 1.) Help feed the world with their orchards, leaves, seeds, fruits, roots, tubercles, and the fact that they house a variety of animals.
- 2.) Are a main staple of the world's poor
- 3.) Are the principal energy source of poor population (cooking, heat, charcoal, preserving/drying food, boiling water, curing, making bricks, etc.)

Grade Level: Grade 4

Goal: To discover the global importance of trees and the need to protect them.

Key Concepts:

Interdependency
Culture
Forest values
Economic stability
Forest uses

Objectives:

- 1.) World map to identify forests used in this activity.
- 2.) Identify world wide uses of forests
- 3.) Identify stressors of forest communities
- 4.) To identify how we can globally cooperate to save the world's forests

Lesson Time: 45 min.

Subject Area to Infuse:

Social Studies, Environmental Education

Standards:

Environmental Education
A.4.1
B.4.5

Social Studies

B.4.2
B.4.3
B.4.10
B.4.11
C.4.2
D.4.3

- 4.) Are a source of natural medicine for their people as well as a source of active ingredients in prescription medicines around the world.
- 5.) Are a source of forage/grazing land for farm animals
- 6.) Provide employment to millions
- 7.) Are found in religion, folklore, and mythology
- 8.) Protect the earth, increase soil fertility and improve the quality of life for the world population
- 9.) Habitat

Materials:

- Run off one handout per group
- “Annex 1-4” sheets
- Information cards
- Puzzle sheets
- World maps
- Classroom world map

Set-Up:

Create your own puzzle using map in Annex 3 for a model, run off materials and organize the pieces of puzzle for the class following, directions in Annex 3.

Procedure:

Introduction

- Brainstorm on chart paper all the uses the students can think of that forests and trees provide our world.
- Give background information on Wisconsin lumbering in the late 1800’s

Activity:

- 1.) Divide class into groups of four and give them puzzle pieces
- 2.) Read Rules for game
 - Absolute silence during game “NO TALKING”
 - No body language allowed
 - Each person makes one rectangle
 - This is a “giving” game, you can give pieces away but you may NOT take a piece or ask for a piece
 - Pieces are given one at a game
 - The puzzle pieces go with the map facing down
 - Game over when all groups finish puzzles
- 3.) Discuss: When done discuss what they have just experienced. How did you feel? Were you anxious? What do you think is the purpose of this exercise? How did you cooperate?

Vocabulary:

economic stability: when a person has what they need to meet their needs and survive

values: the ideas or principal of a society

land-use planning: a process for deciding the best present and future use of each parcel of land in an area.

forest: biome with average annual precipitation of at least 30 inches to support growth of trees and vegetation.

natural resource: any useful material from the earth; water, oil, minerals, trees, etc.

renewable resource: a resource that can be replaced once its used

- 4.) Turn over the puzzle so you can work with the world map that is on the backside. This map has circled numbers which indicate tropical areas around the globe.
- 5.) Handout cultural info to each groups (Annex 4)
- 6.) Each student takes two cards and reads them to the group. That student will locate his cultural group on the map making sure each culture corresponds to the number on the map
- 7.) Check answers
- 8.) Discuss: Which of the cultures did you find most interesting? What new uses for trees and forests can you now add to our chart? How are these forests important to these people? What do you think we can do to help protect these forests?

Assessment:

In pairs create a list of 10 or more things that trees or forests give us.

- The tree was, is, and will always be, the foundation of life.
- “The important thing is not what happens to me, nor what happens to you; the important thing is what happens to everybody because we all are a part of that great everything that we call planet.” Panniker