



Tour Theme: Animals (grades 9-12)

Pre-Visit Activity #2: The LORAX

Objectives:

- Learn to make wise choices in the conservation of resources
- Analyze, review and use information and make observations
- Identify the limitations of the natural world
- Describe interactions that occur in systems
- Compare the adaptive characteristics of species that improve their ability to survive in an ecosystem
- Describe adaptive characteristics that result in a species-unique niche in an ecosystem
- Predict adaptive characteristics required for survival and reproduction in ecosystems

Overview:

"At the far end of town where the Grickle-grass grows and the wind smells slow-and-sour when it blows and no birds ever sing excepting old crows is the Street of the Lifted Lorax," begins this ever-popular Seuss classic. The movie/book is popular for a reason: it focuses on the power of individuals to change the world, the destructive nature of greed, and the need for protecting the environment.

Materials:

- Lorax video or Lorax movie
- Discussion questions
- Writing utensil
- Internet access

Lesson:

Have students view The Lorax video or read The Lorax. Then, assign each student to answer the questions below. Answers should be between five to seven sentences each. Some answers may require students to use the internet. After the assignment has been turned in, use the in-class discussion questions to debrief the lesson.

Discussion Questions Homework Assignment

1. Both the Onceler and the Lorax were passionate about their goals. List several reasons to explain why the Onceler succeeded while the Lorax failed.
2. Humming-Fish are real in the land of the Lorax but we don't have them where we live. Can you list an animal in the state of Nevada that is threatened or endangered like the Humming-Fish?
3. Speculate on the significance of the names "Onceler" and "Lorax."
4. If Six Flags wanted to open a new amusement park in Lake Mead National Park, would you be more willing to pay money to visit it? Do you agree that a large segment of the population would be more willing to pay money to visit it? In the case of those who would now be more willing to pay money to visit Lake Mead National Park, explain why this is or is not evidence that they prefer development to wilderness preservation.
5. An argument once made for protecting desert tortoises is that, "desert tortoises are important because people enjoy seeing them." Explain why this is or is not a valid argument for the preservation of a species (such as the Swamee-Swans in the movie).
6. Can aesthetic appreciation and value be taught? Why or why not? Is it possible to persuade someone that a mountain vista or seashore is beautiful if they did not already appreciate it? Why or why not?
7. Many countries have laws that prohibit the abuse of animals. List several reasons for these laws to exist. Do these laws establish that the animals have a moral standing in their own right?
8. List what you believe to be the top five environmental problems facing in the world today.

Group discussion Questions Following Assignment being turned in:

1. Identify one environmental issue that you believe to be overblown and overstated in the threat that it will ultimately pose. Discuss the actual threat and how it differs from the public perception of the threat.
2. Describe actions that the Lorax could have undertaken to be more effective at preserving the environment.
3. Can the habitat in Southern Nevada be compared with that in "The Lorax?" In which way?