

Step 1

Uncover Our Forests' Past

Extension 2: Foresters Make Headlines

Nutshell

In this lesson, students become newspaper reporters and write stories about an accomplishment of a forester from the past as if it were late-breaking news. The teacher “publishes” the stories in a “newspaper” and distributes them to the class. The class then expands the timeline they created in the main lesson by adding their headlines to it.

Background Information

Wisconsin’s forests have had a history filled with lows and highs. When settlers arrived in the early 1800s they found rich, healthy forests covering much of the area that would become Wisconsin. During the late 1800s and early 1900s however, much of our forest resources were used to build our state and nation. Since those times our forests have made a comeback. Once again, Wisconsin forests are rich and healthy. This time they are being managed in a sustainable way. This happy ending would not be possible without the cooperation of many individuals and organizations. In this lesson, your students will learn about several influential people who made a big difference in the status of Wisconsin’s forests.

After arriving in the area in 1836, Increase A. Lapham made careful records of the pristine land that would become the state of Wisconsin. With great foresight, he urged our state to conduct a survey of our natural resources. He warned of the devastation that would result from exploiting our forests. Because of his foresight and passion for the environment, Lapham is called the founder of the conservation movement in Wisconsin.

Born in 1865, Gifford Pinchot believed that if properly managed, forests could produce the resources needed by his generation and still be maintained for tomorrow’s generations. In 1898 he became the chief of the federal Division of Forestry. He started the U.S. Forest Services’ Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin in 1910. Even today, this laboratory is the only one of its magnitude in the world.

Edward Merriam Griffith became Wisconsin’s first state forester in 1904. In this position, he pursued programs to control fires, acquire land for forest reserves, protect the headwaters of streams flowing into the Mississippi and Lake Superior, and educate others about forestry. However, in 1915 legislation ruled against state forestry laws. This decision made almost all of Griffith’s innovative programs illegal.

Frederick Wilson began his career in 1911 as a disciple of E.M. Griffith. During the period that Griffith was the State Forester, Wilson worked as the Forest Ranger for the Trout Lake Forestry Headquarters in Vilas County. He worked on developing the first tree nursery at Trout Lake and establishing the Star Lake

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- List foresters who influenced the rebuilding of Wisconsin’s forests.
- Describe the issues faced by at least one forester from the past.
- Indicate that foresters have made a lasting impact on Wisconsin’s forests.

Subject

English Language Arts, Arts, Social Studies

Lesson/Activity Time

Total lesson time: 70 minutes minimum

Time breakdown:

- Introduction – 20 minutes
- Activity – 30 minutes plus homework
- Conclusion – 20 minutes

Teaching Site

Classroom

Materials

For the class:

- The timeline display from the main lesson

For each student:

- Access to the Internet
- Copy of Foresters Make Headlines Student Page *
- Paper and pencil
- Markers or colored pencils

Preparation

- Photocopy the Foresters Make Headlines Student Page *
- Preview websites listed on the student page.
- Assemble your students’ articles into a newspaper and make a copy for each student.

* Available online

www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/

Plantation until 1915 when the Wisconsin Supreme Court rendered these programs illegal. Beginning in 1922, Wilson served as the first Extension Forester at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. In this position he crusaded for the enactment of the first zoning ordinance in the U.S. restricting land use to forestry. In 1929 he drafted legislation that helped Wisconsin expand its county forests

Aldo Leopold is most well known for his book [A Sand County Almanac](#), in which he upholds a land ethic encouraging each person to be a steward of the land. Leopold came to Wisconsin in 1924 to supervise the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison. However, much of Leopold's work focused on developing the science of wildlife management. In 1933 he became UW-Madison's first professor of game management and in 1939 he founded the first academic department of wildlife management in the country. In addition he was a conservation activist. The issues he helped Wisconsin to address include game management, land use and zoning issues.

Melvin "Mully" Taylor founded Trees for Tomorrow Education Center in Eagle River, Wisconsin in 1944 and served as its executive director for 31 years. Taylor developed a program to restore and improve forests statewide. He distributed 23 million seedlings to owners of small woodlands with help from paper and power companies. Taylor also developed a hands-on natural resources workshop to teach wise management and use of natural resources. This system served as a model for contemporary Environmental Education programs.

Procedure

Day 1

Introduction

1. Tell your students that they will be learning about several individuals who made a difference for Wisconsin's forests. Explain to your students that these individuals did not work independently. They had to communicate and cooperate with other people and organizations. In addition, each of these foresters had to overcome challenges to accomplish their goals. In order to do this they had to have a vision and a passion for seeing our forests rebuilt.
2. Tell your students that you want them to get a taste for what it is like to use communication and cooperation to overcome challenges. You also want them to have a vision and a passion for accomplishing a goal together. Get your students to help you clear a space in the center of the room. When you have opened up a space to work in, ask your students to line up on one end of the space so that the sides of their feet are touching the feet of

the people next to them. If you don't have enough space for everyone to line up, break your class into smaller groups and take turns doing the activity. Explain to your students that their feet have been magically glued together. Choose a point on the other side of the room and explain that their challenge is to get the entire group to that point. The only rule is that they must stay connected at all times. If anyone's feet come unglued, the group must go back and begin again.

3. After your class has successfully completed the challenge, lead the group in a brief discussion about the activity. Ask your group what challenges they had to overcome in order to complete the task. (Answers will vary but may include the following examples: It was challenging to communicate with people on the other end of the line. There were too many ideas and too many people wanting to be the leader. Someone didn't like my idea or said it wouldn't work.) Ask your class what types of interactions led to failure? (Answers will vary but may include: not listening to others' ideas, not believing others' ideas would work, criticizing others, etc.) Ask your students what types of interactions led to success? (Answers will vary but may include: listening to others, cooperating with others, trying out new ideas, working as a team, thinking ahead, thinking creatively, etc.) Discuss with your group how each person was responsible for their own internal attitude. Ask your students to describe attitudes that led to success. (Answers will vary but may include: a belief that we could do it, a desire to complete the task, a vision for where we were going, etc.) Tell your group to look for real-life examples of these ideas as they read and learn more about the struggles foresters have overcome in our past.



Activity

1. Tell your students that they just became newspaper reporters who will be writing a newspaper about foresters. Explain that this newspaper will be special because the reporters are time travelers (just like in the main activity). Your assignment is to write a story about a person who has changed the history of Wisconsin's forests. Each of you will research and write a story about an accomplishment of a forester or an event from the past as if it were late-breaking news.

2. Give each student a copy of the Foresters Make Headlines Student Page. Explain the steps they will take to write the story. First they need to choose one of the foresters listed and read about them on the Internet. Second, they will need to ask themselves who, what, where, when, why and how questions to come up with material for their story. Third, they will write a newspaper article about an event or accomplishment as if it were late-breaking news. Their stories should be at least three paragraphs long and include information about who, what, where, when, why, and how. If your students are unable to find answers to any of the questions, ask them to use their imaginations to come up with possible answers. You may choose to have them write their stories out with pen and paper or ask them to type them on the computer.
3. Remind your students that newspaper articles often have photographs, maps or charts to accompany them. Ask your students to create a picture, map, chart or some other visual aid to go with their story. Give your students time to work in class or assign the project as homework.

Conclusion

1. When every student has turned in a newspaper article, “publish” the stories in a “newspaper” and distribute them to the class. This can be as simple as photocopying the stories as they were turned in, or you may choose to lay them out newspaper style on the computer. Give your students time to read the stories of their classmates.
2. Use who, what, where, when, why, and how questions to lead your class in a discussion about each of the foresters. Questions will vary depending on what aspects of the foresters’ lives the students chose to address in their stories. Examples of possible discussion questions include: Who was Frederick Wilson a disciple of? (E.M. Griffith) What happened that prevented E.M. Griffith from following through with his innovative ideas? (The Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled against state forestry laws.) Where is Trees for Tomorrow located? (Eagle River, Wisconsin) When did Gifford Pinchot become the first Chief Forester of the U.S. Forest Service? (In 1898) Why did Increase Lapham make records of the natural resources in Wisconsin in the mid-1800s? (He surveyed the natural resources because he saw how valuable they were and wanted to protect them.) How did Aldo Leopold tell others about his land ethic? (He told others by writing a book called A Sand County Almanac.)
3. Ask each student to write out his or her headline in large letters on a separate piece of paper. Also ask them to take note of the year in which the event they

wrote about took place. Tell the class that they are going to add their headlines to the timeline they created in the main lesson. Give your students time to add their stories’ headlines to the bulletin board.

Assessment

Summative

Many of the programs and organizations started by the foresters studied in this lesson still exist today. Even those that don’t exist have benefits that still exist today. Ask your students to write “What became of ...” at the top of a piece of paper. Each student should choose one of the following options to fill in the blank: Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Trees for Tomorrow in Eagle River, Trout Lake Nursery in Vilas County or Star Lake Plantation in Vilas County. Using the Internet, each student should compile a list of things that their organization is still doing, or a list of ways Wisconsin still benefits from its existence.



References

Wisconsin Forestry Hall of Fame, College of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point.

Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame.
www.wchf.org/wchfinductees.htm

Pennsylvania’s Environmental Heritage.
www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/PA_Env-Her/pinchot_bio.htm

Woodworking Hall of Fame.
www.woodmagazine.com/hallfame/pinchot.htm

Ohio State Conservation.
www.1912.history.ohio-state.edu/conservation/gifford_pinchot.htm



Foresters Make Headlines

Student Page

Follow these steps to write your newspaper story.

1. Choose a forester from the following list and read about them on the Internet.

- Edward Merriam Griffith – www.wchf.org/wchfinductees33.htm
- Increase A. Lapham – www.wchf.org/wchfinductees17.htm
- Aldo Leopold – www.wchf.org/wchfinductees2.htm
- Gifford Pinchot – www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/PA_Env-Her/pinchot_bio.htm,
www.woodmagazine.com/hallfame/pinchot.htm,
www.1912.history.ohio-state.edu/conservation/gifford_pinchot.htm
- Melvin “Mully” Taylor – www.wchf.org/wchfinductees18.htm
- Fred Wilson – www.wchf.org/wchfinductees32.htm

2. Choose an accomplishment to focus on in your article. Ask yourself the following questions:

What did the forester accomplish? _____

What obstacles did he have to overcome? If no obstacles are given, imagine what it would have been like to be the forester and think of some possible obstacles. _____

When did this event take place? _____

Where did this event take place? _____

Who else played a role in the event? _____

Why was this accomplishment important? _____

How did the forester make this accomplishment? _____

3. Write a newspaper article about this event or accomplishment as if it just took place yesterday. Your story should be at least three paragraphs long and include answers to the questions listed above. If you are unable to find answers to any of the above questions, you may use your imagination to come up answers.