

The More Things Change...

Developed By	Stephen McQuaid
Suggested Length	Five 40 minute classes
Suggested Grade Level(s)	7, 8, 9
Subject Areas	Social Studies, Visual Arts, Science

Overview

Students will examine, and make decisions about, social and environmental issues around natural resources.

Links to Curriculum Outcomes

Students will (be expected to)

- analyze and explain various perspectives on selected public issues (Social Studies)
- explain how values and perspectives influence interactions among people, technology, and the environment (Social Studies)
- create artworks, integrating themes found through direct observation, personal experience, and imagination (Visual Arts)
- analyze social issues related to the applications and limitations of science and technology, and explain decisions in terms of advantages and disadvantages for sustainability, considering a few perspectives (Science)

Links to Telling Stories: Themes / Key Words

- Industry and landscape
- Alternate views of historical figures and events

Art Works

- *Island Landscape*, Robert Harris, CAG H-186
- *Journal entry*, Robert Harris, CAG H-1811a
- *Journal entry*, Robert Harris, CAG H-1811b
- *Letter*, Robert Harris, CAG H-3072a
- *Letter*, Robert Harris, CAG H-3072b
- *Canadian Fishermen on the Outlook for American Intruders*, Robert Harris, CAG H-1432b



Lesson #1: One Fish, Two Fish, My Fish, My Fish

Objective Students will research various aspects of a fishing rights issue and consider different perspectives through a class “town hall meeting”.

Related Art Work(s)

- *Canadian Fishermen on the Outlook for American Intruders*, Robert Harris, CAG H-1432b

Materials

- pencils or pens
- paper
- newspapers, magazines, web links with stories of fishing disputes

Activities

1. View, with students, *Canadian Fishermen on the Lookout for American Intruders*, without revealing the title of the work. In whole class discussion, consider the following questions:
 - Who do you think these people are?
 - What are they doing? Why?
 - Should they be concerned if other fishers arrive? Why?
 - What do you think the American fishers would think of the situation?
 - Guide students to consider the various points of view that might exist about this issue.
2. Have students search in newspapers, magazines and websites for local or non-local coverage of similar disputes / issues regarding natural resources and share what they have found.
3. Hold an in-class “town hall meeting” on the topic of local fishing rights (or another similar topic relevant to your community). One section of the class might be the journalists, one the local fishers, one the non-local fishers, and the last group might be scientists / environmentalists. Have each group search for information that is vital to their own case and outline arguments they will put forth. After the allotted time is up, hold the “meeting”.
4. Take time for a whole class discussion of perspectives presented once the meeting is finished.

Computer Option

- Students might create online newspapers that tell stories from opposing points of view, written as a present day journalist would write.

Ideas for Assessment

Students may be graded with a rubric on such criteria as preparedness, respect for others' views, effort, oral communication, etc.

Ask students to write what they have learned about the issue that was discussed as a result of their work. They might also indicate which point of view is most valid and provide reasons for their decision.



Lesson #2: Explore The Lorax

Objective By reading the fable, *The Lorax*, by Dr. Seuss, students examine the importance of conserving natural resources. The students will discuss and analyze this fictional story relating to the proper and improper use of natural resources.

Related Art Work(s)

- *Island Landscape*, Robert Harris, CAG H-186

Materials

- *The Lorax*, by Dr. Seuss

Activities

1. As an introduction to the book, allow students to view Harris' painting of a PEI landscape. Ask them to think of where it may have been painted, and when. Encourage them to think of how the painting makes them feel.
2. After they have started to think about this topic, have individual students read sections of the book in class. During the reading, ask students to note what they think are the major ideas of the story. You may want to stop at certain points of the story and get the students to predict what will happen, and see how their predictions hold up. Consider questions such as:
 - Why do you think the Once-ler did what he did?
 - What patterns of change in the environment did we observe?
 - What were the environmental conditions before the company started making Thneeds? What were they afterward?
 - What was the author's message concerning what one person can do to save or destroy the environment?
 - What do you think was the author's intent in writing the book? To what age group is it directed? Why?

- Are any of the situations presented in the story similar to real situations in present-day society? If so, describe which resources and which groups of people are involved.
- What values appear to be important to the characters in the story?
- Who might these characters represent in real life?
- Are any of their values in apparent conflict? Which ones? For what reasons?



Lesson #3: Explore the Lorax (part 2)

Objective Students will analyze this fictional story relating to the proper and improper use of natural resources. Students will create a story of their own, utilizing themes they have just learned.

Materials

- *The Lorax*, by Dr. Seuss
- pencils or pens
- paper
- coloured pencils
- art supplies as required/available

Activities

Once students have completed the first part of this lesson, consider one of the following:

- Challenge students to write and illustrate a children's book on another environmental topic. The text can be in poetry or story form and need not be extremely wordy. They may illustrate it with drawings, pictures from magazines, etc. A good way to find topics for this idea may be to have students start with something similar to what is in the fourth lesson of this unit– keeping an environmental journal. From the student's own local observation(s), they may find something very good and meaningful to serve as the topic for their own story.
- Some students may wish to write the sequel to *The Lorax*. You may wish to do this with students as a group by starting with a discussion web. Encourage students to use the same characters and to think about what the characters may have done after the book ended, or what may have happened to them. An alternative

choice could be letting students imagine what it would be like to have The Lorax visit or live in their own community.

Computer Option

- Some students may wish to investigate why, in the past, this book was banned in certain areas.



Lesson #4: Dear Journal...

Objective Students will keep an environmental journal, keeping notes on causes, effects, and solutions. Students will learn journal-keeping techniques from viewing the pages of Harris' journals.

Related Art Work(s)

- *Journal entry*, Robert Harris, CAG H-1811a
- *Journal entry*, Robert Harris, CAG H-1811b
- *Journal entry*, Robert Harris, CAG H-3072a
- *Journal entry*, Robert Harris, CAG H-3072b

Materials

- pencils or pens
- paper or notebooks

Activities

1. Have students reflect on what they have learned in the unit up to this point and identify questions they still have.
2. Review with students the images they have considered over the last three lessons. In addition, examine, with them, pages from Robert Harris' journals. Observe, with them, journal keeping techniques evident within the pages – for example, keeping sketches within your notes, writing frequently, etc.
3. Have the students start keeping an environmental journal, keeping in mind what they have already learned. Students may keep their journal in a manner they find most convenient. Methods/materials may include a small scribbler, a blank sketchbook or notebook, a web log or “blog”, etc. Encourage students to take note of the environmental conditions around them and think of causes, effects, and solutions.
4. Encourage students to include sketches in their notebooks as well, using the sketches as a record of observations.

5. With students, decide how long the journaling will last (it could be for as short a period as two weeks or for an entire term). Be sure to encourage students to make frequent entries. You may wish to decide, as a group, on a minimum number.
6. At the end of that period, have the students share and discuss their observations, comments, and sketches as a group. Discuss any similarities or differences noted. If there are any dominant issues (the perceived misuse of an area, for example), students may wish to suggest some sort of action to change what they see happening.

Ideas for Assessment

When assessing the students' journals, look for frequency of entries, meaningful observations and comments, and sketches that convey information. If the journals are being kept for a longer period, you may wish to collect them every week or two.

Possible Extensions

The class may wish to take action on a local issue that they identified in their journals. They might make a presentation to a local council, write letters to the editor of a paper, a local politician, etc.

