

PACT Plus

Sample Lessons

for Grades 6–8

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Sample Lessons for Grades 6–8

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Grade 6

English Language Arts Sample Lessons



Embracing Heritage



Embracing Heritage



Lesson 1: Unit Introduction

Overview

Comprehension Question

How does heritage define us individually and as a nation?

Materials

- Springboard images: melting pot and salad bowl
- Embracing Heritage essential words documents: *immigrant*, *heritage*, *assimilate*, *refugee*, *perspective*

Comprehension Canopy Routine 7–10 minutes

Materials

Springboard images: melting pot and salad bowl

Introduction and Prior Knowledge

Throughout American history, millions of people from around the world have left their home country for a chance to start a new life in this country—and people continue to come here to this day.

People come to the United States for different reasons. The earliest settlers, the Pilgrims, sought religious freedom. More recently, people have come to America for job opportunities. All of these people bring with them their traditions, values, and culture.

In this unit, we will explore the immigrant experience that is the foundation of the United States.

Springboard

- Display the springboard image of the melting pot.

For many years, America has been referred to as a melting pot. The term came from a play written in 1908 that showed how immigrants from different nations “melted” or blended together to become Americans.

- Display the springboard image of the salad bowl.

More recently, a new metaphor—a salad bowl—has been used to describe America. A salad is made of several ingredients mixed together in a bowl. The ingredients remain separate, but together, they form a salad.

- Display the springboard images together. Prompt students to begin a “turn and talk” activity.

With a partner, discuss the two terms: “melting pot” and “salad bowl.” How do they differ? How are they the same? Which term do you think best describes the United States today?

Comprehension Question

State the comprehension question that will guide students’ learning throughout the unit.

How does heritage define us individually and as a nation?

Melting Pot



Salad Bowl



Essential Words Introductory Routine

20–30 minutes

Materials

Embracing Heritage essential words documents: *immigrant, heritage, assimilate, refugee, perspective*

Procedure

- Use the essential words documents to introduce each essential word.
- Have students discuss the turn and talk questions in pairs or with the whole group.

immigrant

A person who leaves one country
to live permanently in another country



www.pixabay.com

Related Words: *immigration, newcomer, homeland*

Example Usage:

Some **immigrants**, such as the Pilgrims, came to the New World in search of religious freedom.

Example: *A student who moved with her family to the United States from India*

Nonexample: *A friend who moved to a city 30 miles away*

Turn and Talk:

With your partner, brainstorm reasons an **immigrant** would come to America today.

heritage

Traditions and beliefs that come from someone's family or ethnic background



www.pixabay.com

Related Words: *background, history, culture*

Example Usage:

The Mexican American Cultural Center is a resource for the community to learn about Mexican American culture and **heritage**.

Example: *Performing an Irish dance in the Saint Patrick's Day Parade*

Nonexample: *Wearing a T-shirt with your school's mascot on it*

Turn and Talk:

Describe a family tradition that reflects your **heritage**.

assimilate

To adopt the customs, attitudes, and behavior of another culture



www.wikimedia.org

Related Words: *adjust, adapt, conform, assimilation*

Example Usage:

Adult immigrants tend to hang on to their language and traditional ways, whereas children usually **assimilate** more quickly.

Example: *A Russian immigrant learning to speak English*

Nonexample: *A Chinese immigrant spending most of her life in the Chinatown section of San Francisco*

Turn and Talk:

Must a person give up the traditions of his or her home country to **assimilate** in a new country? Why or why not?

refugee

A person who leaves his or her country because of great danger in that country



www.pixabay.com

Related Words: *evacuee, displaced person, flee*

Example Usage:

Albert Einstein was a **refugee** who fled the Nazi government in Germany.

Example: *A family who leaves their homeland because of a devastating earthquake*

Nonexample: *A family who moves to a new country because of the mother's new job*

Turn and Talk:

What challenges would a **refugee** face after fleeing his or her country?

perspective

A way of looking at or thinking about something



www.wikimedia.org

Related Words: *point of view, judgment, interpretation*

Example Usage:

It is interesting to read about one's own country and its culture from the **perspective** of recent immigrants.

Example: *Your grandfather thinks social media is a waste of time, but you think social media keeps you connected with your friends.*

Nonexample: *You post a picture of your dog on Instagram.*

Turn and Talk:

What is something that you and your parents have different **perspectives** on?



Embracing Heritage

Lesson 2

Overview

Comprehension Question

How does heritage define us individually and as a nation?

Materials

- Warm-up document
- Text: “Letter From M. Goodstein to His Aunt in Poland”

Procedure

- Have the warm-up document displayed as students enter class.
- Direct students to complete the warm-up activity.
- Have students share their responses for about 1 minute.

assimilate

To adopt the customs, attitudes, and behavior of another culture

heritage

Traditions and beliefs that come from someone's family or ethnic background

Read the text below.



One of the first things that many immigrants who arrived in America in the late 1800s and early 1900s did was change their names. Why? Their reasons were simple: Adopting names that sounded more American might help them **assimilate** more quickly. It might help them avoid ethnic discrimination. It might be better for the businesses they hoped to start in America.

Often, immigrants decided on a new name by altering their original name:

Original name	Petrasovich	Noblinski	Hrabko	Savitch	Madsen
Americanized name	Preston	Noble	Harbor	Savage	Madison

Other times, immigrants changed their name to its English translation:

Original name	Blau or Bleu	Weiss, Blanc, or Bianco	Weber	Schmidt
Translated name	Blue	White	Weaver	Smith

This trend has changed over the past several decades. Today, the United States is a more multicultural country and immigrants are proud of their **heritage**.

Lisa Chang's parents immigrated to the United States from Korea in 1976. She kept her Korean last name when she got married. "I felt like I would lose a part of myself and my Korean **heritage**," she said, "and like I was cheating on my family's name."

Adapted from Roberts, S. (2010, August 26). New life in U.S. no longer means new name. *The New York Times*, p. A1. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/26/nyregion/26names.html>

Is it possible for an immigrant be proud of his or her **heritage** and to **assimilate**? Why or why not?

Materials

Text: "Letter From M. Goodstein to His Aunt in Poland"

Before Reading

- Determine the grouping structure for text reading. Facilitate student movement into groups or pairs as needed.
- Introduce the reading.

Even after settling in the United States, some immigrants felt caught between their new American lives and the "old country" they left behind. Some kept in touch with their relatives back home by exchanging letters with them.

The letter we will read is a primary source. It is an actual letter from a young Jewish man who moved from Poland to San Bernadino, California, in the late 1800s. As you read, pay attention to the author's feelings about his heritage as he assimilates in America.

As we read, we'll stop periodically to answer questions and take notes about what we've read.

During Reading

- As needed, clarify vocabulary. Point out connections to the essential words where applicable.
- At each stopping point (including the final one), facilitate student note-taking in response to the provided questions.
- Provide corrective feedback if students misunderstand the material.

After Reading

- Facilitate student note-taking in response to the final questions.
- Have students write connections to any essential words in their notes.

Letter From M. Goodstein to His Aunt in Poland

(1)

San Bernardino, California
November 28, 1890

This past November 4, it was exactly 1 year since I left home. On December 4, I arrived in New York, and on the 12th, I reached San Bernadino. I can tell you for sure that I should have left home 15 years earlier. It would have been much better for me, a thousand times better. I am not able even to describe it to you how I looked at first and how different I look now. I do not want to write about it because if I start, I may never finish with it. I would like to ask the people at home just this one question: Why is it forbidden for a young man to take a walk with a girl, to talk to her, and to get to know her? I do not consider it a sin, and I did not find it in the Gemora (part of the Jewish holy book) to be a sin either. Only you, the Polish people, are so backward. And as a result, when this type of young man arrives here, he is called a “greener,” and in Germany, “Polish” or “Russian pig.” This is the truth.

Is the author eager to assimilate? Underline the sections in the text that support your answer.

(2)

I do not mean to insult you, but it is especially true that in your small towns, within a half hour everything is known all over and becomes gossip. And so when a young man from there arrives here, what kind of an impression does he make? First, he cannot open his mouth because he does not know the language. Then, when he gets together with people, he does not know how to behave and how to have a good time. So people make fun of him. I can understand it because first, he is not able to talk, and then, he is not able to eat because he is not used to this kind of food. He also does not know how to hold a knife or a fork or a table napkin. And he does not know how to sing or raise a toast in company. At home, we only used to say, “Lehayim” (a Hebrew toast to someone’s good health). At home, we only sang zmires (Jewish songs). And he does not know how to dance because I have never seen anyone dance or play at home because people would open their mouths in wonder. They would not go to the theater because this, too, was considered a sin. And as far as dress at home—one used to put on a shirt and a scarf around one’s neck and this was all. Here, however, one has to have different clothes for the summer and for the winter. The same is true for women.

How does the author’s heritage affect him in his new life in America?

(3)

In our store, we also sell women’s dresses and even underwear. And it may happen that a young man has to sell to some young girl some such things or whatever. We also sell, here, undershirts, shirts, collars, fine ties, pocket watches, top hats, and overcoats. All this the young man had never seen at home. So here he is shown everything like a small child. And people laugh at him. I am not telling this, God forbid, about myself. When I arrived here, I was already different. The only thing was that I could not speak English, but now, this is all already behind me.

Why does the author say, “I am not telling this, God forbid, about myself”?

Adapted from Thomas, W. I., & Znaniecki, F. (1918). *The Polish peasant in Europe and America: Monograph of an immigrant group*. Boston, MA: Gorham Press.

Embracing Heritage



Lesson 3

Overview

Comprehension Question

How does heritage define us individually and as a nation?

Materials

- Warm-up document
- Text: “Program Helps Children Who Are Refugees”

Procedure

- Have the warm-up document displayed as students enter class.
- Direct students to complete the warm-up activity.
- Have students share their responses for about 1 minute.

refugee

A person who leaves his or her country because of great danger in that country

perspective

A way of looking at or thinking about something

Read about Vandi, who came to the United States from Sierra Leone, a country in Africa.

Hi, my name is Vandi, and I was born in Sierra Leone. There was a war in my home country, so we had to leave. When I was 6, my family was living in a safety zone in Liberia, which is a country that neighbors Sierra Leone. We were chosen by some officials there to come to America. I was really sad because I had to leave my family and friends. I will not get to see them again until I am grown and can go back to Liberia as an adult.

Leaving was hard, but my mom made me feel better by telling me that in America, we would learn to use the telephone to keep in touch. Now, I can call my family and talk to them by phone. They speak Mende, and I speak English to them to help them learn my new language. I have been in America for 6 years now, so I don't speak Mende much anymore.

I am a Muslim, and that's really different, too. We don't celebrate Christmas, but the day after Christmas, my mom and dad buy me presents. I go out with my sister on Halloween, and we get candy. We celebrate Valentine's Day. On Thanksgiving Day, my mom cooks a turkey. We didn't do that in Liberia.

The United States has lots of roads and sidewalks, which we don't have in Liberia. To go anywhere in Liberia, you walk on the flat land. Our house in Liberia was only one room. In America, our house is huge. We can spread out in different rooms.

In America, I play football, soccer, basketball, and go on Facebook with my friends. I also play dodgeball, which I love. We didn't have any of those games in Liberia. I like to read books like *The Bridge to Terabithia* and *Amulet*. I also read comics. My favorite American foods are hamburgers and pizza. My favorite food from Liberia is a spinach and rice dish. In my home country, we ate rice with every meal.

Although I was sad to leave, coming here was amazing. It was my first time being in a real plane. My first impression of America was, "Wow! This is huge! It's really big!" Now I can work hard in school and learn to be a lawyer and help people when I grow up.

"Meet Young Immigrants: Vandi from Sierra Leone" from IMMIGRATION: STORIES OF YESTERDAY AND TODAY. Published on teacher.scholastic.com. Copyright © 2015 by Scholastic Inc. Used by permission.

Answer the following questions.

1. Is Vandi a **refugee**? What evidence from the passage supports your answer?
2. How does Vandi's **perspective** about coming to America change in the passage?

Materials

Text: “Program Helps Children Who Are Refugees”

Before Reading

- Determine the grouping structure for text reading. Facilitate student movement into groups or pairs as needed.
- Introduce the reading.

As we have learned, a refugee is a person who leaves his or her country because of great danger there. Sometimes, governments force people to leave their country. Sometimes, people flee because they belong to a group that is being mistreated.

Refugees must ask, and be given permission, to enter and get help from another country. The country a person is fleeing to might have a different perspective on whether a situation is dangerous enough to label a person a refugee.

In this passage, you will read about unaccompanied minors entering the United States. An unaccompanied minor is a child younger than 18 who is not with an adult. As you read, pay attention to the different perspectives about whether these unaccompanied minors are actually refugees.

As we read, we'll stop periodically to answer questions and take notes about what we've read.

During Reading

- As needed, clarify vocabulary. Point out connections to the essential words where applicable.
- At each stopping point (including the final one), facilitate student note-taking in response to the provided questions.
- Provide corrective feedback if students misunderstand the material.

After Reading

- Facilitate student note-taking in response to the final questions.
- Have students write connections to any essential words in their notes.

Program Helps Children Who Are Refugees

(1)

October 27, 2014

RICHMOND, Va. — It took Asein Ta 3 days to walk through the mountains out of Myanmar, also known as Burma. He and his uncle, hobbling on one leg, headed for a **refugee** camp in Thailand. Ta was not even a teenager when he had to leave his home country in Southeast Asia.

“My uncle said there was good out there, something different,” said Ta, now 21. Ta’s mother sent him away so he could escape the unfair punishment his family and other ethnic Karens (an ethnic group from Southeast Burma) faced in their native land. She died shortly after he left.

Five years later, Ta was on a plane to Virginia. He was helped by the Unaccompanied **Refugee** Minors (URM) program.

For 35 years, the program has been run by the U.S. government, with help from states and charity groups. It has helped about 13,000 children escape war and natural disasters, like earthquakes, in Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The program lets the children stay in the United States and matches them with foster parents.

Ta was clearly a **refugee**. The question now is whether children crossing into the United States from Central America are as well.

The article says that Ta was “clearly a refugee.” Why is it clear that he was a refugee?

(2)

More Children Crossing the Border

Some people see URM as a way to help unaccompanied Central American children who have come across the U.S. border with Mexico. Their numbers have greatly increased. Fewer than 4,000 children crossed the border alone in 2011. In 2014, 44,000 did so. There are too many incoming children for the U.S. agents at the border to handle safely. But it is unclear whether URM can handle such a large number of Central American kids if they were considered to be **refugees**.

What Difference Would a Label Make?

The United Nations has argued that the Central American children are **refugees** who should be able to move to other countries for safety. Some have been victims of kidnapping or other crimes.

The U.S. government disagrees and does not consider the children to be **refugees**. Getting that label would help the incoming children use the URM program to settle in the United States.

Some argue that labeling the children **refugees** would be the best way to get them the help they need. Kimberly Haynes is one of those people. She works for Lutheran Immigration and **Refugee** Service, which helps the government run URM. She said there is little difference between the Central American kids and past URM **refugees**.

Haynes says that both the Central American children and past **refugees** from other parts of the world face the same kinds of difficulties. “The situations are pretty horrific,” she said.

According to the United Nations and Kimberly Haynes’ perspective, why should the children from Central America be labeled refugees?

(3)

The President Said Maybe

The way to determine whether someone is a **refugee** and can use URM is to investigate the situation in his or her home country. The government plans to do that more in the near future.

President Barack Obama said this year that it might be possible to treat some children as **refugees**. He said that some of the Central American children might apply in certain cases.

He warned, however, that being considered a **refugee** “is not just based on economic need or because a family lives in a bad neighborhood or poverty.” Obama also said that it is better for people to apply to be **refugees** in their home countries before making the trip to America.

Some people like Jessica Vaughan think it should be hard to be labeled a **refugee**. She works for a group that is in favor of tough rules for who can immigrate to America.

“People feel sorry for them, and there’s no question that times are tough in these countries,” she said. However, widespread crime in a country “has never before been an excuse for designating people as **refugees**.”

How is President Obama’s perspective different from the perspective of the United Nations?

After reading this article, what is your perspective on the children from Central America? Do you think they are refugees?

Adapted from Program helps children who are refugees. (2014, November 27). *Newsela*. Retrieved from <https://newsela.com/articles/defining-refugees/id/5739/>

Embracing Heritage

Lesson 4

Overview

Comprehension Question

How does heritage define us individually and as a nation?

Materials

- Warm-up document
- Text: “Excerpt From *Behind the Mountains*”

Note

This sample lesson illustrates how PACT components can be used as a lesson within a novel unit. The novel excerpted here is *Behind the Mountains* by Edwidge Danticat. The following summary of the novel is meant to provide context, so that the sample lesson is more meaningful.

Celiane Esperance lives in the Haitian countryside with her mother, Manman, and her brother, Moy. They have been waiting to join their father, Papa, who immigrated to Brooklyn, New York, 5 years ago. Celiane receives a journal from her teacher and decides to keep a diary about events that take place as her family prepares to move to America. We learn about Celiane’s friends, her grandparents, her love of her Haitian mountain village, and the family’s visit to Port-au-Prince during election time, where a bomb nearly kills Celiane and her mother. At last, Papa is able to send for his family. The Esperances leave Haiti and are reunited with Celiane’s father in New York at Christmastime. Through Celiane’s diary, we learn about their struggles to adapt to American life.

The following excerpts take up the story shortly after the family arrives in America.

Procedure

- Have the warm-up document displayed as students enter class.
- Direct students to complete the warm-up activity.
- Have students share their responses for about 1 minute.

immigrant

A person who leaves one country to live permanently in another country

Reread the following excerpt from *Behind the Mountains*. As you read, remember that Manman, Celiane, and Moy have been in America for 8 days. Papa has lived in America for 5 years.

Tuesday, December 26

Manman and Papa had their first fight in New York. I could hear them arguing all the way from my room.

Manman had turned up the stove too high and burnt some rice she was cooking.

“You are not cooking on sticks and rocks anymore,” Papa said. “You can control this fire.”

“Oh!” Manman said. “Are you calling me a peasant? Don’t forget, we both come from the same place. The sticks and rocks were fine for you before.”

“I’m just saying you don’t have to turn it up all the way,” Papa said.

“Don’t look down your nose at old rags,” Manman said, using one of her proverbs (a short saying that expresses something wise and true). “Remember, they fit you fine before.”

Answer the following questions.

1. Based on this excerpt, circle one of the words below that shows how Manman feels as a recent **immigrant**. Be prepared to justify your answer.

worried **curious** **embarrassed** **angry** **afraid** **happy**

2. “Don’t look down your nose at old rags. Remember, they fit you before.” What does Manman mean when she says this to Papa? Use the word **immigrant** in your answer.

Materials

Text: "Excerpt From *Behind the Mountains*"

Before Reading

- Determine the grouping for text reading. Facilitate student movement into groups or pairs as needed.
- Introduce the reading.

What has happened so far since Celiane, Manman, and Moy arrived in New York?

Today, we will read about Celiane's first day in an American school. What predictions can you make about her day?

As we read, note what it is like to be an immigrant at a new school, whether your predictions are accurate, and what surprises you.

We'll stop periodically to answer questions and take notes about what we've read.

During Reading

- As needed, clarify vocabulary. Point out connections to the essential words where applicable.
- At each stopping point (including the final one), facilitate student note-taking in response to the provided questions.
- Provide corrective feedback if students misunderstand the material.

After Reading

- Facilitate student note-taking in response to the final questions.
- Have students write connections to any essential words in their notes.

Excerpt From *Behind the Mountains*

(1)

New York, Tuesday, January 2

I woke up early, extremely nervous about my first day at school. Papa had already purchased my school supplies, pens and pencils, notebooks, and a backpack to carry them in.

As we ate our morning meal, Papa showed me the bus route on a map for my return trip home. Franck is letting him drive one of the restaurant's vans to and from work. He will use the van to drop me off at school, but I will have to find my way home by myself. (Papa assures me that it is very easy.)

I think it is Moy who has it easy. He'll be going to afternoon classes and he doesn't even have to take a bus.

What are two things Celiane is worried about?

(2)

Later

The school is in a gray concrete building, facing a slew of giant housing complexes, which Papa said are called "projects." The projects are so tall that they look like mountains with windows.

We went directly to the main office, where teachers and school administrators were sitting behind desks, performing different tasks to prepare for the school day. Papa stood quietly facing the desks, waiting for one of the administrators to look up. Finally, a man walked over to us.

Papa's English was not nearly as fluid as the man's was. Still, Papa managed to explain why we were there. In his quick-fire speech, the man asked about my vaccination and medical papers. (*Vaccination* and *medical* are similar words in Creole and in English.) When Papa handed him the papers, the man walked back to his desk and picked up a form. He filled in some of the form and then gave Papa the rest to finish.

The man called someone else over, an older woman. The woman looked down at the form and told us in Creole that I had been assigned to Class 8M5. Papa asked what room that was. She said she would take us.

My knees were shaking as we followed the woman through the hallway. At times, I fell behind Papa and the woman, my new backpack weighing me down.

There was a long buzz and suddenly it was mayhem, with students pouring in to the halls, some running and knocking into one another as they climbed the staircase around us.

My main room, the homeroom, was on the fourth floor in a corner near the stairwell. The students were beginning to arrive, slipping into their seats as we approached the teacher’s desk. The woman from the main office introduced the homeroom teacher as Mr. Marius.

Mr. Marius was a young man, looking not much more mature than many of his students. The woman from the main office gave him my records. He looked them over and then said, “Bienvenue, Celiane.”

Do you think the administrators and teachers at this school deal with immigrants often? Why or why not?

(3)

The class was full now and everyone was looking at me. While the lady from the main office was leaving, I tried to keep my back to the other students and concentrate on Mr. Marius.

Papa was telling him (too loudly for my taste) what a good student I had been in Beau Jour, how my teacher had always “appreciated me,” and how I had often been first in my class.

I kept wishing Papa wasn’t saying those things. From the silence in the room, I could tell the others were listening, adding Papa’s words to their first impressions of me.

I had already decided that I was no longer going to try to outshine everyone in class and that Papa was ruining my plans. Being the teacher’s favorite was no way to make friends.

When it was time for Papa to leave, he handed me a piece of paper with his telephone number at work, our home address, two quarters, and a five-dollar bill for me to take a taxi if I got lost. He told me (again too loudly) that I should not be afraid to call him at work if I needed him. Some of the students were smiling when I waved goodbye to Papa, who looked back one last time before the door closed behind him. I wanted so badly to go with Papa, but I knew this was not possible, so I turned back to the classroom and tried to find a desk.

What has Celiane’s experience as an immigrant in a new school been like so far?

Adapted from Danticat, E. (2002). *Behind the mountains*. New York, NY: Orchard.



PROMOTING ADOLESCENTS'
COMPREHENSION OF TEXT

Grade 7

Life Science Sample Lessons



Ecology

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Ecology



Lesson 1: Unit Introduction

Overview

Comprehension Question

How do interactions between living and nonliving things affect ecosystems?

Materials

- Springboard images: marine ecosystem, desert ecosystem, Amazon rainforest
- Ecology essential words documents: *interact*, *ecosystem*, *species*, *biodiversity*, *energy*

Comprehension Canopy Routine 7–10 minutes

Materials

Springboard images: marine ecosystem, desert ecosystem, Amazon rainforest

Introduction and Prior Knowledge

When you see a picture of a forest or desert, it can look calm and peaceful, as if nothing is happening. But forests, deserts, and other ecosystems are full of life and activity.

In this unit, we will learn about relationships between living things and the environment.

Springboard

- Introduce the springboard images.

I will show you some pictures of different places.

- Provide a purpose for viewing the images.

As you look at each image, write one thing you know about the place just by looking at the picture.

- Display the springboard images one at a time. After showing each image, have students begin a “turn and talk” activity by using one of the following prompts.

- *Tell your partner what kinds of plants and animals might live here.*

OR

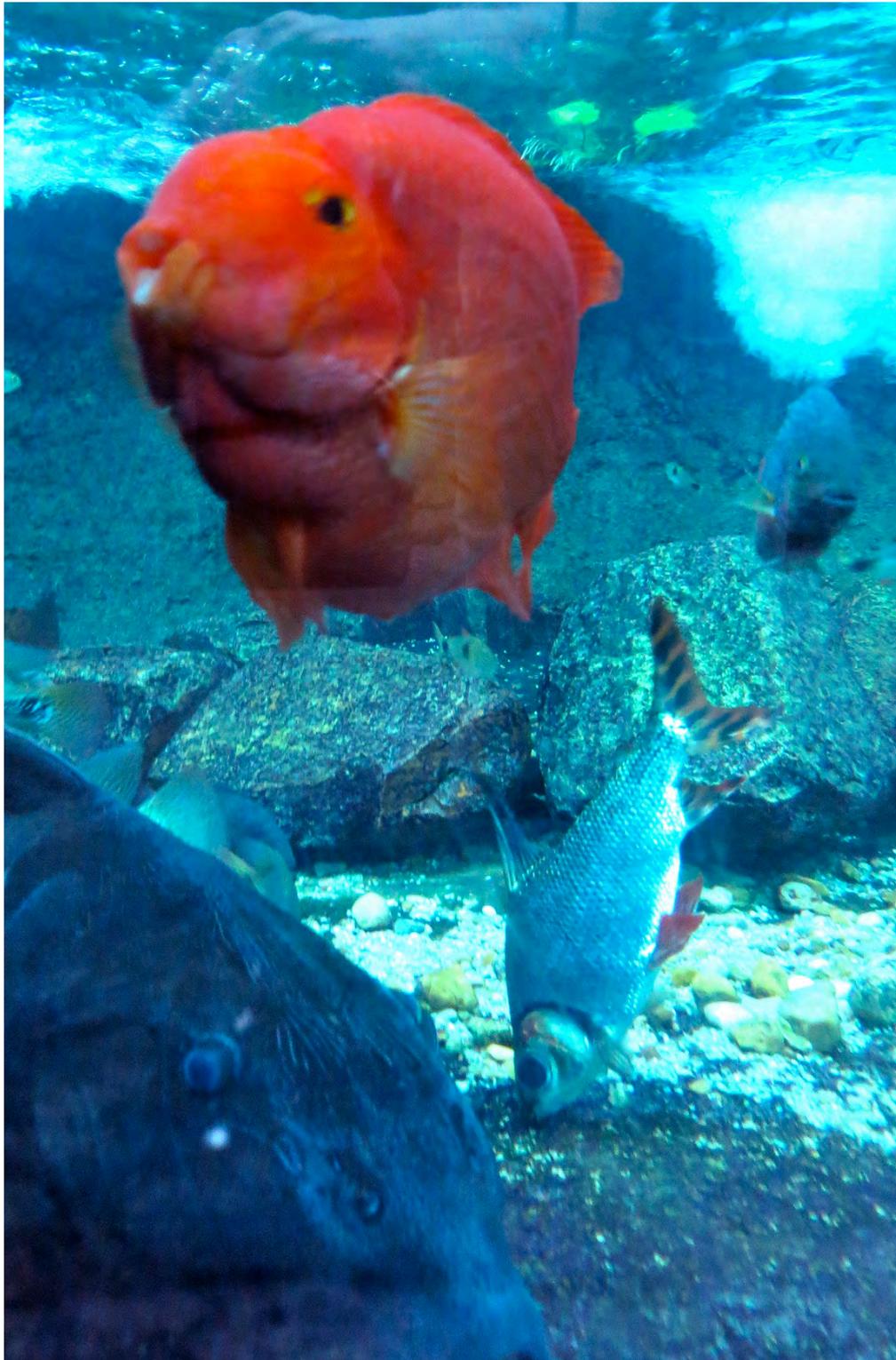
- *How does the weather affect what lives in this environment?*

Comprehension Question

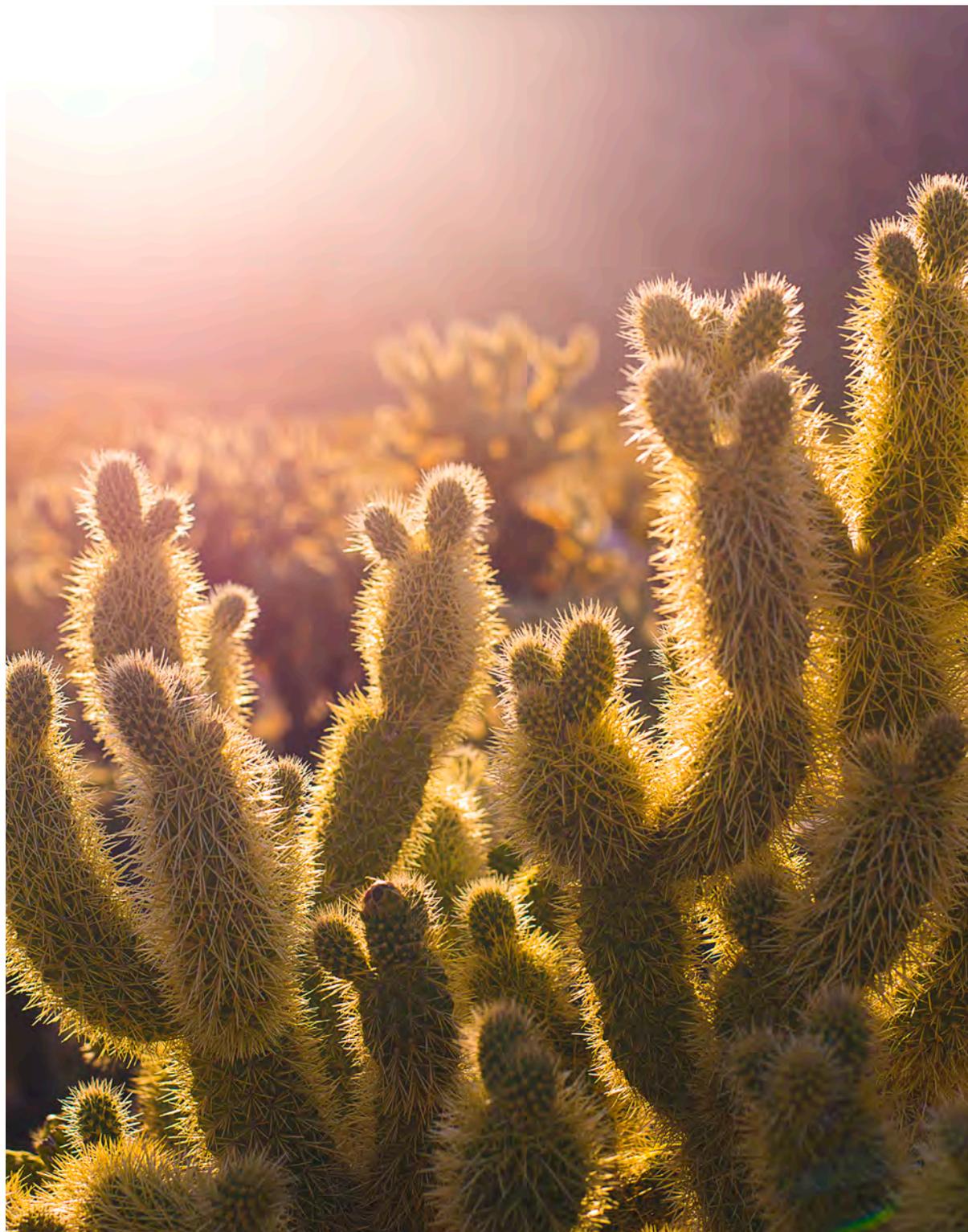
State the comprehension question that will guide students’ learning throughout the unit.

How do interactions between living and nonliving things affect ecosystems?

Marine Ecosystem



Desert Ecosystem



Amazon Rainforest



Essential Words Introductory Routine

20–30 minutes

Materials

Ecology essential words documents: *interact*, *ecosystem*, *species*, *biodiversity*, *energy*

Procedure

- Use the essential words documents to introduce each essential word.
- Have students discuss the turn and talk questions in pairs or with the whole group.

interact

When two or more things have an effect on one another



www.wikimedia.org

Related Words: *interaction, influence, relate, connect*

Example Usage:

Ecology is the science of how living things **interact** with their environment.

Example: *A deer eating the flowers in your neighborhood because the forest where it lived burned down*

Nonexample: *Watching a news report about a forest fire*

Turn and Talk:

In what different ways do you **interact** with members of your family?

ecosystem

A community of organisms that live and interact in a particular area



www.pixabay.com

Related Words: *ecology, environment, habitat*

Example Usage:

Rainforest **ecosystems** rely on tropical bats to pollinate flowers and disperse seeds for trees and shrubs.

Example: *A stream with fish, insects, frogs, and water grasses*

Nonexample: *A puddle on the sidewalk from a recent rain shower*

Turn and Talk:

Is our classroom an **ecosystem**? Why? Why not?

species

A group of similar organisms that can reproduce



www.pexels.com

Related Words: *group, category*

Example Usage:

In British Columbia, there is a **species** of black bear that sometimes produces white cubs.

Examples: *Dogs, mice, pigs*

Nonexamples: *Granite, limestone, shale*

Turn and Talk:

With your partner, think of as many plant and animal **species** as you can that live in the desert.

biodiversity

The number of different species that live within a particular ecosystem



www.pixabay.com

Related Words: *variety, diversity*

Example Usage:

In areas with a lot of **biodiversity**, insects and other creatures pollinate plants naturally. But when plants start to die out, insects and creatures leave as well, decreasing the **biodiversity** of the area.

Example: *The Amazon rainforest*

Nonexample: *A tank of goldfish*

Turn and Talk:

How might the **biodiversity** of a farm be affected if most of the honeybees in the region died?

energy

The power to cause something to work, move, or grow



image by FlickrLickr, www.wikimedia.org

Related Words: *activity, ability, force*

Example Usage:

Food contains chemical **energy**, which organisms use to grow and reproduce.

Example: *Wind causing the blades of a windmill to turn*

Nonexample: *A motionless windmill on a day without wind*

Turn and Talk:

Where do you get **energy** to work, play, grow, and learn?

Where does a cow or chicken get **energy**?

Where does a peach tree get **energy**?

Ecology



Lesson 2

Overview

Comprehension Question

How do interactions between living and nonliving things affect ecosystems?

Materials

- Warm-up document
- Text: “All the Pieces Matter”

Procedure

- Have the warm-up document displayed as students enter class.
- Direct students to complete the warm-up activity.
- Have students share their responses for about 1 minute.

ecosystem

A community of organisms that live and interact in a particular area

interact

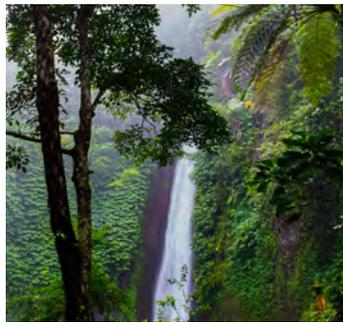
When two or more things have an effect on one another

Below are photos of **ecosystems**.

Desert



Rainforest



Marine



Forest



In the sentences below, fill in the blank with one of the words or phrases in the box. The first one has been done for you. Each word or phrase will be used only once.

whereas **on the contrary** **similarly** **just as** **likewise** **however**

- In the rainforest **ecosystem**, water is plentiful, whereas the desert **ecosystem's** supply of water is scarce.
- In a desert **ecosystem**, animals **interact** with living and nonliving things for food and shelter. _____, in a marine **ecosystem**, fish **interact** with their environment to survive.
- All organisms need water to live, but different organisms **interact** with water in different ways. For example, plants in a desert **ecosystem** have thick skins to store water. _____, trees in forest **ecosystems** shed their leaves in the fall to conserve water and energy.

Before Reading

- Determine the grouping structure for text reading. Facilitate student movement into groups or pairs as needed.
- Introduce the reading.

This is a narrative—a story—about a science class just like ours. The students are learning about the ecosystem of a wildlife reserve and how its organisms interact and depend on one another. As you read, pay attention to how living and nonliving things connect and why those connections are important to the ecosystem.

As we read, we'll stop periodically to answer questions and take notes about what we've read.

During Reading

- As needed, clarify vocabulary. Point out connections to the essential words where applicable.
- At each stopping point (including the final one), facilitate student note-taking in response to the provided questions.
- Provide corrective feedback if students misunderstand the material.

After Reading

- Facilitate student note-taking in response to the final questions.
- Have students write connections to any essential words in their notes.

All the Pieces Matter

(1)

Jason stared at the whiteboard at the front of the classroom, trying to make sense of what he saw there. Mr. Freamon had drawn a complicated diagram of all the creatures living in the nearby Ho Tep Wildlife Reserve. Every type of living thing, from trees and insects to mammals and birds, was written and circled on the board. Arrows snaked around the board, connecting the circles and showing which creatures depended on which other creatures to survive.

Though he had hiked in the reserve plenty of times, Jason had never given much thought to the animals and other wildlife he had seen there. He'd never thought about how the amount of rainfall affected the amount of moisture in the soil, which affected how well plants could grow, which affected the ability of the animals that ate those plants to survive. It was enough to make his head swim a little.

Jason wasn't the only one who was confused. Mr. Freamon could tell that his students were all struggling to make sense of the mess of connections drawn on the board. He smiled and stopped drawing for a moment to speak to the class.

What is happening in this class? Try to use at least two of the essential words in your answer.

Why does Mr. Freamon stop drawing on the board?

(2)

“Take a deep breath,” Mr. Freamon said. “You don’t need to memorize what’s on the board. If you take away one thing from this lesson, let it be this: All the pieces matter. Every **ecosystem** on earth depends on a delicate balance among all of the different forms of life within it.”

Adriana raised her hand and asked why that was.

“Well,” Mr. Freamon said, “all of the creatures within any **ecosystem** are competing for the same resources: food, water, and shelter—the basic needs of every living thing. There’s only so much to go around, so creatures have to compete with other creatures to get what they need. And because they all go about it in a unique way, all of the creatures in an **ecosystem** end up depending on one another. Let me give you an example. Remember that video we watched last week with the wolves killing the elk at Yellowstone National Park?”

Everyone nodded.

“And how many of you thought that the wolves were mean for killing those elk?”

About half the students raised their hands.

“Consider this, then,” Mr. Freamon continued. “Without the wolves in the park to keep the elk population in check, the elk would have eaten all of the aspen and willow in the park. Not only would those plants be gone, but also the other animals that depend on them to survive would have been out of luck. All the pieces matter because all the pieces **interact**.”

What does Mr. Freamon mean when he says “all the pieces matter”?

(3)

After class that day, Jason went home and looked up more information online. He found a lot of interesting links about different **ecosystems** that had changed rapidly because one of the pieces had been taken out of the puzzle, as Mr. Freamon would have put it.

For example, in Africa, people hunted lions and leopards and reduced their population, leading to higher populations of a certain type of baboon. That had led, somehow, to higher rates of parasites in baboons and people. And along some coasts, human activity had reduced the sea otter population. The sea otters ate sea urchins that ate kelp from massive kelp forests. Without the sea otters to keep them in check, the kelp started to disappear.

The whole idea was starting to make sense to Jason. It was basically like dominoes—all the pieces lined up, and if you knocked one down, it would knock down the next one, which would knock down the one after that, until they all went down. Of course, it was a lot more complicated than that, but that was the basic idea.

Jason thought about all the **interactions** on the wildlife reserve. A robin built its nest near the top of an oak tree. He imagined the robin catching insects to bring back to the nest to feed her chicks. He thought about how the roots of the tree reached way down into the soil to drink the moisture there. It really was fascinating how everything fit together.

Thinking about the last paragraph you read, what effect would a drought have on the robin that built its nest in the oak tree?

(4)

Later, when he was back at school, Jason asked Mr. Freamon about the **ecosystem** at Ho Tep. He mentioned how he thought about the trees and how they were rooted in the soil.

“It’s funny you should mention that, Jason,” Mr. Freamon said. “You know, without those trees to anchor the soil, Ho Tep would still be a desert, like it was thousands of years ago.”

“You mean Ho Tep hasn’t always been a forest?”

“No, it hasn’t. For a long time it was a desert—a totally different **ecosystem**. But over time, things changed,” Mr. Freamon said.

“What things?” Jason asked.

“Weather patterns, for one—there probably wasn’t a lot of rain falling on that area for a long time. But as that changed, there was more moisture in the soil—enough for different **species** of flowering plants to begin to take root and eventually trees,” replied Mr. Freamon.

“And once there are trees, there’s shelter for birds and other animals,” Jason said.

“Exactly right,” Mr. Freamon said. “You’ve got the idea.”

“Does that mean that we can deliberately change an **ecosystem**—turn a desert into a forest or something like that?”

Mr. Freamon smiled. “Well, it isn’t that simple. Nature has a way of changing itself, but it takes a very long time, and it doesn’t have an end goal in mind. **Ecosystems** fall apart and then eventually find a new way to rebuild. But that’s not quite the same as planning out a change.

“There are so many variables to consider— not only things like trees and birds, but also the bacteria and other creatures you can see only with a microscope. Not to mention, we haven’t exactly figured out how to change the weather.”

“So we’ve never changed an **ecosystem**?” Jason asked.

“Oh, I wouldn’t say that,” Mr. Freamon said. “We’ve changed plenty of **ecosystems** all right. Except when humans change an **ecosystem**, it’s usually not deliberate. Usually, it’s because clearing out land to build things drives out other creatures.”

“Well, it’s like you always say: Humans are a part of nature, too. Right?”

“Exactly right, Jason,” Mr. Freamon said. “That’s exactly right.”

What can cause an ecosystem to change over time?

How might humans interact with an ecosystem?

Adapted from Raj, A. P. (2013). *All the pieces matter* (ReadWorks lesson plan). Retrieved from <http://www.readworks.org/passages/all-pieces-matter>

Ecology

Lesson 3

Overview

Comprehension Question

How do interactions between living and nonliving things affect ecosystems?

Materials

- Warm-up document
- Text: “Ask an Amazon Expert: Why Can’t We Afford to Lose the Rainforest?”

Procedure

- Have the warm-up document displayed as students enter class.
- Direct students to complete the warm-up activity.
- Have students share their responses for about 1 minute.

biodiversity

The number of different species that live within a particular ecosystem

species

A group of similar organisms that can reproduce

Read the following.



Image by Godot13, www.wikimedia.org

Scientists consider elephants to be keystone **species**. This means that they have an important role in maintaining the **biodiversity** of their ecosystems.

One way elephants help their ecosystems is by eating. As elephants in a forest eat, they create gaps in the vegetation. These gaps allow new plants to grow and create pathways for other animals. In West Africa, forest elephants are the only animals big enough to eat the branches of some large trees. They spread the seeds from these trees through their dung. The dung fertilizes the seeds as they grow into new plants. Many of these trees would disappear without the help of elephants.

Elephants that live on the savannah eat the sprouts of trees and shrubs. This keeps the plants from growing out of control and blocking sunlight. If sunlight did not reach the savannah's grasses, they would die. Antelopes and other animals that graze on the grasses would disappear. And the carnivores that depend on those grazers for food would disappear, too. During the dry season, savannah elephants use their tusks to dig water holes that other animals can use. These water holes may be the only sources of water in the area.

Adapted from International Fund for Animal Welfare. (2011). *Elephants never forget*. Retrieved from <http://www.timeforkids.com/files/Elephants%20Never%20Forget.pdf>

Complete the following sentences.

1. One way that elephants help to maintain **biodiversity** is:
2. If forest elephants became extinct in West Africa, one effect on the ecosystem would be:
3. According to the passage, one reason savannah grasses could die is:

Materials

Text: “Ask an Amazon Expert: Why Can’t We Afford to Lose the Rainforest?”

Before Reading

- Determine the grouping structure for text reading. Facilitate student movement into groups or pairs as needed.
- Introduce the reading.

The Amazon basin and rainforest covers about 40% of South America and falls within the borders of nine countries. About 20% of the Amazon rainforest has disappeared during the past 50 years. Deforestation—the destruction of forests—due to agriculture, building, and illegal logging is threatening the biodiversity of the Amazon River region. In addition, threats to the Amazon have a ripple effect on humans around the globe.

In this passage, “National Geographic” interviews a scientist, Dr. Thomas Lovejoy, about the Amazon region. As you read, pay attention to the cause and effect of human interactions in the Amazon.

As we read, we’ll stop periodically to answer questions and take notes about what we’ve read.

During Reading

- As needed, clarify vocabulary. Point out connections to the essential words where applicable.
- At each stopping point (including the final one), facilitate student note-taking in response to the provided questions.
- Provide corrective feedback if students misunderstand the material.

After Reading

- Facilitate student note-taking in response to the final questions.
- Have students write connections to any essential words in their notes.

Ask an Amazon Expert: Why Can't We Afford to Lose the Rainforest?



www.wikimedia.org

(1)

You've worked in the Amazon for more than 50 years. How have you seen the region change?

Fifty years ago, there were 3 million people and one highway in the entire Amazon basin. That's an area as large as the United States! Today, there are between 30 million and 40 million people, countless roads, and it's about 20% deforested. The combination of new roads and deforestation has fragmented the rainforest and affected the region's **biodiversity**. **Species** lose their habitat or

can no longer subsist in the small fragments of forests that are left. We know that **ecosystems** with a lot of **biodiversity** are generally stronger and more able to adapt than those with fewer **species**.

But on the plus side, 50 years ago there was only one national park—in Venezuela—and one national forest and one reserve in Brazil. Today, more than 50% of the Amazon is under the protection of national parks and reserves. The real challenge is to move toward a much more unified approach to managing the Amazon.

What changes have humans made in the Amazon region over the past 50 years?

What effects have those interactions had on the region's biodiversity?

(2)

When we talk about protecting the Amazon, it’s hard for many people to relate because they don’t feel connected to the region. How can we change that?

There are actually a lot of **interactions** between our lives and the Amazon, no matter how far away we are.

For example, there’s a big, nasty viper called the bushmaster that lives in the Amazon. This snake kills its prey with venom that causes the prey’s blood pressure to drop to zero. Scientists in Brazil discovered how this venom affects a human body system called the angiotensin (AN GEE OH TEN SIN) system. This discovery then allowed pharmaceutical scientists to design medicines to treat high blood pressure. Today, millions of people use these medicines. They now have longer, fuller, and more productive lives and they have the venom of a nasty snake far away in the Amazon to thank for it.

An **interaction** that affects everyone on the planet is climate change. Trees absorb carbon dioxide through photosynthesis. When deforestation occurs, there are far fewer trees to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Reforestation—replanting a forest— is an important way of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The Amazon is a carbon sink, meaning it stores carbon dioxide that would otherwise contribute to climate change. If the Amazon were destroyed, climate change would dramatically increase.

Why would a person living in Washington, D.C., care about what happens in the Amazon?

How is climate change connected to the health of the Amazon rainforest?

(3)

What is your vision for the future of the Amazon?

A lot of damage has been done and forest lost, but nothing is gone until it's gone.

What we hope is that the Amazon will return to be about 90% of its original forest. We also hope that it is managed together by the nine Amazon nations (Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana). We want to see more unified planning among the people in charge of transportation, **energy**, agriculture, and the other industries, so that Amazon cities can have a higher quality of life. This would keep people living in cities, so there's less reason to deforest.

After reading this passage, how would you answer the question that is posed in its title: Why can't we afford to lose the rainforest?

Reprinted with permission from Schleeter, R. (2015, May 19). Ask an Amazon expert: Why we can't afford to lose the rain forest. *National Geographic*. Retrieved from <http://education.nationalgeographic.com/news/ask-amazon-expert-why-we-cant-afford-lose-rain-forest/>

Ecology

Lesson 4

Overview

Comprehension Question

How do interactions between living and nonliving things affect ecosystems?

Materials

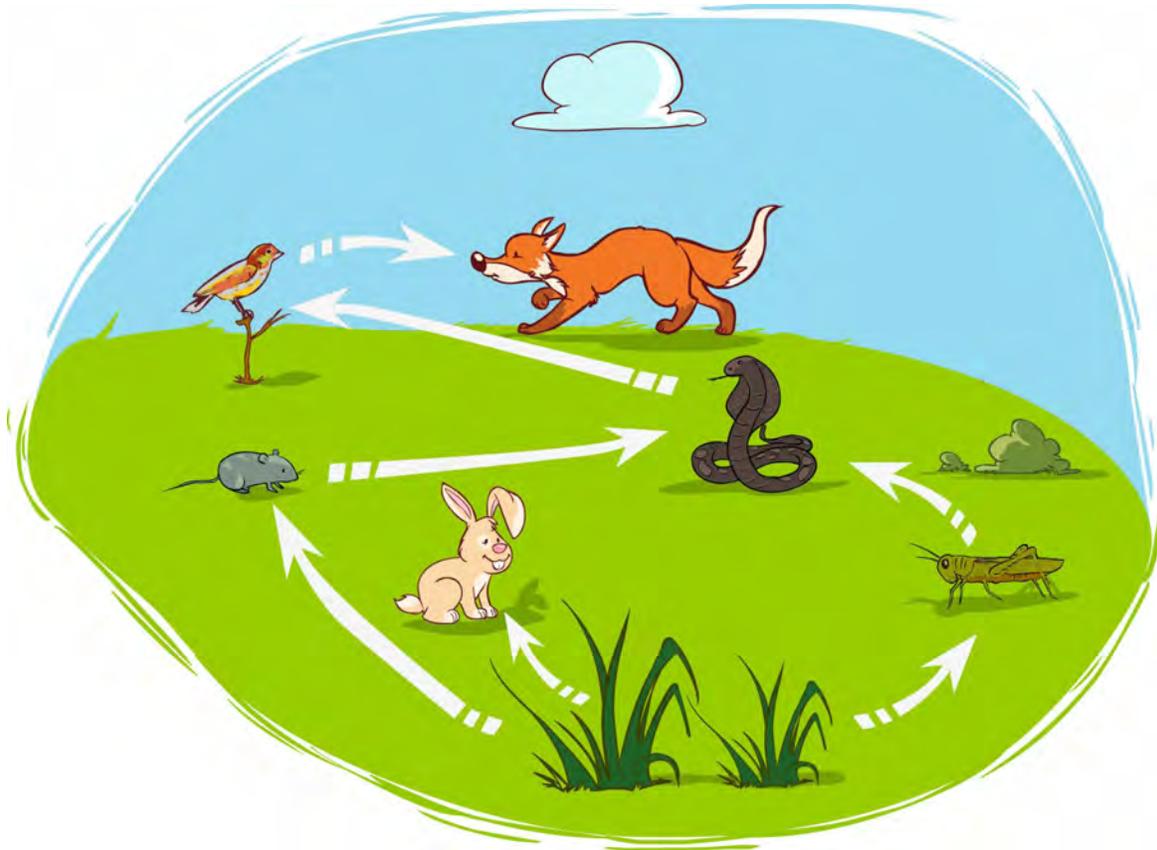
- Warm-up document
- Text: “Energy Flow in Ecosystems”

Procedure

- Have the warm-up document displayed as students enter class.
- Direct students to complete the warm-up activity.
- Have students share their responses for about 1 minute.

energy

The power to cause something to work, move, or grow



Answer the questions below.

1. How does this picture relate to the word **energy**?

2. Which organism do you think gets its **energy** from photosynthesis? How do you know?

Materials

Text: “Energy Flow in Ecosystems”

Before Reading

- Determine the grouping structure for text reading. Facilitate student movement into groups or pairs as needed.
- Introduce the reading.

Raise your hand if you ever played an instrument in your school band.

Raise your hand if you have ever played a position on a sports team.

If so, then you know that each instrument—or each position—has a role in the group.

Similar to that, in an ecosystem, each organism has a role in how energy moves through it. An organism’s energy role is determined by how it gets food and how it interacts with other organisms in the ecosystem. As you read, pay attention to how energy moves through an ecosystem.

As we read, we’ll stop periodically to answer questions and take notes about what we’ve read.

During Reading

- As needed, clarify vocabulary. Point out connections to the essential words where applicable.
- At each stopping point (including the final one), facilitate student note-taking in response to the provided questions.
- Provide corrective feedback if students misunderstand the material.

After Reading

- Facilitate student note-taking in response to the final questions.
- Have students write connections to any essential words in their notes.

Energy Flow in Ecosystems

(1)

What Are the Energy Roles in an Ecosystem?

Producers: **Energy** enters most **ecosystems** as sunlight. Some organisms, like plants and algae, capture the **energy** in sunlight and store it as chemical **energy** in food. These organisms use the sun's **energy** to turn water and carbon dioxide into sugars during photosynthesis. Organisms such as these, that can make their own food, are producers. Producers are the source of all the food in an **ecosystem**.

Consumers: Some members of an **ecosystem** cannot make their own food. An organism that obtains **energy** by feeding on other organisms is a consumer.

Consumers are classified by what they eat. Consumers that eat only plants are herbivores. Some familiar herbivores are caterpillars, rabbits, and deer. Consumers that eat only animals are carnivores. Wolves, walruses, and snakes are some examples of carnivores. Consumers that eat both plants and animals are omnivores. Crows, bears, and humans are omnivores.

Some carnivores are scavengers. A scavenger is a carnivore that feeds on the bodies of dead organisms. Scavengers include catfish and vultures.

Compare how producers and consumers interact with their environment to get energy.

(2)

Decomposers: If an **ecosystem** had only producers and consumers, the raw materials of life, such as carbon and nitrogen, would stay locked up in wastes and the bodies of dead organisms. However, there are organisms in **ecosystems** that prevent this from happening. Decomposers break down biotic wastes and dead organisms and return the raw materials to the **ecosystem**.

You can think of decomposers as nature's recyclers. While obtaining **energy** for their own needs, decomposers return simple molecules to the environment. These molecules can be used again by other organisms. Mushrooms, bacteria, and mold are common decomposers.

Where do decomposers get energy?

(3)

How Does Energy Move Through an Ecosystem?

As you have read, **energy** enters most **ecosystems** as sunlight and is converted into chemical **energy** stored in food by producers. This **energy** is transferred to the consumers that eat the producers and then to the consumers that eat them. **Energy** moves through an **ecosystem** when one organism eats another. This movement of **energy** can be shown as food chains, food webs, and **energy** pyramids.

Food Chains: One way to show how **energy** moves in an **ecosystem** is with a food chain. A food chain is a series of events in which one organism eats another and obtains **energy**. For example, a grasshopper gets **energy** from eating a plant. A mouse obtains **energy** from eating the grasshopper. An owl gets energy from eating the mouse.

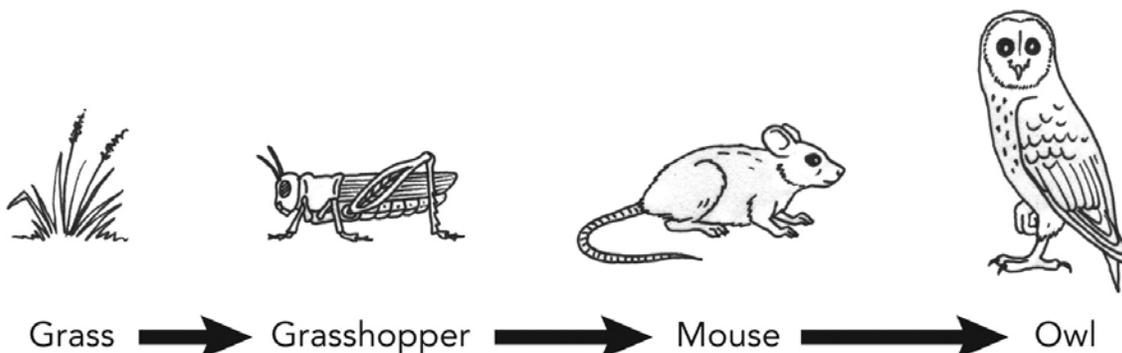


Image by Siyavula Education, www.thunderboltkids.co.za

Food Webs: A food chain shows only one possible path along which **energy** can move through an **ecosystem**. Most producers and consumers are part of many food chains. A more realistic way to show the flow of **energy** through an **ecosystem** is with a food web. A food web consists of many overlapping food chains in an **ecosystem**.

Just as food chains overlap and connect to form a food web, food webs interconnect as well. A gull might eat a fish from the ocean, but it might also eat a mouse at a landfill. The gull, then, is part of two food webs—an ocean food web and a land food web. All the world’s food webs interconnect in what can be thought of as a global food web.

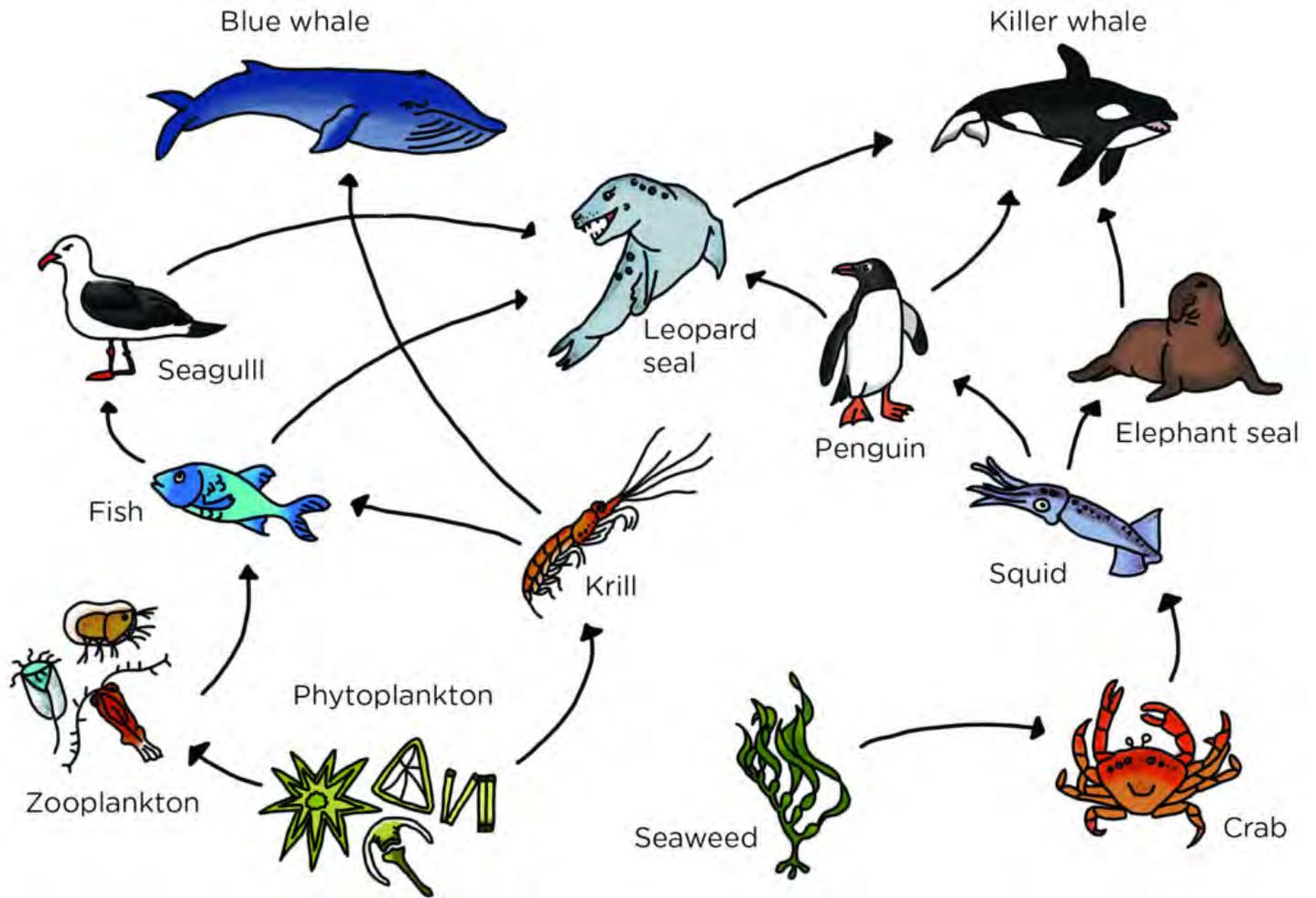


Image by Siyavula Education, www.thunderboltkids.co.za

How are food chains and food webs connected?

(3)

Energy Pyramids: When an organism in an **ecosystem** eats, it obtains **energy**. The organism uses some of this **energy** to move, grow, reproduce, and carry out other life activities. These activities produce heat, a form of **energy**, which is then released into the environment. When heat is released, the amount of **energy** that is available to the next consumer is reduced.

A model called an **energy** pyramid shows the amount of **energy** that moves from one feeding level to another in a food web. The most **energy** is available at the producer level of the pyramid. As **energy** moves up the pyramid, each level has less **energy** available than the level below. An **energy** pyramid gets its name from the shape of the model—wider at the base and narrower at the top.

Most of the **energy** at each level is converted to heat, so there is not enough **energy** to support many feeding levels in an **ecosystem**. The organisms at the higher feeding levels do not necessarily require less **energy** to live than the organisms at lower levels. Because so much **energy** is converted to heat at each level, the amount of **energy** available at the producer level limits the number of consumers that the **ecosystem** can support. As a result, there are usually fewer organisms at the highest level of a energy pyramid.

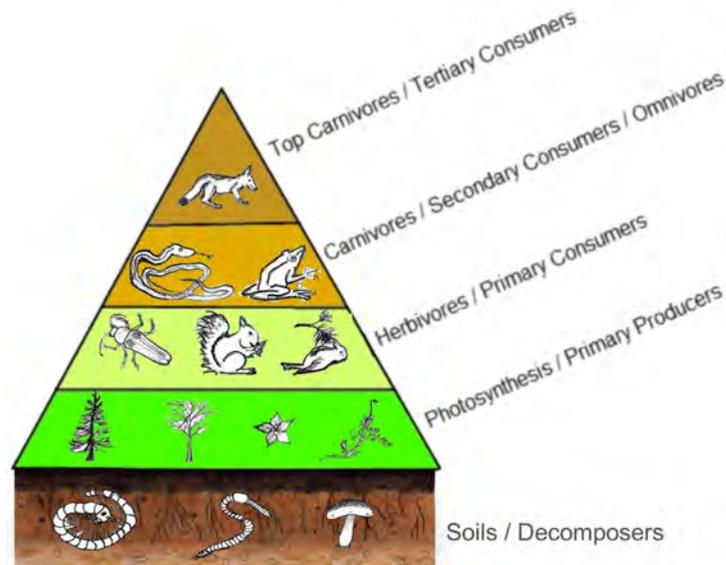


Image by Thompsma, www.wikimedia.org

Why are there fewer organisms at the top of an energy pyramid?

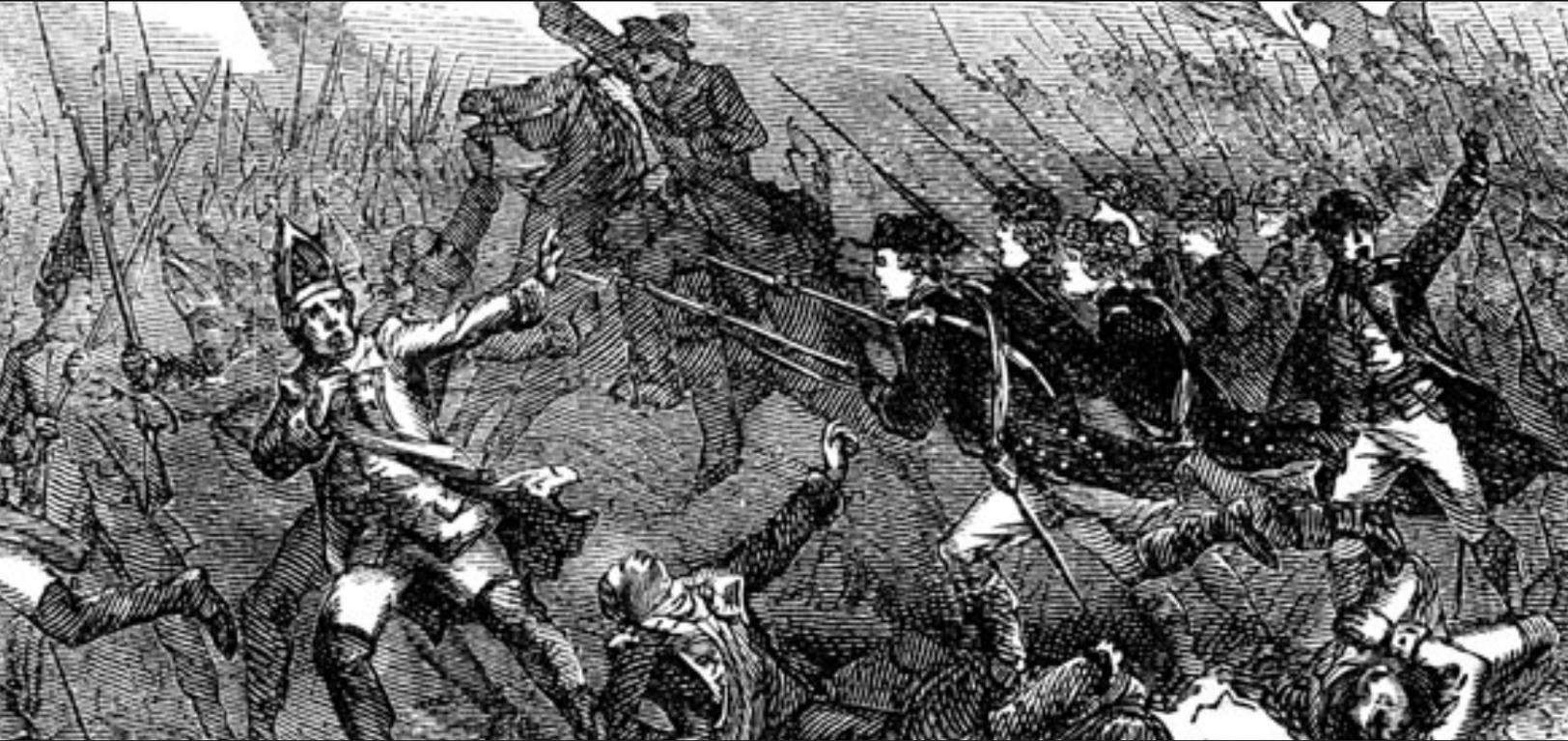
Adapted from Buckley, D., Miller, Z., Padilla, M., Thornton, K., & Wyssession, M. (2015). *Interactive science, Grade 7* (Vol. 1, pp. 375–378). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.



PROMOTING ADOLESCENTS'
COMPREHENSION OF TEXT

Grade 8

U.S. History Sample Lessons



The American Revolution

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The PACT and PACT Plus research teams from The University of Texas at Austin, Florida State University, and Texas A&M University developed these materials with funding from the Institute of Education Sciences (R305F100013) and Office of Special Education Programs (H326M150016).

The American Revolution

Lesson 1: Unit Introduction

Overview

Comprehension Question

What were the causes and effects of the American Revolution?

Materials

- Springboard image: “Join, or Die” political cartoon
- American Revolution essential words documents: *revolution*, *protest*, *natural rights*, *tyranny*, *liberty*

Comprehension Canopy Routine 7–10 minutes

Materials

Springboard image: “Join, or Die” political cartoon

Introduction and Prior Knowledge

In this unit, we will learn about the growing tensions between the colonists in America and their British rulers in America and England. We will see the sequence of events that led the colonists to declare independence, even though they knew it would lead to a war they might not win. Finally, we will learn about how the colonists won the Revolutionary War.

Springboard

- Introduce the springboard activity.

Political cartoons have been used for more than 250 years to make an argument, express an opinion, or present a point of view. In their early days, political cartoons were posted on walls or passed from person to person.

- Display the “Join, or Die” political cartoon.

This political cartoon, created by Benjamin Franklin, was the first one published in an American newspaper. It appeared in the “Pennsylvania Gazette” in May 1754. Let’s figure out its message.

What image do you see?

- Guide students to the answer: a snake cut into pieces.

Correct, you see a snake that is fragmented, or in pieces.

Notice that each fragment has an initial next to it. What do you think those initials mean?

- Guide students to the answer: the colonies—South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and N.E. for the New England colonies.

The image of the snake symbolizes the colonies.

In a political cartoon, words add meaning to the image. The words in this cartoon form the phrase, “Join or die.” Benjamin Franklin intended for that phrase to add meaning to the image of the snake.

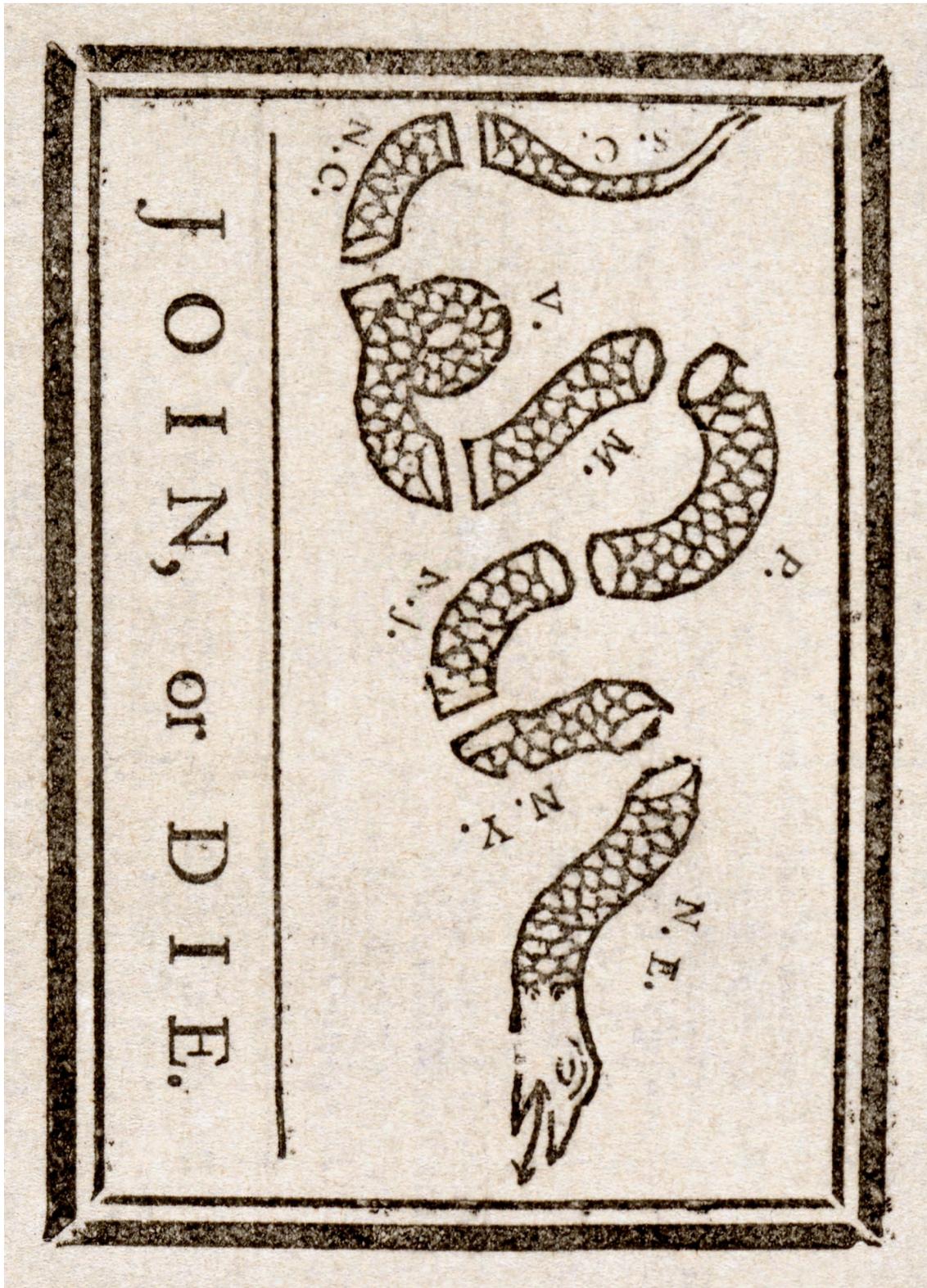
- Prompt students to begin a “turn and talk” activity.

Discuss with your partner the message that Benjamin Franklin wanted to convey in this cartoon.

Comprehension Question

State the comprehension question that will guide students' learning throughout the unit.

What were the causes and effects of the American Revolution?



Essential Words Introductory Routine

20–30 minutes

Materials

American Revolution essential words documents: *revolution, protest, natural rights, tyranny, liberty*

Procedure

- Use the essential words documents to introduce each essential word.
- Have students discuss the turn and talk questions in pairs or with the whole group.

revolution

An overthrow and replacement of a government by the people governed; drastic action or change



King George III



President Washington

Related Words: *overthrow, rebellion, uprising, revolt*

Example Usage:

The **revolution** was a struggle for power between the American colonists and Great Britain over who would rule the colonies.

Example: *The members of a school Spanish Club decide that they do not like the way their president has managed the club, so they hold a special election to choose a new president.*

Nonexample: *The president of the Spanish Club moves to a new school, and the club's vice president takes over as president.*

Turn and Talk:

What is one way that war is related to **revolution** and one way that war is different from **revolution**?

protest

A formal expression of disapproval or disagreement



Related Words: *objection, formal complaint, dissension*

Example Usage:

The colonists **protested** many of Britain's policies by staging public demonstrations and boycotts.

Example: *A rally at the state capitol against increased taxes*

Nonexample: *A parade honoring volunteers*

Turn and Talk:

What are some ways you could organize a **protest** against a strict dress code in school?

natural rights

Rights that all people have



Related Words: *unalienable rights, natural law, human rights*

Example Usage:

Thomas Jefferson's belief in **natural rights** led him to justify declaring independence from England.

Example: *The right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness*

Nonexample: *The right to wear whatever you want to school*

Turn and Talk:

Do you believe that freedom of thought is a **natural right**?
What about freedom of speech? Why?

tyranny

An abuse of authority, especially by a government or ruler with total power



Related Words: *dictatorship, harsh treatment*

Example Usage:

In a 1761 court case to protest Britain's policies in America, James Otis declared, "Taxation without representation is **tyranny!**"

Example: *Searching a home without a search warrant*

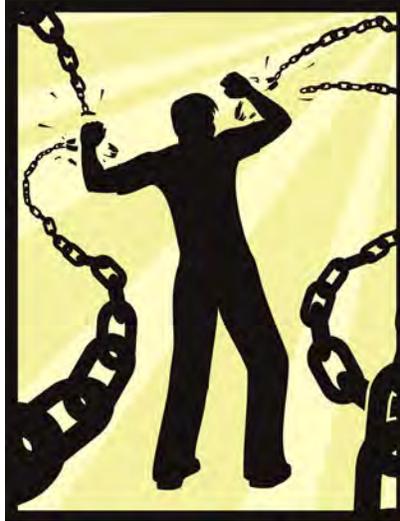
Nonexample: *Reduced speed limits in school zones*

Turn and Talk:

Do you believe that making students follow a dress code is **tyranny?**

liberty

A natural right to act freely



Related Words: *independence, freedom, liberation*

Example Usage:

“This fierce spirit of **liberty** is stronger in the English colonies probably than in any other people of the earth.”

— Edmund Burke, English politician, 1775

Example: *A prisoner of war who has just been released from prison*

Nonexample: *A child whose parents grounded her*

Turn and Talk:

What is one example of your **liberty**?

The American Revolution

Lesson 2

Overview

Comprehension Question

What were the causes and effects of the American Revolution?

Materials

- Warm-up document
- Text: “Letter From Benjamin Franklin”

Procedure

- Have the warm-up document displayed as students enter class.
- Direct students to complete the warm-up activity.
- Have students share their responses for about 1 minute.

protest

A formal expression of disapproval or disagreement

Read the following.



The Sons of Liberty in Boston organized the Boston Tea Party. The group was angry about the Tea Act, which taxed all the tea imported into the colonies. Colonists believed the Tea Act violated their rights as Englishmen to “no taxation without representation.” The British government, which included no one the colonists elected to represent their interests, passed the tax. On December 16, 1773, a group of colonists boarded ships and destroyed tea by throwing it overboard into Boston Harbor.

The British government responded in 1774 with the Intolerable Acts to punish the colonists. Colonists throughout the 13 colonies responded to these acts with anger. The crisis worsened, and the Revolutionary War began near Boston in 1775. By setting off this chain of events, the Boston Tea Party was a key cause of the American Revolution.

Complete the following sentences.

1. The Sons of Liberty organized the Boston Tea Party because (use the word **protest** in your answer):

2. One cause of the Boston Tea Party was:

3. One effect of the Boston Tea Party was:

Before Reading

- Determine the grouping structure for text reading. Facilitate student movement into groups or pairs as needed.
- Introduce the reading.

Think about policies in your home or school that you consider unfair. The colonists felt that many of the laws and taxes the British passed were unfair.

In today's reading, Benjamin Franklin expresses his concern about the relationship between Britain and the colonists.

As we read, we'll stop periodically to answer questions and take notes about what we've read.

During Reading

- As needed, clarify vocabulary. Point out connections to the essential words where applicable.
- At each stopping point (including the final one), facilitate student note-taking in response to the provided questions.
- Provide corrective feedback if students misunderstand the material.

After Reading

- Facilitate student note-taking in response to the final questions.
- Have students write connections to any essential words in their notes.

Letter From Benjamin Franklin

(1)

January 6, 1766

Sir,

I have attentively studied the paper you sent me, and I am of opinion that the measure it proposes, of a union of Great Britain with the colonies, is a wise one.

(2)

However, Britain holds back the colonies in every branch of commerce that she thinks interferes with her own; she drains the colonies, by her trade with them, of all the cash they can make by every art and industry in any part of the world; and thus keeps them always in her debt. While these circumstances continue, is it still necessary or wise to tax the colonies, in a Parliament wherein they have no representative? And are the colonists to be thought unreasonable and ungrateful if they oppose such taxes?

What is Benjamin Franklin's complaint?

(3)

How, they say, shall we show our loyalty to our gracious King, if our money is to be given by others, without asking our consent? And, if the Parliament has a right to take from us a penny for every pound, where is the line drawn, and what shall keep Parliament from demanding, whenever they please, for the rest of the pound?

(4)

Have we then anything that we can call our own? It is more than probable that bringing representatives from the colonies to sit and act as members of Parliament would in a little time remove these objections and difficulties and make the future government of the colonies easy; but, until some such thing is done, I do not believe that any taxes levied by Parliament will ever be collected, but such as must be stained with blood. I am sure the profit of such taxes will never be worth the expense of collecting them and that the respect and affection of the Americans to Britain will in the struggle be totally lost, perhaps never to be recovered.

(5)

In my own private judgment, I think an immediate repeal of the Stamp Act would be the best measure for this country. The repeal would fill them with joy and gratitude, re-establish their respect and veneration for Parliament, and restore at once their ancient and natural love for this country and their regard for everything that comes from it.

I am, with much esteem, your obliged friend,

B. Franklin

Adapted from Mott, F. L., & Jorgenson, C. E. (1936). *Benjamin Franklin: Representative selections, with introduction, bibliography, and notes*. Project Gutenberg eBook retrieved from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35508/35508-h/35508-h.htm>

What does Benjamin Franklin fear the new taxes will cause?

If the British government had listened to Benjamin Franklin, could war have been avoided? Why or why not?

The American Revolution

Lesson 3

Overview

Comprehension Question

What were the causes and effects of the American Revolution?

Materials

- Warm-up document
- Text: “Declaring Independence”

Procedure

- Have the warm-up document displayed as students enter class.
- Direct students to complete the warm-up activity.
- Have students share their responses for about 1 minute.

natural rights

Rights that all people have

revolution

An overthrow and replacement of a government by the people governed;
drastic action or change

Below are two quotations from philosopher John Locke, whose ideas were important to colonists who wanted a **revolution** to overthrow the British government and create a new government that better protected their rights.



John Locke's View on the Role of Government

Each man joins together with others to preserve their life, liberty, and property ... Government is for the preservation of every man's right and property, and by protecting man from the violence or injury of others, government is for the good of the people.

John Locke's View on Revolution

But whenever the legislators take away and destroy the **natural rights** of the people, or reduce them to slavery under absolute power, the government puts itself into a state of war with the people, who are no longer required to be obedient to that government ... It is no wonder that they will then rise up, and try to put power into hands which will protect their **natural rights**. This is why government was originally organized.

Complete the following sentences.

1. John Locke argues that the purpose of government is:
2. According to John Locke, the people should **revolt** when:

Before Reading

- Determine the grouping structure for text reading. Facilitate student movement into groups or pairs as needed.
- Introduce the reading.

The Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson, is considered one of the most important documents in the history of the United States. The following describes how it came about.

As we read, we'll stop periodically to answer questions and take notes about what we've read.

During Reading

- As needed, clarify vocabulary. Point out connections to the essential words where applicable.
- At each stopping point (including the final one), facilitate student note-taking in response to the provided questions.
- Provide corrective feedback if students misunderstand the material.

After Reading

- Facilitate student note-taking in response to the final questions.
- Have students write connections to any essential words in their notes.

Declaring Independence

(1)

I have a date for you to remember. Something happened on this day that changed America—it even changed the whole world. It was a day that King George III didn't think important. He would find out how wrong he was. The date is July 4, 1776. That was the day the members of the Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence. It was a year after the Battle of Bunker Hill, and finally, the Americans had made up their minds to be free of Great Britain.

(2)

But that wasn't why the world was changed. It was the words they used in that declaration that made all the difference.

(3)

The delegates believed that if they were going to vote for **independence**, they should have a good reason. They knew that when they signed the declaration, they would become traitors to England. They would each be hanged if England captured them. If they were to take that big a risk, they wanted to make it worthwhile. And it would be worthwhile if they could help create a free nation, a great nation, a nation run by its citizens.

(4)

That's why the members asked Thomas Jefferson, one of the members of the Congress, to write a paper—called a “declaration”—that would do the following:

- Tell their beliefs about good government
- Tell what King George had done wrong
- Announce that the colonies were now free and **independent**—no longer under British rule

Why were the words of the Declaration of Independence so important?

(5)

Some people thought it surprising that Thomas Jefferson was asked to write the declaration. Jefferson was one of the youngest members of the Continental Congress. He was a tall, shy redhead who loved to read, run, ride horseback, and play the violin. He had a reputation for writing well. John Adams said of him, “Though a silent member in Congress, he was so prompt, frank...and decisive upon committees and in conversation—not even Samuel Adams was more so—that he soon seized upon my heart.”

(6)

Jefferson wasn’t sure he could write a good declaration. But John Adams and Benjamin Franklin had faith in him. They talked Thomas Jefferson into trying. Adams told him, “You can write 10 times better than I can.”

(7)

Adams and Franklin were right. Thomas Jefferson knew just what to say, and he said it in a way that inspired people all over the world. The whole declaration is something to read and think about, but one part will ring in your ears with its greatness. Jefferson wrote:

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, **Liberty**, and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.*

(8)

Just what does *equal* mean? Are we all the same? Look around you. Of course we aren’t. Some of us are smarter than others, and some of us are better athletes, and some of us are better looking, and some are nicer. But none of that matters, said Jefferson. We are all entitled to **natural rights**: the right to live, the right to be free, the right to try to find the kind of life that will make us happy. And that is the whole reason for having governments, he said. Governments are not made to make kings happy. They are for the benefit of the people who are governed. Governments should have the “consent of the governed.” When lawmakers try to gain or give someone else absolute power over lives, **liberties**, and property of the people, lawmakers abuse the power the people had put into their hands. It is then the privilege of the people to establish a new group of lawmakers to provide for their safety and security.

What does the author mean when he writes, “Governments should have the consent of the governed”?

(9)

The Declaration of Independence primarily referred to the rights of white men. Other minorities such as women and African Americans used the Declaration of Independence to fight to win **liberty**. Jefferson said, “all men are created equal.” He didn’t mention women. Did he mean to include women? No one knows. Perhaps not. In the 18th century, very few people thought much about women’s rights. Women in America did not have the right to vote until the 20th century.

(10)

Did Thomas Jefferson mean to include black men when he said “all men”? Historians sometimes argue about that. He said that “nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free.” In the first draft of the declaration, he described slavery as a “cruel war against human nature.” Many congressmen agreed. John Adams spoke out strongly against slavery. So did Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Rush. But South Carolina and Georgia would not sign the declaration if it contained the antislavery section. So Jefferson’s antislavery words were taken out.

Adapted from Hakim, J. (1993). *A history of US: From colonies to country*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

How did the Declaration of Independence help the colonists win the Revolutionary War?

The American Revolution

Lesson 4

Overview

Comprehension Question

What were the causes and effects of the American Revolution?

Materials

- Warm-up document
- Text: “Letter to Governor Clinton From George Washington”

Procedure

- Have the warm-up document displayed as students enter class.
- Direct students to complete the warm-up activity.
- Have students share their responses for about 1 minute.

tyranny

An abuse of authority, especially by a government or ruler with total power

liberty

A natural right to act freely

During the Revolutionary War, between 1776 and 1783, Thomas Paine wrote several essays that together are called *The American Crisis*. These essays all show Paine's support for independence from British control. General Washington found Paine's first essay so inspiring that he ordered it be read to the troops in the Continental Army. Below is part of the essay that Washington found so inspiring.

THESE are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. **Tyranny**, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this comfort with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too easily, we value too lightly...it would be strange indeed if something as precious as **liberty** should not be highly rated.

Britain, with an army to enforce her **tyranny**, has declared that she has a right not only to tax, but to bind us in all cases whatsoever. If being bound in that manner is not slavery, then is there not such a thing as slavery upon earth.

Complete the sentences below.

1. From Paine's perspective, Britain is:

2. George Washington thought this essay would inspire his troops to fight for **liberty** because:

Materials

Text: “Letter to Governor Clinton From George Washington”

Before Reading

- Determine the grouping for text reading. Facilitate student movement into groups or pairs as needed.
- Introduce the reading.

Valley Forge was the site of the 1777–1778 winter camp of the Continental Army. Washington and his men suffered great physical hardships there, but they became a trained force capable of defeating the British Army.

Imagine being a soldier encamped in the cold, with tattered clothing, inadequate food and supplies, and with no help on its way. Would you be tempted to quit? Why might you stay? In this text, Washington describes the conditions at Valley Forge and the men camped there.

As we read, we’ll stop periodically to answer questions and take notes about what we’ve read.

During Reading

- As needed, clarify vocabulary. Point out connections to essential words where applicable.
- At each stopping point (including the final one), facilitate student note-taking in response to the provided questions.
- Provide corrective feedback if students misunderstand the material.

After Reading

- Facilitate student note-taking in response to the final questions.
- Have students write connections to any essential words in their notes.

Letter to Governor Clinton From George Washington

(1)

Headquarters, Valley Forge, February 16, 1778

Dear Sir:

I don't like to trouble you about this topic, which does not fall under your authority; but it is a subject that causes me more upset than I have felt since the beginning of the war. It loudly demands the most extreme energy of every person of weight and authority who is interested in our success. I mean the present dreadful situation of the army in need of supplies and our miserable future. It is more alarming than you can probably believe because to really understand, you would have to be here. For some days past, there has been starvation in camp. A part of the army has been a week without any kind of meat and the rest for 3 or 4 days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the outstanding patience and loyalty of these soldiers because their suffering has not caused general rebellion or for soldiers to run away. Strong symptoms of discontent have appeared, and nothing but the most active efforts everywhere can prevent a shocking disaster.

What about the character of his soldiers did Washington admire?

(2)

Our current sufferings are not all. There is no plan made for any acceptable help in the future. All the storehouses provided in the states of New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, and all the immediate additional supplies they seem capable of providing, will not be enough to support the army more than a month longer, if that. Very little has been done to the eastward and as little to the southward. We cannot expect much from them. When the supplies are exhausted, what a terrible crisis will follow, unless all the energy of the continent is used to provide a solution in time.

What might be the “terrible crisis” that George Washington writes about?

(3)

Motivated by this thought, I am doing everything that I can possibly think of to prevent the fatal consequences we have so great a reason to fear. I am calling upon everyone who has a position of power or influence to help us. Because of your well-known enthusiasm, I expect you to do everything within your power. I am aware that you might be drained of resources since you have been so long at war. But, although you may not be able to contribute supplies to our relief, you can perhaps do something to help; and any assistance, however small, will be of great help at this important time. It will also help the army to stay together until something more permanent can be arranged. What methods you use is up to you; but if you can devise any means to get a quantity of cattle, or other kind of meat, for the use of this army, to be at camp in the course of a month, you will provide a really important service to the common cause.

How did the winter at Valley Forge help or hurt the colonists' effort to win the war?