Lesson Plan

One-Sentence Summaries

Book: *California's Redwood Forest*
Series: Natural Wonders of the World
Level: Navigator

Objective

To help students explore the way that human actions impact the natural environment (both positively and negatively) by focusing on and summarizing the way people have damaged and preserved the redwood forests of California.

Supplies

- *California's Redwood Forest*
- Whiteboard
- Paper and pencils

Before the Activity

Read through *California's Redwood Forest*, or assign it to students to read on their own. Write the following list on the whiteboard:

1. Write a one-sentence summary of what an old-growth forest is.
2. Write a one-sentence summary of what caused coast redwoods to become endangered.
3. Write a one-sentence summary of what people are doing to protect coast redwoods.
4. Write a one-sentence summary of the sidebar on page 28 ("Saving Luna").
5. Write a one-sentence summary of the sidebar on page 7 ("The World's Tallest Tree").

Activity

Coast redwoods are the world's tallest trees. Forests of coast redwoods once stretched across parts of California and Oregon in the western United States. Many of these trees have since been destroyed. However, people are hard at work to protect the trees that remain.

Have students turn to Chapter 4 ("The Future of the Forest") and read about the history of how humans have interacted with California's redwoods. Then ask students to write five one-sentence summaries, following the prompts on the whiteboard.

Give students a few minutes to write their summaries. Then ask the following questions:

- What is the difference between an old-growth forest and a second-growth forest? (Answer: The trees in an old-growth forest are much older and much taller because they have had more time to grow.)
- If you were a scientist, would you focus on protecting the old-growth forest or the second-growth forest? (Possible answers: Protecting the old-growth forest is more important because those trees are the oldest; protecting the second-growth forest could help replace some of the trees that have been lost.)
- Why do you think the settlers and logging companies chose to cut down so many redwoods? (Possible answers: They were more focused on earning money from lumber or farming than they were on protecting the natural resources; there seemed to be plenty of redwoods, so they were not worried about running out.)
- Why do you think people began working to protect the redwoods in the 1900s? (Possible answers: People began to realize that they might run out of redwoods; people began thinking more about preserving the trees for future generations to see.)
- What are scientists doing to protect Hyperion? (Answer: They are keeping its location secret.)
- What do you think scientists are afraid might happen to Hyperion? (Possible answers: Scientists might be afraid that a company would want to chop it down like the lumber company tried to do with Luna; scientists might be afraid that people would damage the tree by trying to climb it.)

Evaluation

After the group discussion, collect students' written answers. Use the attached answer key to give students one point for each accurate summary, for a total of 5 points.

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading informational texts standards, grade 4 (RI 4.2), the National Council for Social Studies Standard 3, and the National Science Education Standards' Content Standard F, grades K–4.

Answer Key

1. An old-growth forest is an area of ancient, tall trees that have grown for many years (p. 31).
2. Coast redwoods became rare when settlers chopped many of them down to build towns and logging companies cut down others to sell (p. 26).
3. Starting in 1902, people began setting aside parks, or areas of protected land, where people could not chop the trees down (p. 26).
4. To prevent a lumber company from chopping down a tree called Luna, Julia Hill sat in its branches for two years (p. 28).
5. After measuring Hyperion, the tallest tree in the world, scientists worked to protect it by keeping its location inside Redwood National Park a secret (p. 7).