

Lesson Plan

Illustrating Nature

Series: Natural Wonders of North America

Level: Beacon

Objective

To have students create a brochure that describes key details about a natural wonder in North America.

Supplies

- One or more books in the Natural Wonders of North America series
- Whiteboard
- Paper
- Pencils, pens, colored pencils, or markers

Before the Activity

Write the following bullet points on the whiteboard:

- How It Formed
- Land and Wildlife
- Changes
- Conservation

Activity

The Natural Wonders of North America series highlights some of the natural features that make the continent's landscape beautiful and unique. Each book highlights one mountain range, body of water, or other natural feature. It describes when and how this feature formed, the wildlife and landforms the area is known for, and the ways the feature has changed over time. Some of these changes include threats that harm the area's plants or animals. But the books also describe ways people are working to protect areas and the creatures that live in them. This work is called conservation. It helps keep land and water safe for people, plants, and animals.

Have each student choose one natural wonder they'd like to learn about. Students should read the book about this wonder. As they read, students should take notes. They should look for facts about the four topics listed on the whiteboard.

Next, show students how to fold a paper into thirds to create a brochure. Students should write the name of their book on the front cover of the brochure. Then, they should fill the

inside panels with details about the wonder. They should use the four categories from the whiteboard, using one panel to give details about each topic. Students can use both text and images to present this information. For example, a brochure about the Appalachian Mountains might include a timeline of events in the How It Formed panel. The Land and Wildlife panel might have a few sentences about each of the different habitats in the area. Or it might include drawings of well-known species. The Changes panel could describe how mining has damaged the mountains. And the Conservation panel could list some of the national parks in the area.

Give students time to complete their brochures. Then have students pair up with a person who chose a different wonder. Have each student present their brochure to their partner. They can show the text and/or images they included on each panel. And they can explain why they chose that information.

Evaluation

Collect each student's brochure at the end of class and use the following system to give each student up to 10 points:

- 1 point for following the four-panel brochure format
- 1 point for each panel's information that is accurate
- 1 point for each panel's information that is a good fit for the topic
- 1 point for using good spelling and grammar

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational text, grade 4 (RI 4.1), and writing standards, grade 4 (W 4.2, 4.8), and the National Council for Social Studies standard 3.