

The Ancient Tree Hunt

KS3 Geography

ENVIRONMENTAL INTERACTION

TEACHERS NOTES

This lesson examines Environmental Interaction. Your pupils will take part in a role play based on whether or not to fell ancient trees for a new skateboard park.

Aims:

- To enable pupils to appreciate that local planning decisions are often based on compromises – you cannot please everyone
- To enable pupils to learn actively through group work

Starter

Project the picture of the tree house built by protestors. Encourage the pupils to ask questions about the photo. You could then give them the **5 W's** ie **why, where, who, what, when**. (This was 1996 at the Newbury By-pass when a few dozen people lived up trees and chained themselves to trees to try to stop the Newbury by – pass being built through woodland. They failed but caused a big stir. Some pupils may remember Lisa on The Simpsons climbing a tree to save it).

The following website also gives information about woods (some of them in Wales) which are under threat:

<http://www.woodsunderthreat.info/>

Role Play

Construct groups and give each a role play card which gives basic information about each role. Encourage them to plan for this and wear/have something that exemplifies the role eg a skateboard or skateboard hat, a clip board, woodland trust badge, political party badge, “farmers hat”, etc

De-role

Don't forget that it is important to get the pupils out of role before they leave the lesson. If they get really enthusiastic then the discussion/argument/role might carry over after the lesson!!

Skills – Understanding places, environments and processes

2. explain the causes and effects of physical and human processes and how the processes interrelate
3. explain how and why places and environments change and identify trends and future implications

Skills – Communicating

1. develop opinions and understand that people have different values, attitudes and points of view on geographical issues
2. assess bias and reliability of geographical evidence to weigh arguments, make decisions and solve problems
3. communicate findings, ideas and information using geographical terminology, maps, visual images, a range of graphical techniques and ICT

Range

- study threatened environments: characteristics of, and possibilities for, their sustainable development
- study tomorrow's citizens: issues in Wales and the wider world of living sustainably and the responsibilities of being a global citizen
- ask and answer the questions

Plenary/Homework

- Ask pupils to do a plan of their own protestor's tree house
- Write a summary of what your planning decision would have been and explain it.
- Do a continuum to see if their opinions have changed over the 3 lessons.

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Developing debate:

There is an opportunity for some roles to have differing views. Try to encourage the pupils to explore differing viewpoints to help show that decisions are not easy to make.

Some parents should be for the park and some against it. The compromise for the AM could be restricted times of opening or a wardened site. Some residents may be for the park but against big competitions for fear of too much noise, traffic and vandalism. You could use the local Green councillor to illustrate local politics – perhaps they start up a campaign in the local paper to try and build up support – and this works especially with the vandalism of the previous park. You could add a farmer's wife who does NOT want the trees removed because she knows that birds who live there keep down the insects that affect their crops

Other issues you could build into this scenario are:

An access road/track to the site

Who is paying for it? – local tax, lottery grant....

Will the community be a more pleasant place with the park or a less pleasant place without the trees?

Role Play – Should we build a skateboard park?

Your pupils will undertake a role play about whether or not to fell trees in a small wood for a skateboard park.

The roles are:

Teenagers

Assembly Member (AM)

Local Councillor

Farmer

Woodland Trust

Residents Association

Parents of skateboarders



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These sheets have been designed to be shared. Feel free to photocopy and provide to colleagues. The Woodland Trust is the UK's leading woodland conservation charity dedicated to the protection of our native woodland heritage. www.woodlandtrust.org.uk www.AncientTreeHunt.org.uk

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STUDENT ROLE PLAY CARDS (photocopy onto card and cut out)

Should we build a skateboard park?

You will undertake a role play about whether or not to fell trees in a small wood for a skateboard park.

Teenagers:

I like skateboarding and want to develop my skills. The nearest skateboard park is 5 miles away and I have to rely on my parents to take me and my friends. My parents are not always free so I sometimes use streets and pavements near my home. With a skatepark we could have competitions and invite touring teams for exhibitions

Woodland Trust Representatives:

We want the local council to look for another site. The trees are healthy and too valuable to cut down. You would lose –

- a) protection for birds and insects
- b) a local amenity where people walk their dogs
- c) some plants that use up carbon dioxide
- d) a nice view.

Residents Association:

We say that the local youth can be a problem on paths with their skateboards. People pushing prams and older people have had problems getting out of the way and there have been a few accidents. The local wood is used for dog walking and a new skateboard park could cause a problem with dogs and some older people who like to use the woods for a walk may feel nervous.

Parents of skateboarders:

Some of us are for it because we won't have to drive to the existing park. Some of us are against because if our children skate on the paths nearby then we know where they are and can keep an eye out. If they go to new Park who will patrol it and keep a look out for our children?

Farmer:

I own the wood and will get money from the council as they will have to buy the land. I don't use the wood to earn money so I'm not interested in keeping the trees.

Local councillor

(member of the Green Party):

I want to keep the trees in the wood. I am in the minority on the council so have to think how I can get support from other members. I may try to get the local media on my side. The skateboard park we built 2 years ago was soon vandalised and is now no use.

Local AM (assembly member):

A number of local people have written to me about the wood. Some are for the skateboard park and some are against. My National party is keen to support "green issues" but I need local votes in the next election so I can keep my seat in the assembly. I might look for a compromise where all sides are reasonably happy.



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