

Natural Resources



Artist: Chad Gottuso • 8th Grade • Forest Middle School • Bedford County

NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural resources are materials that come directly from nature and are used to produce goods and services. Examples include trees, water, soil, coal and animals.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Definition/Background

Natural resources, such as land, are “gifts from nature.” They are present without human intervention. Producers use natural resources, human resources, and capital goods to make goods and services. All raw materials used in production originally came from natural resources. This sometimes creates confusion when classifying resources because raw materials are not necessarily a natural, human or capital resource. For example, lumber is not a natural resource because it does not come *directly* from nature; trees have been altered by man to form lumber. Trees are a natural resource, but lumber used to build a house is considered an intermediate good (a good produced and then “used up” in the process of producing another good or service.)

Teaching Ideas

1. Create a class book titled, *Natural Resources A-Z* by assigning students different letters of the alphabet to list and illustrate natural resources beginning with that specific letter.
2. Call out the names of natural resources. Instruct the students to raise one hand if the natural resource is a plant, two hands if it is a mineral and to quickly stand up/sit down if it is an animal. (Typical list: tree, cow, gold, silver, corn, coal, chicken, sheep, wheat, goat).
3. Play charades to act out natural resources and their uses. For example, a student might act out swimming to identify the natural resource of water.
4. List as many goods and services that can be created from a tree...in just three minutes!
5. Ask the students to debate the following statement, “Clean water is NOT free.”

Lessons & Resources

Print Lessons

Focus: Economics Grades K-2, Lesson 3: Gifts from Mother Nature (elementary)

Master Curriculum Guides in Economics: K-2, Lesson 7: Gifts from Nature (elementary)

Middle School World Geography: Focus on Economics, Lesson 1: What are Productive Resources? (middle)

Online Lessons

The Giving Tree (elementary)

http://www.ncee.net/resources/lessons/childrens_lit_sample.pdf

Water, Trees, Fish (elementary)

http://www.usmint.gov/kids/teachers/lessonPlans/50sq/2007/_k01-2.pdf

There is Something in the Water (middle)

<http://www.econedlink.org/lessons/index.cfm?lesson=EM308&page=teacher>

Literature

- **The Beeman** by Laurie Krebs. Barefoot Press, 2008. Honey, a **natural resource**, and the bees responsible for making it are described by a boy as he spends time with his Grandpa, the town beekeeper. [Grades K-3]
- **Hoot** by Carl Hiaasen. Random House, 2002. **Natural resources** and endangered species are the main concern of twelve-year-old Roy and his new friends as they attempt to save both at a proposed construction site. [Grades 4-7]

VIRGINIA COUNCIL ON ECONOMIC EDUCATION

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The Virginia Council on Economic Education, in cooperation with the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, is pleased to provide this poster featuring a winning entry from the 2007-2008 Color the Economic Concepts Contest.

Teachers in Grades K-8: Give your students the opportunity to illustrate their knowledge of economic concepts in a creative and fun way. They may be selected for a poster next year! Winning students also receive a \$50 U.S. Savings Bond.

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