



# Use Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax* to Explore Environmental Issues

**Author** Dennis Rees  
**Grade Level** 6-8  
**Duration** 2 class periods

**ELL Adaptation by** Rhonda Gonzalez

## National Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

#### Element 5: Environment and Society

- 14. How human actions modify the physical environment.
- 15. How physical systems affect human systems.
- 16. The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

## AZ Standards

### ELA

#### Reading

#### Key Ideas and Details

- 6.RI.1, 7.RI.1, and 8.RI.1 Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

#### Writing

#### Production and Distribution of Writing

- 6.W.4, 7.W.4 and 8.W.4
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

## Arizona Social Science Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

#### Examining human population and movement helps individuals understand past, present, and future conditions on Earth's surface.

- 6.G3.1 Analyze how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the distribution and movement of people, goods, and ideas.
- 6.G3.2 Analyze the influence of location, use of natural resources, catastrophic environmental events, and technological developments on human settlement and migration.
- 7.G3.3 Evaluate the influences of long-term, human-induced environmental change on spatial patterns and how it may cause conflict and promote cooperation.
- 8.G3.1 Evaluate the impact of economic, political, and social decisions that have caused conflict or promoted cooperation throughout time.
- Global interconnections and spatial patterns are a necessary part of geographic reasoning.**
- 6.G4.2 Describe how natural and human-made catastrophic events and economic activities in one place affect people living in nearby and distant places.
- 7.G4.4 Explain an issue in terms of its scale (local, regional, state, national, or global)
- 8G4.1 Take an active stance on a geographic issue reflecting its scale (local, regional, state, national, or global)

### ECONOMICS

#### By applying economic reasoning, individuals seek to understand the decisions of people, groups, and societies.

- 7.E2.1 and 8.E2.1 Explain how economic decisions affect the well-being of individuals, businesses, and society.
- Individuals and institutions are interdependent within market systems.**

## Use Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax*

6.E3.1 Describe the relationship between various costs and benefits of economic production.

SIOP Elements		
<b>Preparation</b> Adapting content Linking to background Linking to past learning Strategies used	<b>Scaffolding</b> Modeling Guided practice Independent practice <b>Comprehensive input</b>	<b>Grouping Option</b> <b>Whole class</b> <b>Small groups</b> <b>Partners</b> Independent
<b>Integrating Processes</b> Reading <b>Writing</b> Speaking <b>Listening</b>	<b>Application</b> Hands on Meaningful <b>Linked to objectives</b> <b>Promotes engagement</b>	<b>Assessment</b> <b>Individual</b> Group <b>Written</b> Oral

### Arizona ELP Standards

#### Grade 6-8

#### Basic

#### Listening and Reading

Standard 1 By the end of each language proficiency level, an English learner can construct meaning from oral presentations and literary and informational text through grade appropriate listening, reading, and viewing.

B-1: determine the central idea or theme and explain how they are supported by using some text evidence.

B-2: recount specific details and information in a variety of texts.

Standard 2 By the end of each language proficiency level, an English learner can determine the meaning of words and phrases in oral presentations and literary and informational text.

B-3: apply context clues, information from visual aids, reference materials, and a developing knowledge of grade-appropriate English morphology to determine meaning of unknown words.

#### Speaking and Writing

Standard 4 By the end of each language proficiency level, an English learner can construct grade appropriate oral and written claims and support them with reasoning and evidence.

B-1: construct a claim about a topic or text.

B-2: supply a reason that supports the opinion and is based on some textual evidence.

B-3 use grade appropriate words and phrases.

B-4: provide a concluding statement to an opinion.

## Overview

Literature is a rich source of geographic information and concepts. By using *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss, students will explore the concept of resource consumption and how people can make wiser use of resources.

## Purpose

In this lesson, students will analyze the actions of a fictional character on his environment and suggest possible ways that the character could have made a

less harmful impact on his environment. This lesson contains adaptations for diverse learners (ELLs).

## Key Vocabulary

**renewable resource** - a natural resource that the environment continues to supply or replace as it is used

**resource** - any useful material found in the environment

**nonrenewable resource** - a resource that cannot be replaced once it is used

## Use Dr. Seuss's The Lorax

**environment** - all of the surroundings and conditions that affect living things, such as water, soil, land and air

**deforestation** - the process of clearing land of forests or trees

**smog** - a mixture of dangerous smoke and fog in the air

### Materials

- One copy of *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss
- Optional: YouTube Video--The Lorax-Read Aloud Picture Book (18.18 min)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdWesdMfyd4>
- Vocabulary Cards
- Projection device
- Questions to Guide Your Listening worksheet
- Business Letter-- ELLs
- Scoring Guide for Letter

### Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Identify renewable and nonrenewable resources.
2. Analyze the impact of the certain actions on the environment.
3. Determine ways to lessen our impact on the environment.

### Procedures

*Prerequisite Knowledge: Students know the business letter format.*

*Prior to the Lesson: Determine if Option A or B best fits your students.*

#### SESSION ONE

1. Begin the lesson by explaining renewable and nonrenewable resources using the Vocabulary Cards. A **renewable resource** is one that nature can replace within a reasonable time, such as plants and animals. A **nonrenewable resource** is one that nature cannot replace within a reasonable time, such as metals and fossil fuels. Continue to explain the rest of the Vocabulary Cards. (**Scaffolding: Comprehensible input; Application: Linked to objectives**)
2. Distribute the Questions to Guide Your Listening worksheet. Partner ELLs with English proficient students. Instruct students to answer the questions as the book is read. (**Grouping Option: Partners, Whole class**)
3. Project and read *The Lorax* to the class or play the YouTube Video--The Lorax-Read Aloud Picture

Book (18.18 min).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdWesdMfyd4>

(**Integrating Processes: Listening, Writing**)

4. After reading, discuss the questions as a class.

#### SESSION TWO Option A

1. Review business letter format.

2. Distribute the Scoring Guide for the Letter and explain that they will be writing a business letter to the Onceler pointing out the problems he created and ways he could have avoided them. The letter will also analyze the scale of the problem. Was it a local, state, national or global issue to cut down all of the trees?

#### SESSION TWO Optional B

1. Have students work in groups to make objects needed in order to act out the story. Provide paper and markers for making nametags that can hang around necks or use stick-on nametags. You will need labels for the: Lorax, Onceler, Truffula Trees, Barbaloots, Swamee Swans and Humming Fish. You can make other labels for the Onceler's family members also. (**Grouping Option: Whole Class or Small Group; Application: Promotes Engagement**).

2. Ask one student to read the story and other classmates will act out the story. You can have the whole class involved in the play by choosing many trees, Barbaloots, swans, fish or Onceler family members as you need to include everyone.

(**Grouping Option: Whole Class, Small Group; Application: Promotes Engagement**).

3. Distribute the fill in the blank Business Letter and Vocabulary Cards to those who are not English proficient. Allow them to use the Vocabulary Cards to fill in the blanks. (**Assessment: Written, Individual**)

4. For English proficient students: review business letter format. Distribute the Scoring Guide for the Letter and explain that each student will be writing a business letter to the Onceler, pointing out the problems he created and ways he could have avoided them. The letter will also analyze the scale of the problem. Was it a local, state, national or global issue to cut down all of the trees?

### Assessment

#### Social Science and ELA

The business letters may be scored with the Scoring Guide for the Letter. Mastery will be considered 48 points or higher.

## Use Dr. Seuss's *The Lorax*

The Questions to Guide your Listening can also be graded. Mastery will be considered a score of 80% or higher.

### Extensions

Students could re-write *The Lorax* making the Onceler more environmentally correct.

Students could write a sequel where the Onceler undoes his damage.

Students could create their own "Seuss-like books." On the left side they could illustrate a cause (chopping down the trees) and on the right side illustrate the effect (no food for the animals). They could do this for three cause/effects in the book. For the last two pages have the Onceler come to Arizona. What does he do in our state?

### Sources

*The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss. ISBN 0394823370