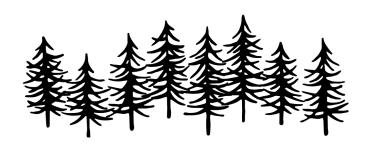# TIMBER!

Get Started with Reading

Grades: 3-5

Background: The virtual field trip to Central Michigan University's Museum of Cultural & Natural History is all about the lumber industry. The story of logging begins with forests.

Objective: Students will explore informational text about forests and practice their note-taking skills.

Source: Britannica Kids (reading) & CILC Maker Space (original resource

FORESTS
RESOURCE FROM BRITANNICA KID

Introduction

A large area filled with many trees is called a forest. Forests grow in almost every part of the world. The only places bare of forests are deserts, some prairies and mountaintops, and the North and South poles.

Types of forests

Two basic types of trees make up most forests: hardwoods and softwoods. Many forests contain either hardwoods or softwoods, but some forests have both types.

Maples and oaks are examples of hardwood trees. Hardwoods have wide leaves and grow fruits. They are often deciduous, meaning they drop their leaves every fall. However, some hardwoods, such as mahogany trees, keep their leaves all year. Hardwood forests grow in places with temperate (mild) or tropical (hot) weather.

Pines and redwoods are examples of softwood trees. Softwoods have cones and needles rather than fruits and wide leaves. Softwoods do not lose their needles each year. Many softwoods are known as evergreens because their needles remain green year-round. Softwood forests often grow near mountains and in cool regions.

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Thick forests that grow in wet parts of the world are called rainforests. Rainforests may contain hardwoods, softwoods, or both.

Life in the Forest

Every forest is a complex living system made up of thickly growing trees, bushes, vines, fungi, and other plants. Forests are also the homes of mammals, birds, insects, and many other animals. These living things all depend on each other to survive.

As a forest ages or changes, it affects all the living things in it. Diseases or insect attacks may weaken the trees and plants in a forest. A big fire can destroy the food and shelter that animals need to survive. Humans can also endanger forest plants and animals by chopping down too many trees.

Forest Products

Many important natural resources come from the world's forests. Forests provide food, wood, fuel, natural fibers, and other materials. These resources may be made into furniture, shelter, paper, clothing, medicines, and many other products.

To save natural forests people sometimes plant tree farms. As workers cut down the trees grown on these farms, they plant new trees to replace them.

Other Benefits of Forests

Forests are known as the lungs of the planet. This is because they supply a huge amount of Earth's oxygen, which animals need to breathe. The trees of a forest give off oxygen as part of a process called photosynthesis. Forest trees also help to protect soil from erosion. They block the forces of wind and water that wear away the land. In addition, forests offer a peaceful place for hiking, camping, bird-watching, and exploring nature.

Protecting Forests

For thousands of years people have been cutting down forests for wood and to make room for farms and cities. Now many of the world's forests are in danger of disappearing. Many people work to protect forests. For instance, the Chipko movement in India was started to protest the destruction of forests. People, mostly women from small villages, would form circles around the trees to prevent them from being cut down.

Forestry is the science of managing forests. People who work in forestry study the life cycles of trees and other forest plants. They also work to prevent the spread of tree diseases, keep trees safe from harmful insects, and control forest fires.

To save forests many governments also create national forests, state parks, and wilderness preserves. In these places, forests are left in their natural state for people to enjoy.

Name _____

Taking Notes

Directions: Use this organizer to take notes on the essay.

list of key words	words I need to define

summary of main points

timeline of key events

questions I have