

ADVOCACY, CONSERVATION, COMMUNITY, PLANNING, AND THE ENVIRONMENT: AN INTEGRATED SECONDARY VISUAL ARTS ACTIVITY

Introduction: The 1911 Weeks Act: Saving the Forests of the White Mountains



THOMAS COLE, "THE NOTCH OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS," 1839. COURTESY OF THE NH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

By 1900, the White Mountain forests of New Hampshire were disappearing at an alarming rate. What was once an area with vast forests and incredible natural scenery was becoming an area blighted by clear cuts and burned-over mountain slopes. Unregulated forestry practices in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries brought devastating results that impacted the environment and the landscape of the White Mountains. Tourism, logging, pulp mills, hotels, hikers, farmers, and railroads all competed for resources in the area. A growing number of advocates called for protection of the White Mountains and its forests. As forest devastation grew, all concerned with the long-term vitality of the White Mountains joined the call for change. What could be done to save the mountain forests? Conservationists called for the purchase of private lands to establish a protected national forest.

In the end, efforts of the forest advocates succeeded in creating a national movement, resulting in the passing of the 1911 Weeks Act. The White Mountains and its forests were saved. Today there is a wealth of photographs, personal accounts, and calls for action that demonstrate the efforts of the forest advocates, the original beauty of the White Mountains, and the negative effects of unsustainable practices on the environment, landscape, and local communities.

The accompanying activities have been designed to use the history, stories, photographs, and conservation efforts resulting in the 1911 Weeks Act as a catalyst for exploration, investigation, and discussion of the importance of forested and natural areas. Students will explore the history of the conservation and progressive movement and the connections between its messages and actions and their own community and personal feelings about the environment and nature. They will look at the debates and arguments between the forest advocates and industry and the role that sustainable forestry plays, benefiting community and industry.

The activity and essential questions have been designed to meet a range of ages and abilities. It is a foundation that may be modified and changed to meet the needs of educators in their classroom and community. The following sites contain further information and additional resources for this activity:

logginginlincoln.com

whitemountainhistory.org

plymouth.edu/go/WeeksExhibit

COMMUNITY PLANNING: DESIGNING MULTI-USE ENVIRONMENTS

Essential Questions

- Why are natural areas important to communities, the environment, and industry?
- How does one determine what area or site is important to save?
- What is the importance of sustainable and environmentally friendly development and industry?
- How does a community change when it loses its natural resources and environment or when it loses its industry?

Materials

(Materials and resources may be modified to meet the needs of students and teachers.)

Internet

Computer

Computer printer

Photographs from the community

Reference books on architecture and design

Pencil

Rulers

Paper

Scissors

Glue

Paint

Paint brushes

Paint trays

Water containers

Colored pencils

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Analyze the key issues presented by advocates and conservationists of the White Mountains that resulted in the 1911 Weeks Act in terms of context and impact.
- Identify and describe the ecological relationships among natural areas, communities, and industry.
- Visually communicate the multiple uses a natural area can have in a community by designing a mixed media land use plan.



"ALBANY, NH, 1915 BY R.C. LARRABEE. PASSACONAWAY AND CHOCORUA FROM EAST SIDE," PHOTOGRAPHS, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, NH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.



PATH OF THE SLIDE, FOLLOWING FOREST FIRES, SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE FORESTS COLLECTION, MILNE ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE.



TOWN OF ZEALAND PHOTOGRAPHS, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, NH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Description of Lesson

This lesson is an exploration and discussion of the impact of unregulated and unsustainable practices of industry and development on the environment and communities. What disappears from or comes to the landscape, environment, and community because of unchecked development and industrialization is at the core of this activity. The lesson centers on the conservation and advocacy movements that helped to bring the 1911 Weeks Act into being and uses it as the catalyst for exploration and discussion. Debates among conservationists, advocates, and industry, and photographic and written documentation of the effects of unsustainable logging and industry on the White Mountains from that period will be used to discuss and investigate permanent changes to and effects upon that environment, landscape, and its communities. The perceived benefits and disadvantages of industry and conservation upon community will be explored and discussed in connection to like situations found in the students' community. The exploration and discussion of benefits and disadvantages may focus on: aesthetics, environment/natural habitat, industry, recreation, community, and lifestyle.

From this investigation and discussion, students will look to their community to identify a site being lost due to rapid development or industrialization. They will discuss, explore, and investigate why that site is important to conserve personally, environmentally, and for their community and the possible impact the loss of it will have on them, their community, and the environment. In addition, students will investigate, explore, and discuss the loss of that development and its impact on the community and themselves. They will explore the possibilities of compromise through saving and managing the development alongside saving the identified natural area and what the results may look like.

Anticipated Length of the Lesson

** Class times may vary from school to school. The sequence may be modified to fit to a school's instructional schedule.*

Estimated class length: 45 minutes

Estimated length of lesson: 4 to 5 days

Sequence of Daily Lessons

The following is an outline of the possible sequence of procedure for the activity. This is a foundation that may be modified as needed by the instructor.

Day 1: Using information from the 1911 Weeks Act exhibition Web site, the teacher will introduce and discuss the motivations of the advocacy and conservation movements that worked to save the forests of the White Mountains. The class will discuss the impact of unregulated and unsustainable industry on the White Mountains as well as the varied interests of the groups that sought to protect the forests of the White Mountains. The importance of industry to the White Mountains and its communities during that period will be discussed. The teacher and students will use this discussion as a catalyst to identify a natural area in the students' community that is rapidly changing and transforming because of development and industrialization and discuss the changes, their reasons, benefits and disadvantages, and ways to stop the changes or to find a compromise between conservation and development.



"WOODSTOCK & THORNTON GORE RAILROAD," PHOTOGRAPHS, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, NH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Day 2: The teacher will refocus the class on the 1911 Weeks Act, its varied advocacy and conservationist groups, the effects of unregulated and unsustainable industry and logging on the forests of the White Mountains, and the areas the class identified in their community that are rapidly changing due to development and industry. The students will research the history of these areas and discuss their role in their community. The teacher will introduce the work of the Superstudio and the Chicago River Walk to the class and discuss the designs and planning that were done to accommodate both natural areas and development and how it may affect communities. The teacher will demonstrate the use of photographs as a basis to plan and design industry and development. Painting and collage will be used to create a design that shows a compromise between development and natural areas and expresses what the student feels is important to the community. Students will begin working on the development of their designs. They will design the look of the buildings and the layout and plan of the landscape.

Day 3: The teacher will refocus the students on the topic of the lesson and the design activity. The students will work independently on their planning designs.



"SCENE AT CAMP #12, SEPT. 1903," PHOTOGRAPHS, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, NH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Day 4: The teacher will refocus the students on the topic of the lesson and the design activity. The students will work independently on their planning designs. Students will be nearing completion of their designs.

Day 5: The teacher will refocus the students on the topic of the lesson and the design activity. The students will complete and then discuss their planning designs in class as a group focusing on the choices they made and why they feel they are important to them and the community.

** Modifications: The teacher may predetermine a local community area for the activity. An urban or suburban area or neighborhood may be substituted for a natural area within the community.*

Art History Component

Teacher selected images from 1911 Weeks Act Exhibition

Suggested Visual Art Resources

Superstudio (Adolfo Natalini, Cristiano Toraldo di Francia, Gian Piero Frassinelli, Roberto Magris, Alessandro Magris)

megastructure-reloaded.org/superstudio

designmuseum.org/design/superstudio

Chicago Riverwalk

explorechicago.org/city/en/things_see_do/attractions/tourism/chicago_riverwalk.html

** Additional materials and resources may be researched and added by the teacher.*

Assessment Plan

Teachers may assess students formally and informally and design those assessment strategies using this lesson as a foundation and tailor them to their needs based upon their classroom profiles.

Vocabulary

Advocacy

Conservation

Architecture

Urban planning

Community

Industry

Tourism

Visual literacy

Mixed media

Standards

Visual Arts Standards

Standard 1. Apply appropriate media, techniques, and processes.

Standard 2. Identify and apply the elements of visual art and principles of design.

Standard 3. Choose and evaluate a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.

Standard 4. Understanding the arts in relation to history and culture.

Standard 5. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate their own and others' artwork.

Standard 6. Make connections among the visual arts, other disciplines, and daily life.



"WHITE MOUNTAIN PATH, c. 1900," PHOTOGRAPHS, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS, NH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

New Hampshire Curriculum Frameworks

- SS - 3.10.6.8 - Employ photographs to classify areas as rural, suburban, and urban, and to identify similarities and differences in land use in those areas.
- SS - 3.11.6.2 - Identify and discuss the human geographic features of neighborhoods and places including population density, economic activities, forms of shelter, and modes of transportation and communication.
- SS - 3.11.6.4 - Discuss the attachments people have for a particular place and region as well as their sense of belonging in certain places and regions.
- SS - 3.13.10.4 - Evaluate, take, and defend positions concerning the ways changing population patterns can influence the environment and society.
- SS - 3.14.6.1 - Identify and discuss ways people depend upon, use, and alter the physical environment.
- SS - 3.15.10.1 - Evaluate sites within their community or region in order to identify the best location for a particular activity (for example, school, factory, shopping area, waste treatment plant).
- SS - 3.15.10.4 - Use the concept of sustainable development to analyze how different countries respond to changes in population and the needs of society.
- SS - 4.16.6.6 - Demonstrate an understanding that people, artifacts, and documents represent links to the past and that they are sources of data from which historical accounts are constructed.
- SS - 4.16.6.10 - Discuss the importance of individuals and groups that have made a difference in history, and the significance of character and actions for both good and ill.
- SS - 4.16.10.4 - Examine historical materials relating to a particular region, society, or theme; analyze change over time; and make logical inferences concerning cause and effect.
- SS - 4.16.10.6 - Develop and implement research strategies to investigate a given historical topic.
- SS - 4.16.10.11 - Use knowledge of the past and the processes of historical analysis to carry out historical research; make comparisons; develop and defend generalizations; draw and support conclusions; construct historical explanations, narratives, and accounts; solve problems; and make informed decisions.
- SC - 4.3.10.1 - Investigate how human activities, such as reducing the amount of forest cover and increasing the amount and variety of chemicals released into the atmosphere have changed the Earth's land, ocean, and atmosphere.
- SC - 4.3.10.3 - Describe possible consequences of reducing or eliminating some of the Earth's natural resources.



EDWARD HILL, "FRANCONIA NOTCH, WHITE MOUNTAINS—ECHO LAKE AND PROFILE HOUSE," 1887, NH HISTORICAL SOCIETY.