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A Lesson on Plants and Places by Cali Pohlman

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 2 hours

Lesson Keywords: Plants, Environment, Climate, Fourth Grade, Geography, Science, Language Arts

Lesson Description: This lesson is designed for students in a fourth grade class. Students will examine plants and the places that they grow through a passage reading. Students will use context clues to make inferences about the text. Students will use these inferences to respond to questions regarding the text. Students will use higher level of thinking to complete discussion questions and essay question. New vocabulary will be established after reading the given passage.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.3: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4: Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.4a: Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1b: Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2b: Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2d: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.4.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

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Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

Instructions: Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

Plants and Places

by

Content: Plants live in many different environments. Some live in the ocean. Some live in the desert. Plants are very important. Every environment needs plants. Animals need them. Many herbivores eat them. Many animals use them to make homes. Some animals make nests in plants. If there were no plants in those environments, the animals would be homeless.

When you see a plant you can tell a lot about its environment. If the plant has big leaves and flowers, that tells you where it lives. It lives in a warm environment. That plant needs warm sunny days to grow. It needs water, too. So that environment will be wet. Those are part of the climate. Climate is what the weather is all year. It is how warm or cold the place is in winter, spring, summer, and fall. Wind is part of climate, too.

Each state has a state flower. That state flower is a clue to the climate of that state. The state flower of Illinois is the violet. That is a small plant. It has little flowers. What is the climate of Illinois? We have hot summers. We have long cold winters. Plants start to grow here in spring. In summer most Illinois plants grow bigger. Then in fall they lose their flowers. Illinois is a Midwestern state. The magnolia could not live in a Midwestern state. It needs a different climate. If you look at the state flowers of Midwestern states you will see they have small flowers. The violet also is the state flower of Wisconsin.

Some states have really unique state flowers. You won't find their flowers in other states. The cactus is the state flower of Arizona. That is a state in the southwestern United States. The Saguaro Cactus lives in the desert. A desert is a climate that has less than 10 inches of rain or snow all year. Arizona has a dry, hot climate. The cactus can live there. It has adapted to that hot, dry climate. Birds live there, too. Some birds live in the Saguaro cactus. They make holes in the side of the cactus. The Saguaro cactus cannot live in Illinois or Florida. It fits the hot dry desert climate. Desert plants and animals exemplify how to adapt to a hot dry climate. They do not just survive. They thrive.

The magnolia is a plant that grows in a warm rainy climate. It has very big flowers. The artist Martin Heade painted pictures of magnolias when he lived in Florida. He thought they were beautiful flowers. People think his paintings are beautiful. You will find magnolias in Florida and other states of the Southeast United States. You will see them in Mississippi. In fact, the magnolia is the state flower of Mississippi. It is the state flower of Louisiana, too.

Task 1: Vocabulary

Instructions: Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

Q: 1 WordPhrase: Exemplify **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: The author of this passage states, "Desert plants and animals exemplify how to adapt to a hot dry climate.? What does the word "exemplify" mean in this sentence?

- A: To show or illustrate
- B: To become
- C: To endure
- D: To exclaim

Question: Which of the following sentences uses the word "exemplify" correctly?

- A: I exemplify, "What beautiful weather we are having today!"
- B: My mother will exemplify her worries by overthinking things.
- C: Dogs exemplify bad behavior when they chew their owners' shoes.
- D: The weather will exemplify as the storm grows stronger.

Q: 2 WordPhrase: Thrive **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: In this passage the author states that "[Desert plants and animals].... They do not just survive. They thrive.? In this sentence, what does the word "thrive" mean?

- A: Retain water
- B: Take over
- C: Die off
- D: Grow strong

Question: Which of the following sentences uses the word "thrive" correctly?

- A: Birds use their beaks to thrive open the hard shells of seeds.
- B: Thomas was able to thrive in school once he got glasses to help him see better.
- C: I thrive broccoli! It tastes awful!
- D: Snow will thrive in the summer heat.

Q: 3 WordPhrase: Climate **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: The passage states that, "Arizona has a dry, hot climate.? What does the word "climate" mean in this sentence?

- A: Location
- B: Weather condition
- C: Soil
- D: Rainfall

Question: Of the following sentences, which one shows the proper use of the word "climate?"

- A: Arizona does not get much climate each year, so it is very hot and dry.
- B: The climate of Washington is rainy and cold most of the year.
- C: Florida is located in the southeastern climate of the United States.
- D: The climate of some birds includes cactuses and other plants.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: Environment **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: The first sentence of the passages states: "Plants live in many different environments.? What does the word "environments" mean?

- A: Soils
- B: Forests
- C: Settings
- D: Pots

Question: Read the following sentences. Which sentence correctly uses the word "environment?"

- A: Husky dogs are suited for a cold, snowy environment.
- B: Birds make environments out of trees and plants.
- C: The environment states that it will be chilly and windy today.
- D: Environments eat only plants.

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Task 2: Forum Discussion

Instructions: Read the following questions carefully?and respond to each. Please post one reply for each question, with at least 4 sentences per response.?

Respond to ALL parts of the discussion if there are multiple questions.?

1 - Clues to the Climate of a State

In the passage, the author states, Each state has a state flower.?That state flower is a clue to the climate of?that state.

What are some clues for determining the type of climate a plant inhabits? Can the same plant?live in different climates? Why or why not?

2 - Plants are Important to Environments

Why does the author state that every environment needs plants.?

What do you think would happen if a plant species became extinct??

3 - Climate v.s Environment

Based on your interpretation of the reading, what is the difference between climate and environment??

4 - Magnolias Plants

In the last paragraph, we learn that magnolia?plants are the state flower of two southeastern states.?

Why did the author include this information?

Is is relative to the topic? Why or why not?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: Students, you are required to pick or imagine a specific climate. Describe the types of plants that would grow in this climate.

Think about these questions when writing your response: What do the plants look like? Are they big or small? What weather conditions do they need to survive? What animals might eat them? What animals might live in them? What would happen if the climate suddenly changed?

Please use a minimum of 200 words. Use vocabulary words and information provided in the passage to support your answers.

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