

Unit 3 Wilderness

1. Whole class instruction

Objective: To demonstrate why wilderness is important and how people can help to protect wild areas, and to return areas to the wild.



1.1. Go to Textbook pages 12-13

“Wild forests used to cover almost all of Britain. Today they cover just about two percent of the land.”

- ▶ Show students a map of Britain. Discuss how after the last ice age (around 13,000 years ago) wild forest covered almost all of Britain. Now cover up all but a tiny bit of the map (around two percent). The covered part is how much wild forest remains today. Now cover up 1/8th (around 12 percent) of the map. The uncovered part is all of the forest in Britain today – wild and plantation.

1.2. Go to Textbook pages 14-15

“It only takes a short time to destroy a forest, but it can take hundreds of years to grow a wild forest back.”

- ▶ Show students photos of a clearcut forest. Discuss methods used to cut down forests for farming and why these are so destructive. For example, when forests are cut down using slash and burn, all the plants are destroyed and animals are driven out. Discuss how the roots of the trees hold nutrients into the soil. Without the trees and plants, these nutrients wash away in the rain.
- ▶ Use the pictures on pages 14 and 15 of the textbook to discuss how farmland can be turned back into wilderness.

2a. Group exploration

2.1. NO TITLE GIVEN

- ▶ Students could choose a wild part of Britain and research the different animals and plants that live there, and the importance of the area. For example, Exmoor is home to wild orchids, the heath fritillary, one of the UK's rarest breeding butterflies, unusual moorland plants such as cranberry, peat and milkwort. Hedges and muddy ponds can also be miniature areas of wilderness. Students can read about muddy puddles in the Muddy Puddle Comprehension workbook.



Cross-curricular
with Victorians

Comprehension workbook John Muir

Muir's quotes about wilderness include:

"When we tug at a single thing in nature, we find it attached to the rest of the world."

"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

"All that sun shines on is beautiful, so long as it is wild."

"Between every two pine [trees] is a doorway to a new world."

"Going to the mountains is going home."

2b. Literacy activity

Go to Literacy>> John Muir

- ▶ John Muir was instrumental in making people aware of the beauty of their natural landscape and the need to protect and conserve that landscape. His work influenced the creation of America's extensive system of natural parks and wilderness areas, and the Sierra Club, which he founded, is today a major force for conservation in America. Muir wrote beautifully about the environment and helped people to not only care for the environment, but to love it as well.

3. Plenary session

- ▶ Review the differences between wild land and land that has been changed by people. Ask students why it is important to have some wilderness.

4. Further work/homework

- ▶ Ask students to plan a garden that is good for nature.