

Lesson Five

People Change the Landscape

Introduction

As we go through life, we discover a part of ourselves that has been left by those who have gone before us. The Earth is an excellent means of recording the changes that occur over time. To learn how people have helped to influence some of these changes, all one needs to do is take a close look at the world around her/him. Touching the past by examining the present can be a very enlightening experience for those who decide to probe the world in which they live. The world grew naturally before people arrived. People have changed the Earth to better meet their needs.

Shared Book Literature Source

Island Boy, Barbara Cooney.

Through simple text and captive illustrations, two-time Caldecott winner Barbara Cooney recalls a forgotten way of life – a life that is dedicated to family and community, rooted in the land called Earth. Through a little boy named Matthias the reader shares life, as this character found it, growing up on a small island out in the bay.

Other Materials Needed

- United States Discovery Map
- World Discovery Map
- Map Markers

Suggested Lesson

As part of a pre-reading activity, open the book to inside cover. Explain to the children that the story they are about to read is based on the experiences of a small boy on Tibbetts Island. Ask them to survey the map and see if they can locate this island on the map provided. Ask the children to define what an island is. Looking at other areas on the map, have the children locate other islands found on the map. Ask the children to list these islands on the chalkboard.

Ask the children to locate the compass rose found on the map. Discuss with the children the purpose for this and ask them to describe the location of some of the various islands listed on the chalkboard, using directions indicated by a compass rose. Discuss further with the children the terms bay, channel, and harbor. Ask the children to compare the different features of each.

Ask the children to think about life on an island and how one would go about setting up a home there. Encourage the children to consider all facets of life – survival, shelter, travel, pleasure/recreation, industry, etc. and predict what life might be like for someone living on an island.

In a shared book experience, read the story with the children. Remind the children of their predictions about life on an island. As you read the book, list the various activities. Place these activities into categories. For example, when Pa dug the well for water it was for the purpose of survival. When Pa cut the stone and the wood to make a house, it was for the purpose of providing shelter. Discuss with the children Pa's ability to take natural features of the island and turn them into people-made features. Compare the list of things Pa did to the list of student predictions.

Divide the class into three groups. Ask the children to draw a map depicting the island with all of its natural features, prior to the Tibbett family coming to live there. Ask a second group of children to draw a map depicting the island with all of its people-made features, noting the changes resulting from the Tibbett family moving to the island. Ask the remaining group of children to create a map key for the island map with the people-made features. ON the map key, ask the children to identify the natural resources from which the people-made features were derived. For example, in the map key a people-made feature such as a house would be correlated with a tree and stone.

As Pa prepared the land for his family, changes resulted in the way the island appeared. Divide the class into smaller groups. Ask the children to draw pictures that will represent some of the changes that resulted and then to sequence them accordingly.

Ask the children to refer to the Discovery U.S./World Map. Using the map marker, ask the children to locate various islands found on the map. As the children identify different islands, ask them to identify the direction it is from the last island circled.