

BENEFITS OF NATIVE LANDSCAPES

How do native landscapes benefit their ecosystems?



Approximate time needed:

65-85 minutes

Grade level:

High school (9-12)

Educator prep:

- Prepare Know/Wonder T-chart
- Print informational handouts, if using

Materials needed:

- Large sheet of paper or whiteboard (physical or [virtual](#))
- Printed informational handouts, if using (the first four handouts are from a US Bureau of Land Management [Native Plants Classroom Investigation Series](#))
 - [Reduce soil erosion](#)
 - [Maintain balance among organisms](#)
 - [Support pollinators](#)
 - [Diversify food supply](#)
 - [Reduce pollutants](#)
 - [Conserve water](#)
- Devices with internet access for each student, if using
- Six devices that can record video

Essential student background information or skills needed:

- Information from [Native Plants 101 lesson](#)

Objective:

- Students will be able to discuss the environmental benefits of native landscapes.

Background Info for Educator:

- This lesson suggests that students create TikTok videos to share what they have learned. Though it is meant to be a fun and engaging way to demonstrate understanding, there are downsides to using a social media app in the classroom. [This article](#) gives a brief overview of some pros and cons. It is up to the teacher to decide what is right for their classroom, and students could make TikTok-inspired videos that aren't posted online instead.
- If you are unfamiliar with the app, [here](#) is an article that explains what it is.

Activity Plan:

Introduction:

15 minutes

- Begin class with a Know/Wonder T-chart displayed for all to see.

- Ask students to reflect on what they know about native plants and record their answers on the Know side of the chart.
- Ask students to reflect on the questions they still have about native plants and record their questions on the Wonder side of the chart.
- Encourage students to try to answer each other's questions. If any questions remain at the end, make note of them and be sure to answer them in the next few class periods.

Learn by Making:

40-60 minutes

- Explain to students that they will get into groups and spend some time learning about a specific benefit of native landscapes. Then they will create a TikTok video to share what they have learned.
- Break students into six groups. [Here](#) are some fun ways to form groups. Each group will research a different benefit of native landscapes:
 - Reduce soil erosion
 - Maintain balance among organisms
 - Support pollinators
 - Diversify food supply
 - Reduce pollutants
 - Conserve water
- There are two research options:
 - For a short version of this activity, give each group an informational handout about their topic, linked in the **Materials needed** section above. They can take the information straight from the page to make their video.
 - If you have time and want students to do their own research, allow 20 minutes to learn more about their assigned topic.
- Allow 15 minutes to plan the video. Encourage students to answer these questions:
 - What is the subject?
 - What background information or context is necessary? Imagine you are hearing about this subject for the first time.
 - What are some specific examples of the benefits native landscapes offer to this subject? For example, which features of native plants help us conserve water?
- Allow 15 minutes to create the video.

Closing:

10 minutes

- Gather class back together and invite students to share their videos.

Potential Extensions

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Potential Challenges

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