



Creating a Forest Code of Conduct

Age range: 12 and up (junior, intermediate, senior)

Time: 60 to 120 minutes

Subjects: Civics, Science, Geography, World Issues

Resources: depends on product; may require large paper, scissors, old magazines, glue, colouring utensils.

Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the importance of forests and freshwater by drawing connections between their behaviour and its impact on the environment.

Hook: Why We Need Codes of Conduct



Have the class list several well-known codes of conduct, such as classroom, library and cafeteria rules, Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, religious codes of conduct, and personal ethics (what we do when no one is looking).

Ask one or two students to go to the chalkboard or paper easel. Have the class call out phrases for a Code of Conduct for Hallways (10 rules for hallway behaviour). Ask the class to explain why we need rules for our behaviour.

Discuss why we need rules for how we treat our valuable shared natural resources.

Procedure

This activity can be used as an introduction to the topic of forests and water. It can also be given as a unit wrap-up to students who already know quite a bit about the importance of forests, freshwater and the factors affecting them.

1

Introduce the activity by saying, "You have been hired to write a Code of Conduct by which humans will abide in order to protect our system of forests and freshwater."

In pairs or groups, ask the students to create a Code of Conduct for one of the following:

- all citizens of Earth,
- all Canadians,
- groups such as farmers, forestry companies, cottagers, shipping lines, factory owners, professional foresters, or visitors to provincial and national parks,
- people in your home or school,
- political leaders of different countries.

Students should include an introduction to the Code of Conduct they create. Each Code of Conduct should contain from 10 to 30 items (*see sample on the following page*).

2

Ask the students to present their Codes of Conduct. They should explain why each item is included and why items are ranked as they are. You may want to print out the code of ethics for a professional forester association and/or the Canadian Institute of Forestry at: www.cif-ifc.org/english/e-ethics.shtml

 **Extensions**

Send the Code of Conduct with a letter to the Prime Minister.

Send the Code of Conduct with a letter to the United Nations.

Make the Code of Conduct a centre-piece of a poster/collage, with water and forest images drawn or cut from magazines.

Place a household or school Code of Conduct on an 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper, along with images, to be posted in each student's home or in the school for everyone to read and remember.

Make the Code of Conduct part of a message for citizens of Earth, future Canadians, or political leaders who will be living 100 years from now.

Have students critique each other's Codes of Conduct before the final version is created.

Sample Code of Conduct for Sport Fishers of Great Slave Lake

As sports fishers who care about the environment and what we leave for future generations, we solemnly swear to:

- Use human powered craft (canoes, kayaks) or fish from the bank as much as possible, instead of using motorized craft.
- Avoid disruption of spawning beds.
- Participate in stream and river clean-up programs whenever possible.
- Avoid contact with the animals and birds who share our water resources.
- Plant trees and vegetation near shorelines, when appropriate, to discourage erosion and sedimentation.
- Assist in fighting invasive species by learning how you can make a difference and taking recommended actions.
- Plant trees back from shorelines, where appropriate, to add to our forests' capacity to filter water.
- Avoid using live bait.
- Fill gas tanks away from water sources.
- Keep noise to a minimum.
- Work to have regulations put in place that protect forests, wetlands and water.
- Protect and respect vegetation and trees near to water.
- Never pollute the water with garbage, soap or other substances.
- Respect fishing and safety regulations; catch and release carefully to ensure the health of fish populations.
- Conserve water at all times.
- Educate others about the Code of Conduct.
- Peacefully encourage others to respect the Code.

