



Lesson One: Plants, Wildlife, Recreation, Oh My!

Grade Level: 3rd Grade

Time: 60 minutes

Essential Question: How can we be stewards of Wyoming's lands to benefit current and future generations?

Objective: Students will identify plants, wildlife, and recreation in Wyoming.

Purpose: Students learn about public and private lands and understand how they are unique in Wyoming.

Required Materials/Resources:

- Land Ownership Map of Wyoming (Source 1)
- WOT Road Trip Map (Source 2)
- Chart paper
- *History of Public Lands in Wyoming* (one copy per student and one for the teacher) (Sources 3-5)
- Highlighters
- Title Cards - Plants, Wildlife, Recreation
- Picture Cards of plants, wildlife, and recreational activities in Wyoming (one per student, although if your class is small enough, students can have more than one card) (print front to back, flip on short edge)
- Student journals

Suggested Teacher Preparation:

- Prepare "Notice and Wonder" anchor chart.
- Divide students into small groups of no more than four or five students per group.
- Post the Title Cards around the room where all students can see them.

TEACHER NOTE:

Wyoming also contains lands known as State Trust Lands. These are lands granted to Wyoming and designated to generate revenue for public schools and other state institutions. While they are owned by the state, public access is limited depending on location and designated use. To avoid confusion, we have limited the definition of public lands in this unit to focus only on federal lands and state parks.

- Make copies Picture Cards and the Discussion Question Cards back to back.
- Read the *History of Public Lands in Wyoming* and review the Land Ownership Map of Wyoming and the WOT Road Trip Map.
- Become familiar with the diversity of Wyoming’s wildlife (deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, bison, etc.), plants (sagebrush, Indian paintbrush, etc.), and recreation (hunting, fishing, skiing, camping, etc.).
- Have notebooks or folders to use as student journals.
- Be able to display the prompt in step 7.

Standards:

Social Studies: SS5.5.1, SS5.5.2 (Practiced/Encountered)

ELA: 3.RI.1, 3.RI.7, 3.SL.1 (Practiced/Encountered)

Vocabulary:

- **Attributes** - a quality or feature of someone or something
- **Characteristic** - a feature or quality belonging typically to a person, place, or thing and serving to identify it
- **Plant** - a living thing that relies on photosynthesis
- **Public land** - land owned by a government; may or may not be accessible to the public
- **Private land** - land owned by a person or group and kept for their exclusive use; permission and access for any purpose must be granted by the owner
- **Recreation** - an activity that is undertaken for pleasure or relaxation
- **Unique** - being the only one of its kind; unlike anything else
- **Wildlife** - living things, especially mammals, birds, and fish that are neither human nor domesticated

Instructional Procedure/Steps:

1. Share with students the definition of public lands. Display the Land Ownership Map of Wyoming and the WOT Road Trip map, and ask the following questions:
 - **“What do you notice and wonder about these maps?”**
 - **“How are they similar?”**

- **“How are they different?”**
- **“Why might certain areas be public lands?”**
- **“What does the yellow on the map indicate?”**
- **“What does it mean that the land is privately owned?”**

Allow students to respond, and chart student responses. Keep and post this anchor chart to see if what students wonder about is answered later in the unit. Say:

“Wyoming has both national parks and national forests. They are located on public lands.” Pass out the *History of Public Lands in Wyoming* texts. Read it aloud. Pass out highlighters, and have students listen and highlight important facts and information while the text is read.

2. Place students into their small groups. Give students four to seven minutes and have them share out facts they highlighted in the text. One student starts by sharing a fact and then the next student continues on, so each student gets a turn. Students repeat the process until time is up.
3. When time has expired, provide students with the definition of unique, and say: **“We are now going to discuss three reasons why Wyoming lands are unique.”**
4. Pass out the picture cards of plants, wildlife, and recreation to students. Point out the title cards posted around the room and show students that the questions appear on the cards also. Say: **“Our classroom represents Wyoming lands. Each card represents one of the categories (plants, wildlife, or recreation) found on Wyoming’s lands.”**
5. Have students match their cards with the appropriate category then move to that area. Once there, students discuss with other students in their group what they notice about the cards in their category using the

discussion questions on the back of the cards.

6. When all groups have finished discussing the questions, have students return to their seats. Pick six students, two from each category, to share what they noticed/discussed when they were working in their groups. Allow students to add any wildlife, plants, or recreational activities they can think of that are unique to Wyoming and were not included on the picture cards. When students are finished sharing, say: **“These three categories make Wyoming unique because we have such a variety of examples in all of them. It does not mean that these plants, animals, and recreational opportunities don’t grow, live, or happen anywhere else. Wyoming is special and unique because we have all of them together. We are lucky to live in such a diverse place.”**



In this task, students will be engaged in the higher order thinking skill of synthesis by predicting possible outcomes if public lands went away.



Assessment: Pass out Student Journals. In their journals, have students copy and respond to the following prompt:

- **Wyoming’s land is unique because _____ . Another reason the land in Wyoming is unique is _____ . Since these attributes make Wyoming unique, what do you think might happen if the opportunity to enjoy them went away?**

Collect journals when students are finished. Student responses should highlight the variety of the wildlife, plants, and recreation that is available in Wyoming. Possible answers: *Wyoming’s public land is unique because I can be outdoors in more than half of my state. Another reason the land in Wyoming is unique is I can see many different kinds of wildlife when I am outdoors. I think if these attributes went away, Wyoming would not have variety anymore and would no longer be unique.*

Credit/Sources:

1. Wyoming Association of Conservation Districts. (2017, July 27). *Wyoming Land Ownership Map*. Cheyenne, Wyoming.
2. Travel Wyoming.com. (n.d.). *WOT Road Trip Map*. Retrieved September 7, 2018, from https://www.travelwyoming.com/sites/default/site-files/files/uploads/WOT_Road%20Trip%20Map%20FINAL%2C%204.19.17.pdf
3. Legends of America. (2003-present). *Wyoming Legends: Old West History of Wyoming*. Retrieved August 13, 2017, from <http://www.legendsofamerica.com/wy-timeline.html>
4. State of Wyoming. (2018). *Wyoming History*. Retrieved August 13, 2017, from <http://www.wyo.gov/about-wyoming/wyoming-history>
5. Wyoming Office of Tourism, Cameron Ross, Strategic Partnerships Senior Manager.