**The Lorax**

**Overview**

This activity, now with video presentation of the text, helps students explore the idea of sustainable development. This exploration takes place by watching the story characters’ behavior and the consequences of their behavior as foci for the discussion of the story. The knowledge gained from the characters is then expanded to include the concept of sustainable development. Students then identify and discuss real-life situations where sustainable development is practiced in their community.

**Objective**

Students will use inquiry skills to recognize issues surrounding the use and abuse of natural resources. They will then identify or create solutions to both fictional and real-life problems of natural resource depletion.

**Materials**

A copy of “The Lorax”, by Dr. Seuss. You can use the book, but the 25-minute video is highly recommended.

**Lesson**

*Engagement*

1. Discuss with students the concept natural resources. Where they come from, what we use them for and why they are important to us.

2. Once the concept of natural resources is understood, discuss the difference between renewable and nonrenewable natural resources. What do these important distinctions mean for the future?

*Exploration*

1. Explain to the students that they will be reading the book, or watching the video of “The Lorax”, by Dr. Seuss. Make sure they pay close attention to each character and how they use natural resources differently.

*Explanation*

1. Have the students break into small groups of 2 or 3 or in-depth discussion.

*Extension*

1. See attached discussion questions.

Lorax Students Discussion Questions

The Once-ler’s activities had far-reaching effects. List some of the consequences of his actions.

What could the Once-ler have done differently (be sure to address each of theeffects you listed above)? Could he have avoided all of the consequences?

Both the Lorax and the Once-ler called each other crazy. Who do you think was crazier, the Once-ler or the Lorax? Why?

The Lorax thought his views might be “old-fashioned” and the “progress progresses too fast”…what do you think?

Were all of the things the Once-ler did harmful? Or is there a need for some industry?

Is it important to restore the land so that the Humming Fish, Brown Barbaloots and Swomee Swans return? Why? How might you do this?

Natural resources like Truffula Trees are resources in nature that can

be used for different purposes. How did the Brown Barbaloots use the Truffula Trees? How were they used by the Once-ler?

Were Truffula trees a renewable resource? What happened?

“Sustainable development” is defined as meeting the needs of the present without reducing the ability of people to meet their needs in the future. Others have described it as “use it, but don’t abuse it, or you might lose it.” Did the Once-ler practice “sustainable development”? How or how not?

Can you think of an example in your community or even the United States in which we need to practice “sustainable development”? In your examples, are we doing a good job or a bad job at “using it without abusing it”? If not what could be done differently?