

Stumped Seedlings Game (Tree Identification)

Subject(s): Science

Grade Level: Intermediate-Secondary

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Time Required: 1-2 hour periods

Lesson Objectives: (1) Describe needles, leaves, cones, bark and life span of Idaho's trees.

(2) Identify trees of Idaho based on description of needles, leaves, cones, bark and life span.

(3) Understand the diversity of Idaho's trees and their characteristics

Materials Needed: (1) Tree Cards (3 x 5 card with names of chosen trees written on them). (2) Data Sheet "Trees of Idaho" or paper for note taking. (3) *Trees of Idaho* booklet available from Idaho Forest Products Commission (optional).

Procedure:

1. Introduction & Background Information:

Hold two different books up in front of the class. Ask the following questions and summarize/list responses from students.

What do we call these items? How are they similar? How are they different? How do we tell the difference between similar items? How would we tell the difference between types of trees?

Today we will be focusing on how to tell trees apart and what makes them different from each other.

Fill in data sheets or give notes on needles, leaves, cones, bark and life span of Idaho's trees. Discuss "Where to Find" and "Things to Know" for each tree. (Information found in *Trees of Idaho* booklet.) Choose number of trees to be included based on students' ability level and time available. Data could be given by teacher or gathered by students in pairs or groups using copies of the booklet, then reviewed by teacher.

2. "Stumped Seedlings" Activity:

-Pin or tape Tree Card on each student's back.

-Tell students that they are tiny seedlings, but don't yet know what type of tree they are. Their mission is to gather data about their features and identify their tree type so that they may live long enough to be part of the Old Growth Forest.

-Students must ask peers who have looked at their Tree Card yes/no questions only about tree features (I.e., Am I coniferous? Are my needles in bundles of 3?) Only one question can be asked for each peer. Peers must use data sheet of booklet to be sure they give only accurate answers to questions.

-When students know their tree names, they must ask a question for verification (i.e., Am I a ponderosa pine?) (Teacher may want to limit number of verification questions or require that they be answered only by the teacher to discourage random guessing.)

-Once a tree is identified, Tree Card is worn on the front of the shirt and the student is then a member of the Old Growth Forest. (Still stays available to answer questions for others.)

-Teacher decides when activity is over based on time limit or when most students have identified their trees.

3. Closure: Review information on trees by asking variations of the following question, filling in the blanks: "I'm thinking of a tree that has _____ needles in bundles, _____ inch cones and lives to be _____ years old?"

