

# A FOREST IS...

## Teacher Discussion Guide

### LEVELS

Grades 4-5

### SUBJECTS

Science  
Social Studies  
Math  
Language Arts  
Visual Arts

### CONCEPTS

Forests contain numerous habitats that support diverse populations of organisms.

Resource management helps societies meet the needs of a growing human population.

Ecosystems change over time through patterns of growth and succession

### SKILLS

Analyzing  
Discussing  
Data Gathering  
Identifying Relationships and Patterns  
Interpreting  
Observing  
Organizing Information  
Representing  
Researching

### OVERVIEW

A forest is more than a group of trees – it plays a vital role in the environment and provides valuable products used every day.

### DISCUSSION AND STUDY TOPICS

*Forest management practices help maintain trees and can be used in the context of many different areas of learning. Here are some suggestions:*

#### Science

- **Different forests, different environments.** What are the components of a healthy forest? What role do elements such as sun, water, soil and atmosphere play with forests? How do areas of the forest, such as young, old or stream side, differ from each other? Have students create a mural using pictures from magazines or their own drawings to show different parts of the forest. (*class presentation, research project, art project*)
- **Interview with a tree.** Ask students to write up an “interview” with a tree or write a story from a tree’s perspective. In the interview or story, the tree should reveal how different plants and animals depend on it and how they affect it. (*research project, essay topic*)
- **Landscapes.** Compare the school grounds with a local forest. How are they similar? How are they different? (*essay topic, class presentation, research project*)
- **Schoolyard safari.** Choose an area of your schoolyard to study and observe for an extended time. Ask students to keep a written journal, drawings or photographs of the area on a regular basis. How does the area change over time? How does the plant life change from season to season? Animal life? (*essay topic, class activity, art project, class presentation*)

#### Social Studies

- **The forest manager.** Discuss the different uses of a forest: harvesting timber for wood and paper products, wilderness preserves, recreation and other uses. Assign different costs and profits for these different activities. Tell students that they’ve been given the job of managing a piece of forestland donated to your community and their goal is to find the best balance between generating income, maintaining and enhancing plant and animal species, and visitor enjoyment. Have students map out a management plan for their “ideal” forest and calculate the cost or profit of each activity. (*class activity, class presentation, research project*)
- **People and forests.** Have students create a collage illustrating people’s dependence on forests. It can include pictures of forests, forest products, people using forests and forest products, and people working in forests. (*research project, art project, class presentation*)

*In addition to providing beauty and recreation, forests supply raw materials to help meet society’s needs for housing, paper, containers and thousands of other products used by consumers every day. As one of the country’s leading forest products providers, Georgia-Pacific Corporation has a long-term interest in and commitment to the health of our nation’s forests.*

*Educational in Nature® is a series of environmental education curriculum supplements designed to foster understanding and environmental awareness for your students.*

# A FOREST IS...

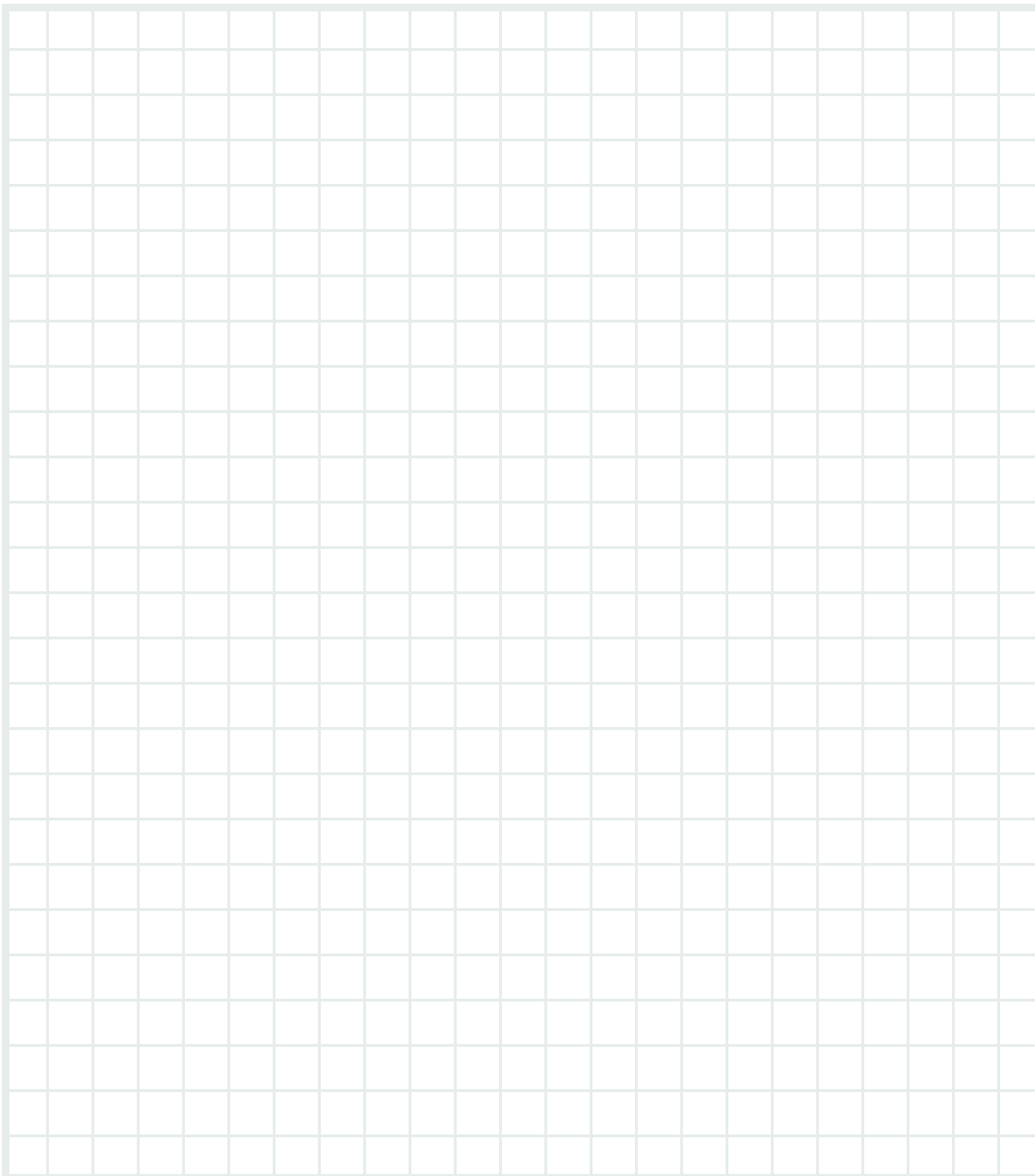
## Activity Sheet

### MAP AN OUTDOOR PLAN

On the grid below, create a “map” of a new outdoor plan for the area surrounding your school. The plan should provide plenty of recreation for your friends and improvements for the environment. See examples for how to depict different elements on your site.

Some or all of these elements should be in your plan:

- benches
- bird feeder
- grassy area
- gymnasium
- nature trail
- new trees
- parking lot
- playground equipment
- recycling bins
- school building
- shrubs
- trash cans
- wildflower patch



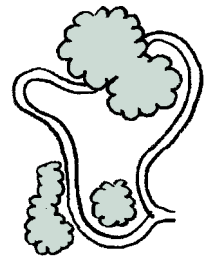
### Examples



**BUILDINGS**



**TREES**



**NATURE TRAIL**



**WILDFLOWER PATCH**



**IMPROVEMENTS**