



The Lorax

Age: Grades 1-7

Lesson Plan Three: Blue Trees

Objective: To compare and contrast environmental conflicts that can be found in fiction with real life environmental issues.

Background: The book *The Lorax* was published in 1971. It seems that the author, Dr. Seuss had a premonition of things to come very early on and he found a remarkable way to weave an environmentalist lesson into a children's book. Towards the end of his story he wrote: "Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."

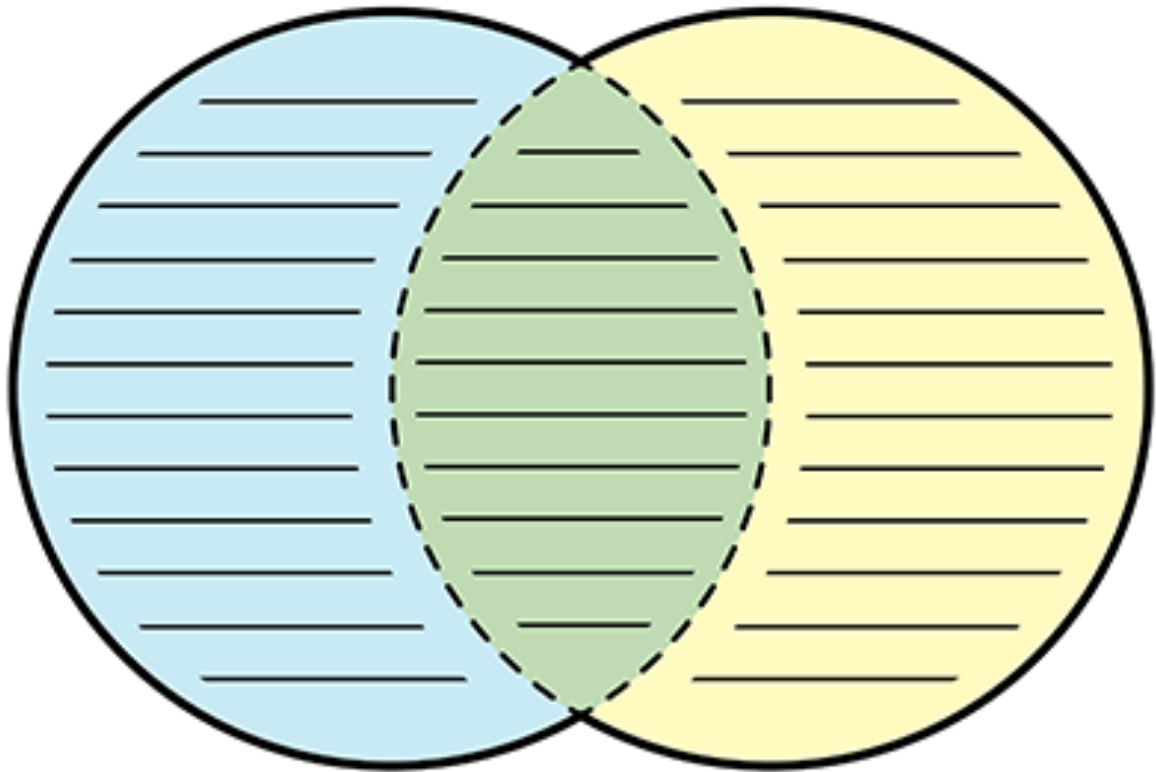
Activity: Read *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss. As a class, record the changes that take place in the environment in the book as time passes. Notice the changes from page to page as the story progresses. (If time allows students could screen the film *The Lorax*.)

Discussion: What do you think the story is trying to tell us. Could the outcome have been any different? Can you think of any issues in your community that might compare to what happened in "Thneedville". Maybe a water aquifer has become polluted or an increase in oil tanker traffic is threatening local waterways where you live. Maybe your community has experienced an environmental tragedy and if so, what were the effects of that incident. Make a Venn diagram noting the details of the book on one side and the details of the real life conflict on the other. Where the circles overlap, record the similarities between the events in the book and the events of the actual incident in your world.



The Lorax

Real Life
Connections



Challenge: Change the narrative of The Lorax. Can you arrive at a different ending – one where a solution to the problem can be found and disaster averted.