

Project Learning Tree

Name: Jordon Hahn

Environmental exchange box-(K-8) students fill a box with things from their environment and exchange it with another box from a different region.

Objective

- Students discover characteristics of local forested areas, which may include woodlands, urban forests, school yard trees, and/or tree farms, and compare these characteristics to the forested areas in another region.
- Gives students a chance to learn more about their own region and the things that are special about it, as well as another region and how it is different.

Before Lesson

- Find another group to exchange box
- Fill out form on line at www.plt.org or mail it in - Project learning tree will find a match for you
- Allow at least 4 weeks for a match

Activities

- once you have the name and address of your exchange partner tell students they are going to exchange environment with students in another region!
- The people who will receive our box will not know much about our region so we have to fill our box with helpful clues as to what our environment is like.
- Have students brainstorm as a group what kinds of items they might want to fill our box with
- Divide up the responsibilities into researching, collecting, and preparing materials
- **The box may include:**
 - Student written descriptions
 - Collage of pictures from a local ecosystem (river, coolie, prairie, downtown, housing development, a picture of Bismarck from an aerial view, etc.)
 - Drawings of local trees, plants, and animals
 - A video of local sounds and sights
 - Stories of student's favorite things to do and places to go (parks, boating on the river, baseball field, snowmobiling, sledding hill, ect)
 - Descriptions and pictures of local cultural events
 - Natural objects (leaves, nuts, cones, pressed flowers, rocks)

Waiting for box to arrive

- Ask students what they know about the region they will be receiving their box from
- Can they name major cities, landmarks, or other features, what do they think climate is like,
- Record guesses and answers

When box arrives

- Open box together
- Lay out everything that is in it

- Let them examine all its contents
- Have students begin to compare and contrast their region to the one they have exchanged with
- Have all students write and send thank you notes back to them

Interdisciplinary or Cross-Curricular Connections

- Have students create Venn Diagram about similarities and differences
- Have students research what benefits they would have from moving to the new area or staying in their region, and present findings to the class
- Have students write and draw pictures of what they think the exchange box's region looks like
- Have them write creative stories about an adventure they might have in the new region
- Have students draw, research and write about their ideal community, what it would look like, and why people would choose to live there
- Start pen pals with the class asking any questions about their region.

Artifacts, Books, etc. Related to Lesson

- *A Walk in the Deciduous Forest* By Rebecca L. Johnson
- *A Walk in the Rain Forest* By Rebecca L. Johnson
- *A Walk in the Boreal Forest* By Rebecca L. Johnson
- *A Walk in the Tundra* By Rebecca L. Johnson
- *A Walk in the Desert* By Rebecca L. Johnson