



Drawing Succession

Purpose:

- In this activity, the learner will draw the successional process along a timeline, labeling the five stages of secondary succession, and describe the reasons for the change.

Time Required: 45 minutes – 1 hour

Appropriate grades: 5th-9th

NGSS and Common Core Standards:

MS-LS2-2: Construct an explanation that predicts patterns of interactions among organisms across multiple ecosystems.

Objectives:

- Students will individually demonstrate the process of secondary forest succession by sketching the five stages of succession correctly.
- Students will predict the changes in forest succession based on two different disturbances by correctly naming the new successional stage in group discussion.

Materials:

- Forest Succession Timeline Diagram (provided)
- Timeline Template - make copies for students (provided)
- Colored Pencils, Markers (not provided)

Activity:

Introduction	Begin this activity with an introductory class discussion. Ask students, “What do you think succession means?” and “What does forest succession mean?” After a few answers, define forest succession and its importance. (Example: Forests are constantly changing due to disturbances, such as fire.)
Body	<p>Primary Succession:</p> <p>After the short discussion, pass out colored pencils and timeline templates to students (2 per student). Tell students you will all be sketching the stages of forest succession together.</p> <p>Introduce students to primary succession and its stages. Sketch each stage on the board and have them follow along.</p>



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	<p>Secondary Succession: Once the primary successional stages are complete, inform students of a disturbance that occurred in the forest they just sketched. (High intensity fire, landslide, etc.) Introduce secondary succession to students and ask how it differs from primary succession. Have students use a new timeline to sketch the succession stages. Inform students they will be sketching what they think each stage will look like. Discuss each stage with students sharing descriptive information of each stage and local species that can be found at each stage. (see Background Information and Forest Succession Timeline Diagram) After each stage, have students hold up and display their sketches.</p>
Closure	<p>Once all of the stages have been sketched and discussed, hold a closing discussion with students. Review the stages of succession and ask students questions about what might happen to a forest during at least two different disturbances (low-intensity fire, high winds, insects, etc.).</p>

Extensions:

- During closing discussion you can ask about the effects and change in stages of more than two disturbances. Some disturbances may be less detrimental to a forest, and may only eliminate certain species of a forest.
- Human disturbance could also be included into this lesson, such as different timber harvesting methods (selective thinning, clear-cutting, etc.)
- This activity is an excellent introduction for Activity #3 Succession and Habitat Diversity.



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