
Fire Station



Purpose:

- This activity is an introductory lesson for a unit on fire ecology. In this activity, students will be introduced to sizes and locations of fires, with the main focus on place-based fires in the Cascade Siskiyou Bioregion. Students will explore whether or not fires are good or bad for the region. This activity is meant to engage students by showing them interesting items that represent concepts in fire ecology and stimulate their own questions on the topic.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Discuss fire interactions and relationships with ecosystems.
- Prepare an explanation or drawing for each station and present their findings about fires effect on ecosystems to the class.

Materials:

- Fire-scarred tree cookies (5)
- Open and closed knobcone pine cones
- Ponderosa pine bark samples
- Low-intensity fire photo and high intensity fire photo (located in brown folder)
- Biscuit Wildfire and Quartz fire maps (located in brown folder)
- Use of Fire in the Landscape interpretive cards (from “Humans and Fire” lesson)
- Urban-Wildland Interface poster (rolled up in kit bin)
- Laminated Smokey Bear poster (located in brown folder)
- Laminated Fire Station Labels (8) (located in brown folder)
- Fire Stations worksheet (from binder, copied for each student or group)

Time Required: 45 minutes - 1 hour

Appropriate grades: 4th-8th

NGSS and Common Core Standards:

4-ESS2-2: Analyze and interpret data from maps to describe patterns of Earth’s features.

MS-LS2-4. Construct an argument supported by empirical evidence that changes to physical or biological components of an ecosystem affect populations.

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

W.3.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.



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Activity:

Introduction	<p>Start by asking students what they know about fires. Ask them how they think fire affects the forest, communities, animals, indigenous people, etc.? Write their thoughts on the board.</p> <p>Try to gauge their knowledge on fire and then tell them that they will be starting their unit on fire ecology by looking at and touching some interesting items related to fire ecology concepts. They will be answering some questions, but we hope that the items will raise more questions than they answer. Tell them that they should answer the questions using only their observations and previous knowledge. They do not need to worry about having the right answers.</p>
Body	<p>Pass out a Fire Stations worksheet to each student or group. Have the groups rotate between stations while they fill out the worksheets. Students can add supplemental drawings to the worksheet to help develop their explanation of their findings. Depending how large your class is, students can work individually, in pairs, or in groups. Encourage discussion among the students at the stations. Each group should spend 2 to 5 minutes at each station.</p>
Closure	<p>Have the students return to their seats. Have one group present on each station. Students should share their observations and discuss their answers to the worksheet questions as a class. On the board, write down additional questions the students have about fire ecology. Use these questions to guide further investigations during your fire ecology unit.</p>

Modifications:

- Take a field trip to a local burn site, or recently burned site, and use the props to set up stations for the class.
- Include Spanish and English translations for the worksheet. Also, labels for each station can have both languages.
- For TAG learners or for homework have them find and read an article on fires in the area and write a paragraph reflection about if the news reporters reported on the local fire as being bad, good, or both.

