



Rangeland Revival

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Subject: Language Arts	Grade Level: 7 th & 8 th
Time Required: 8 days, 50 min. each	CCS Standards: Reading-informational text: 7 Speaking and Listening: 4

Overview	Students will be able to identify and learn how to control specific weeds. They will learn about and gain an understanding of recreational impacts on rangelands.
Goal(s) & Objective(s)	1- Students will build on prior knowledge and be further educated about identification and control of specific weeds, and they'll have an understanding of how recreational activities, wildlife, and land owners are affected by the rapid growth of weeds in Idaho.
Materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rangeland Revival Powerpoint that contains: 1-Pictures for intro. activity (ex: ocean, mountains, carnival, vacuum cleaner, chocolate pie, fishing, ship, airplane, camping.) 2-Pictures of range animals, crops, wildlife, seeds stuck to a hiker's sock, and various invasive and noxious weeds, close ups of flowering weeds 2. Computer Lab 3. Greenhouse or growing light

Teaching Activities: <i>Instructional Approaches/Strategies</i>	<p>Introduction:</p> <p>1-Tell the students that you'll be showing them some pictures and they are to write down whatever comes to mind while they look at the pictures. Encourage them to think of specific adjectives, nouns and verbs—which can be single words or even phrases—to describe what they feel or think of while watching the slides. Tell them not to worry about spelling or punctuation; they're just going to be brainstorming and free-writing.</p> <p>2-For a warm up, show a variety of sample photos. After each slide, call on students and discuss their reactions. What comes to mind with each photograph? Encourage students to use words that evoke feelings, senses, activities, details of the environment, etc.</p> <p>Procedures</p> <p><u>Day One</u> (<i>Use of SmartBoard & Elmo or PowerPoint; photographs</i>)</p> <p>1-Now tell the students they'll be writing down five words or phrases for each picture in the next set of photos. They'll have time to share their reactions with the class once</p>
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all of the pictures have been shown. For this segment, show pictures of Idaho rangeland. Be sure to include some close-up shots of flowering weeds (as students might describe these as being pretty—and that can lead to an interesting discussion!).

2-Discuss students' reactions to this second set of photos. Do the students describe the rangeland as being forage for animals? Do they recognize weeds when they see them? Do they consider the land to be good for recreational use such as hunting, fishing, ATV use, camping? Share and discuss ideas as a group.

3-Following the discussion of students' descriptions, briefly discuss the concept of weeds, reminding the students that the word WEED can be defined differently depending on who you are. (Of course, in middle school, this is where all of the marijuana jokes come in...but as a middle school teacher, you already knew that.) Talk about how weeds can be "native or non-native, invasive or non invasive, and noxious or not noxious" (www.id.blm.gov), and tell them that it's important that they know the difference and that they learn how to identify and help reduce noxious weeds in Idaho.

4-Discuss some problems with weeds in your area and have students brainstorm how this invasion is detrimental. (You'll find good topic-starters in the **Background** portion of this activity guide.)

Day Two (*Guest speaker should be pre-scheduled; can forgo speaker and go straight to Internet research if desired*)

1- (Optional) Today your guest speaker will come in to discuss the importance of managing Idaho rangeland. He or she should include information about how non-native plants impact our economy, recreational usage, and more. (An ideal guest speaker will be from the Idaho BLM or the Idaho Department of Agriculture; a successful local rancher is also a wealth of information!) *Note: Be sure to share your expectations regarding content with your guest speaker ahead of time, and let him or her know how much class time they'll have with your students. You'll also want to allow enough time for questions and answers at the end of the session.*

2-Assignment: 1 page response about guest speaker. (*Note: You may choose to assess based on writing, content, or both—just be sure to inform the students of the specifics in advance.*)

Days Three and Four (*Computer lab; Internet access; copies of Rangeland Revival sheets for each student*)

1-Call on students to share the highlights of their summaries. Discuss. Point out that even if a student feels that invasive plants don't impact their lives (because they're middle schoolers and they'll argue that they don't eat or hunt or step foot in the outdoors), they need to realize the impact that unhealthy rangeland can have on the environment and on the human population in general. Collect student summaries.

2-Tell the students they'll be working in groups to further investigate various area of interest (which must be pre-approved by teacher) concerning rangeland management,

weed control, adverse affects of noxious weeds on recreation and commercial use, etc. The students will use the Internet for this activity. Before you turn them loose, hand out **RANGELAND REVIVAL** sheets. Go over the information and project requirements with them at this time so they know what they are working toward. *Note: I usually have my students work in groups of one to three, and certainly no more than four. Even though they're researching in groups, the extra day of lab time will benefit most students; if students finish early or choose to do research at home, they can simply move ahead to the project that begins on Day Five.*

Days Five and Six

1-Using the information gathered from the Internet and from the guest speaker, students will work in their groups to compose their songs. The **goal** of their song is to share important information about something specific to rangelands. This time should also be used to rehearse. Remind them to make copies of lyrics for everyone in their team.

2-Depending on the genre of music that the team has chosen, they should plan to dress accordingly. A country band might wear overalls or cowboy hats. Rappers might have a lot of bling. Tell the kids to have fun with it and to be creative!

3-A typed final draft copy of the lyrics are due to the teacher at the time of presentation to the class. Review the details of how they'll be assessed both individually and as a team. Details are at the bottom of their Rangeland Revival sheets. Feel free to adapt the assessment and point values according to your needs.

Day Seven (*You might wish to videotape presentations for student viewing*)

1-Presentation of songs.

2-Music Awards (optional); consider qualities such as best lyrics, most musically gifted, best vocals, most surprising performance, you-make-me-laugh award, etc...

Closure

Day Eight (*Use of SmartBoard & Elmo or PowerPoint; photographs*)

1-Show the range-related pictures from Day One. How have students' perceptions of Idaho Rangeland changed? Do they have different words to describe the weeds? Have their emotions evolved since the first time they saw the photographs?

2-Discuss how a deeper knowledge of a topic changes our views.

3-Ask if the students have heard the phrase "A picture is worth a thousand words". How have their words changed after the Rangeland Revival?

Assessment:

Day 4-HW-Write a one-page summary of what you learned from today's guest speaker. What impact, if any, does the proper management of Idaho's rangeland have on your life? (If you believe it has no impact on your life, why is this so?) Be sure to organize your thoughts clearly and be ready to share your ideas with the class. Your paper is due tomorrow at the beginning of class

Day 8- Have students write a short summary of how their views have changed with more knowledge on the topic.

Attachments:

Rangeland Revival Music Festival Guidelines

BACKGROUND:

This activity is meant to expose students to a broad range (no pun intended!) of Idaho rangeland information. Because students will be working in groups and exploring specific topics under the rangeland umbrella, they will be able to focus on what most interests them. The first day introduces Idaho rangeland management in the broadest sense, and the second day will provide more detail to the scope of the matter. Through discussion and then by honing in on their personal interests, students can proceed to tackle more specific rangeland concerns on their own terms. By pre-approving group topics as students begin their online research, you can help ensure that groups aren't duplicating information; this will allow for students to jigsaw their findings, putting together pieces of the puzzle so that each group contributes a little for the entire class to learn a lot. This will occur as they listen to each group's presentation.

As the educator, you'll want to familiarize yourself with ecology and management issues. The Internet has a wealth of resources. A handful of websites are listed here to get you started; you can also share these URLs with your students as they begin their Internet research:

www.uidaho.edu/weeds

www.agri.state.id.us

www.weedcenter.org

www.blm.gov/weeds

Some specific topics that you can present to your students for further exploration:

- What can we do to help prevent the spread of invasive weeds? (Discuss how seeds travel and how we can be proactive in this matter.)
- Adaptations (How do bothersome plants manage to take over? Consider root systems, seeds, germination, and the impact these invasive weeds have on native plants.)
- What is a healthy rangeland community? (Explore shrubs, forbs, grasses, sagebrush, and other plants that comprise well-managed rangeland. Why is it important to protect these areas from non-native plants?)
- Once an area becomes unhealthy, what can we do to restore our lands? How can we fight the battle individually and together with state agencies?
- What are some common native plants in our area? Why are they important? Research their characteristics and their significance to healthy rangeland.
- What specific problems do invasive weeds cause? Explore in detail: increase in wildfires, reduction of livestock forage, fewer recreational opportunities, decline in plant diversity, destruction of wildlife habitat, lower crop yields. Consider how these problems impact your life.

Rangeland Revival:

A music festival like no other

Okay, so what if you're not a musician? This isn't exactly MTV. Nope, this is Rangeland Revival—a music festival in which you and your teammates will gather information, compose lyrics, find yourself a tune, and proceed to impress us all with your amazing talent...or lack thereof. Whoops—didn't mean to make you nervous!

If you're already in a panic, stop everything. Breathe. Remember that you're working as a team. Feel free to use the melody of any popular song that you can all agree on—you'll just have to change the lyrics. Or, if you have someone in your group who can actually compose music—fantastic! Why not come up with your own tune and *really* blow us away? Feel free to use an instrument of any kind (cow bell, harmonica, guitar, tuba...) to jazz things up a bit. Heck, you might even play something exotic. Like spoons.

The biggest thing to remember is that **CONTENT COUNTS**. (Yeah, there really IS a point to all of this madness.) This means you've got to use your lyrics to express what you've learned. Be specific, thoughtful, and creative with your words. Write and perform a song about what you've researched. Perhaps you want to focus on something really specific, like Leafy Spurge. Maybe you're dying to write a love song about Rush Skeletonweed (which is a fabulous name for a band, don't you think?). You can always write a bit of rock n' roll from the point of view of a cow (or a goat or a sheep)—and in that tune you can rave (or rant) about the rangeland. Maybe a sad country western song is more your style, and you can sing about how weed seeds get spread by wind, fishermen, hiking boots, and more. Use your imagination. Throw in your personality. And, of course, us all want to sing along. By the way, you don't have to have your song memorized, but you're likely to get bonus points if you do.

Oh, one more thing! Get yourself an applicable band name. It's much cooler that way.

Individual Assessment (200 points possible)

- _____ 60 **Getting there** (time on task in class—prior to performance)
- _____ 60 **Participation** (you must sing or create music)
- _____ 20 **Professionalism** (not laughing, etc, during performance)
- _____ 20 **In character** (look the part; if you're a rocker then you should dress like one)
- _____ 20 **Preparedness** (you're ready to go; no excuses)
- _____ 20 **Volume** (we've got to hear your beautiful voice)

Team Assessment (200 points possible)

- _____ 100 Lyrics demonstrate learning, knowledge of material, integration of facts, detail
- _____ 50 Four verses, one chorus (min); if using existing song, add verses if necessary
- _____ 25 Creativity
- _____ 25 Typed lyrics; final draft quality (due at time of presentation)