



EduTrend Contents

P4C · NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT · MIDDLE SCHOOL

The Last Tree on the Island

Should we limit what we take from nature today for people in the future?

Ages 11–13

Level: Intermediate

50 minutes

Circle and small groups
· up to 30

Activity 03

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 student worksheets · assessment checklist

ACTIVITY 03 · AT A GLANCE

The Last Tree on the Island

Students follow an invented story in rounds: an island has 100 trees and ten families. Each family needs wood and can cut trees each year; young trees take ten years to grow. Groups decide how many trees to cut each round and track what happens. Then the class creates questions and enquires into whether we should limit what we take for the sake of people who come later.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the session students can:

- model a shared resource problem;
- reason about future generations;
- evaluate collective rules;
- use evidence from the simulation.

KEY WORDS

resource · future · limit ·
sustainable · collective · rule

CURRICULUM LINKS

Geography: sustainability. Maths:
modelling growth. Citizenship:
shared decisions.

1**STIMULUS**

Share something to
think about

2**THINK**

Quiet thinking time

3**QUESTION**

Create and choose
a question

4**ENQUIRE**

Reason together

5**BUILD**

Agree, disagree,
add

6**REFLECT**

Last words

Materials (per class)

- Tree counters (100)
- Round tracking sheet
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

SAFETY

Everyone may pass. Discuss ideas, not people,
and use the story or invented examples rather
than personal situations.

ACTIVITY 03 · SESSION PLAN

Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

Time	What happens	Say or ask
0–8 min Stimulus	Run the island tree rounds.	<i>"What did you notice?"</i>
8–20 min Questions	Students create questions in pairs and vote on one.	<i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i>
20–44 min Enquiry	Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas.	<i>"Should we limit what we take from nature for future people?"</i>
44–50 min Last words	Each person says one last thought or passes.	<i>"Has your thinking changed?"</i>

CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Propose a fair limit for the island and defend it against an objection.

ACTIVITY 03 · FACILITATOR NOTES

The philosophy in brief

Economists and philosophers call problems like this collective action problems: what is sensible for one may be harmful if everyone does it.

Simple simulations let students experience the pressure to take more than their share.

Common ideas to listen for

- “If I don’t take it, someone else will.” That is the problem to solve.
- “Nature always regrows.” Not if taken too fast.
- “Future people don’t matter yet.” Ask why.

Adapting the activity

Support

Use fewer families and trees.

Stretch

Design a rule that keeps the island forested for 50 years.

WORKSHEET 1

Island tracker

Name: _____

Class: _____ Date: _____

Record each round.

Island tracker

Round	Trees cut	Trees left	New trees

WORKSHEET 2

Thinking moves

Use these in the enquiry.

Thinking moves

Thinking move	My example
I agree with... because...	
I disagree with... because...	
An example is...	
A counter-example is...	
Building on what... said...	

WORKSHEET 3

Last words

Before and after.

Who should decide the limits? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think... because...

FOR THE TEACHER

Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight students; copy as needed.

Student	Asks a philosophical question	Gives reasons and examples	Listens and builds on others

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

The Last Tree on the Island is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Nature and the Environment programme (middle school, level: intermediate). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at edutrend.org.

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