



## FORESTS OF THE FIRST STEWARDS

### 3rd - 5th Grade Discussion Guide

### Episode/Lesson Plan #3 – End Use Products and Education (Grades 3-5)

#### INTRODUCTION

Welcome back to the Menominee Forest! In the last lessons, we learned how the Menominee people care for their forest and how trees are turned into useful products.

In this episode, we'll explore how the forest is also used for art, culture, and learning. We'll meet a basket weaver who shows how materials from the forest can be used to create beautiful and useful items. We'll also learn how the Menominee have used forest resources for things like building, canoes, and staying warm.

Next, we'll visit the College of Menominee Nation to see how students are learning to care for the forest in the future. We'll discover how traditional knowledge and modern science come together to protect the forest for generations to come.

Then, we'll take a walk along the Menominee Phenology Trail, where we'll see how people observe and learn from nature over time. We'll discover how watching the forest helps people understand how it changes and how to take care of it.

In this lesson, you'll learn how people use the forest in creative ways and how education helps continue the story of forest stewardship.





Educational Partners:



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## LEARNING OBJECTIVES (GRADES 3-5)

- i. Explain how forests provide materials for art, tools, and building.
- ii. Understand how traditional knowledge and modern education work together.
- iii. Experience forest connection through movement and exploration.

## STANDARDS ALIGNMENT

This lesson aligns with the following standards:

### 1. NGSS (Science/Engineering))

- a. 3-PS2-4: Define a simple problem that can be solved by using materials from the environment.
- b. 4-ESS3-1: Explain how humans use natural resources responsibly.

### 2. Common Core (ELA)

- a. RI.3.7 / RI.4.7: Use information from illustrations and text to demonstrate understanding.
- b. W.3.2 / W.4.2: Write informative texts explaining a process or concept.

## LESSON TIME ESTIMATE AND SUMMARY

(Approximately 30-45 minutes total)

Learning Objective	Activity	How Students Show They Learned	Time Estimate
Explain how forests provide materials for art, tools, and building	Watch the basket weaving segment; discuss how forest materials are used to create baskets and other items	Students create a simple woven design (paper, yarn, or snack-based) and explain what their item is used for	15-18 min
Understand how traditional knowledge and modern education work together	Watch the College of Menominee Nation segment; discuss how students learn about forests today	Students draw themselves as a "future forest helper" and share what they would do to take care of the forest	8-12 min
Experience forest connection through movement and exploration	Short indoor or outdoor simulation of a phenology trail (movement, observation, touch items)	Students share one thing they experienced or noticed during the activity	12-15 min



## BEGINNER VOCABULARY

1. **Weaving:** The process of crossing materials over and under each other to create something like a basket or fabric. Think of it like building a pattern by going over, under, over, under.
2. **Natural Materials:** Materials that come from nature, like wood, plants, or fibers. Think of it like using what the forest gives you to make useful things.
3. **Tradition:** A way of doing something that is passed down from generation to generation. Think of it like a family recipe or skill that is shared over time.
4. **Innovation:** Creating new ideas or new ways of doing things. Think of it like using old knowledge in new and creative ways.
5. **Stewardship:** Taking care of something responsibly so it stays healthy for the future. Think of it like being a caretaker for the forest.
6. **Phenology:** The study of how nature changes over time, like leaves changing colors or birds migrating. Think of it as a nature calendar.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Basket Weaving and Cultural Traditions

- Basket weaving is an important cultural practice for the Menominee people.
- Materials from the forest are used to create baskets for everyday use and art.
- These skills are passed down from generation to generation.
- Basket weaving is not just about making something; it is also a way of sharing stories and traditions.

### Forest Products Beyond Timber

- The forest provides more than just wood for buildings.
- It also provides materials for baskets, tools, canoes, and warmth.
- These uses show how people can live closely with the forest and use its resources in many ways.

### Education and the Future of the Forest

- The College of Menominee Nation teaches students about forestry and environmental science.
- Students learn how to care for the forest using both traditional knowledge and modern science.
- This helps prepare the next generation to protect and manage the forest.

### Blending Tradition and Innovation

- The Menominee combines cultural teachings with new technology and research.
- This balance helps protect the forest while allowing people to continue using its resources.
- It shows how learning and innovation can support long-term forest health.
- The Phenology Trail is a part of Menominee culture.



## LEARNING PROCEDURE

### 1. Introduction

- Show an image or short clip of a handmade basket or woven item.
- Facilitate a discussion:
  - What do you think this is made from?
  - Where do you think those materials come from?
- Connect to the Menominee Forest and explain that the forest provides materials not just for building, but also for art, tools, and everyday life.

### 2. Activity 1: Basket Weaving and Forest Materials

- Students explore how forest materials are used to create baskets and other everyday items through weaving and design.

### 3. Activity 2: Learning from the Forest (College of Menominee Nation)

- Students examine how traditional knowledge and modern education work together to care for forests.

### 4. Activity 3: Movement through Phenology Simulation

- Students engage in a guided exploration to observe and interact with elements of the forest.





## 5. Conclusion

- Facilitate a discussion:
  - What are some ways people use the forest besides building?
  - Why is it important to pass knowledge down to the next generation?
- Students share one thing they learned or one thing they created.

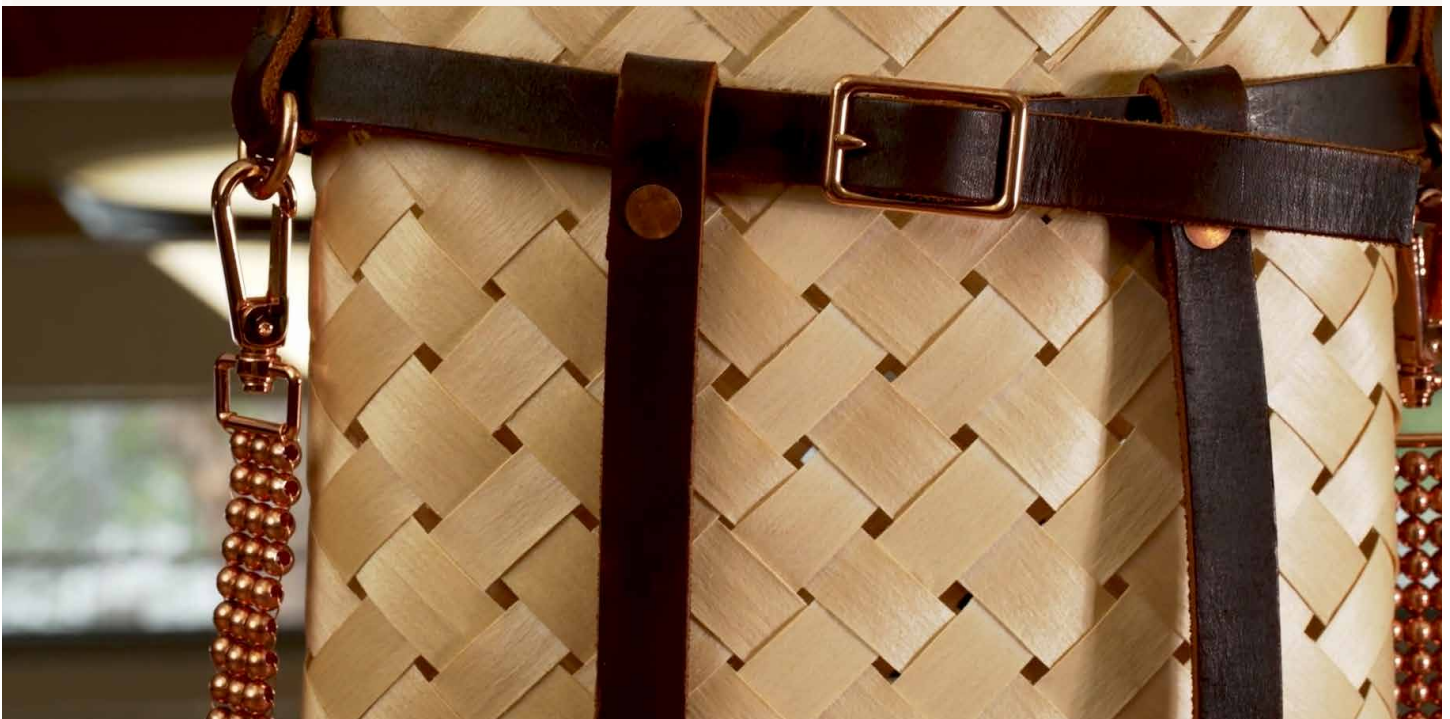
## 6. Teacher Tips:

- Encourage creativity; there are no “wrong” designs or ideas.
- Keep instructions simple and model activities when possible.
- Focus on positive connections between people and forests.
- Allow flexibility - activities can be shortened or expanded based on time and engagement.

## ACTIVITIES

### Activity 1: Basket Weaving and Forest Materials

- Objective: Explain how forests provide materials for art, tools, and building.





- Materials: Basket weaving video segment, paper strips/yarn (or snack-based materials), crayons/colored pencils/markers.
- Steps:
  - Show the basket weaving segment. Pause to highlight how materials from the forest are used.
  - Discuss: What materials came from the forest?
  - Introduce vocabulary (weaving, natural materials, and tradition).
  - Students create a simple woven design using paper strips, yarn, or snack items.
  - Students explain what their item is and how it would be used.
- Tips:
  - Keep weaving simple (over-under pattern).
  - Focus on creativity, not perfection.
  - Alternative option - students can design instead of physically weave if materials are limited.

## Activity 2: Future Forest Helpers (College of Menominee Nation)

- Objective: Understand how traditional knowledge and modern education work together.
- Materials: College of Menominee Nation video segment, paper, crayons/colored pencils/markers.
- Steps:
  - Show the College of Menominee Nation segment.
  - Discuss:
    - What are students learning to help take care of the forest?
    - What would YOU do to help the forest?
  - Students draw themselves as a “future forest helper.”
  - Students share their drawing with a partner or the class.
- Tips:
  - Encourage students to include tools, actions, or ideas in their drawing.
  - Connect to real-life roles (planting trees, protecting animal habitats, studying forests).

## Activity 3: Movement through Phenology Simulation

- Objective: Experience forest connection through movement and sensory exploration.
- Materials: Indoor or outdoor space, optional natural materials (leaves, bark, seeds) or visual props (printed photos or images)
- Steps:
  - Create a “phenology trail” path students can follow. Place small items or images along the path to represent different forest elements.
  - Students move along the trail, stopping to observe, touch, or collect items.
  - At each stop, guide students through a movement or sensory prompt, such as:
    - Grow like a seed becoming a tall tree
    - Stretch your branches out towards the sun
    - Fall like leaves in autumn
    - Shake and move like a tree in wind



- At each stop, ask questions like:
  - What do you feel?
  - What might be happening in the forest right now?
  - How are the trees responding?
  - Students move through the trail together, experiencing each stage with classmates.
  - At the end, students share one thing they experienced or noticed (no writing required).
- Tips:
  - Keep this active and playful.
  - Focus on movement, imagination, and sensory prompts.
  - If space and weather allow, take students outside for a stronger connection.

## References

For additional information:

- <https://menominee-nsn.gov/CulturePages/BriefHistory>
- <https://www.menominee.edu/sustainable-development-institute>
- <https://www.mtewood.com/>





## Additional Resources from LEAF: Wisconsin's K-12 Forestry Education Program:



LEAF-Wisconsin's K-12 Forestry Education Program  
College of Natural Resources  
**University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point**

- [Lesson 1: American Indians and the Forest](#)
- [Lesson 7: Sustaining Our Forests](#)
- [Career Profile - McKaylee Duquain](#)
- [Wisconsin Forest Tales](#)
- [K-1st Grade Field Enhancement - Sensing the Forest](#)
- [2nd-3rd Grade Field Enhancement - Observing Forest Interactions](#)
- [4th Grade Field Enhancement - Unlocking a Forest's Past](#)
- [5th-6th Grade Field Enhancement - Studying Forest Layers](#)
- [5th-6th Grade Field Enhancement - Woods Worth](#)
- [5th-6th Grade Field Enhancement - Competition in the Forest](#)