

# NATURE'S MYSTERIES

## Lesson Plan

### Changes and Conservation

Lesson Plan for *Australia's Pink Lakes*

Grade 4

#### Objective

To help students explore how human activity affects natural resources, evaluating both the benefits and the dangers of using those resources.

#### Things Needed

- *Australia's Pink Lakes* book

#### Before the Activity

Read the *Australia's Pink Lakes* book out loud as a class, or have students read it on their own.

#### Activity

Australia has several lakes that look bright pink. This surprising color is caused by algae and salt in the lakes' water. However, human activity has affected the colors of some lakes. Open the book to Chapter 4 ("Pink Lake Fades") and discuss the following questions as a class:

- According to page 26, what changes did people make that affected Pink Lake's color? (Answers: They built a highway and railroad nearby. They mined salt from the lake.)
- How did these changes affect the lake's color? (Answers: Mining removed salt from the lake, and the highway and railroad kept salt from getting into the lake. Less salt meant the algae that made the lake's red pigment couldn't survive.)
- What could governments do to prevent similar changes in other pink lakes? (Answers: They could limit activities such as camping or building near the lakes. They could make laws to not allow mining.)

Earth has many other natural resources that people visit or use. For example, people might cut down forests to get wood for building. These actions can create benefits, but (like the changes to Pink Lake), they can also cause problems. Have students turn to a partner and discuss the following questions:



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- What is another natural resource that people might want to visit or use?
- Why might people want to visit or use this resource?
- What could people do to protect this natural resource?
- Do you think it would be better for people to use or protect this resource? Why?

**Evaluation**

Could students answer the questions about how human activity has affected Pink Lake? Could they discuss the pros and cons of using other natural resources with a partner?

**Standards**

This lesson plan may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational texts, grade 4 (RI 4.3), and speaking and listening standards, grade 4 (SL 4.1).



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