

Good Tourist, Bad Tourist [ME]

Grades: 6-8

Time: 45 minutes to 1 hour

Goals: To create an eco-friendly brochure about coastal tourism.

Objectives:

Students will be able to: define eco-tourism; describe the best practices for tourists to follow for migrating species; and create brochures for local tourists.

Directions: Mark each sentence about eco-tourism as either True or False.

1. Nowadays people want to protect the environment when they are on vacation. _____
2. Eco-tourism uses its profits to protect local species. _____
3. In this form of tourism, tourists usually stay in eco-friendly hotels. _____
4. An eco-tourism vacation is generally cheap. _____
5. You can take lots of photographs everywhere that you go. _____

Directions: Answer these questions about eco-tourism and discuss them as a group.

1. What attitudes do people have today in order to protect the environment?

2. Why do you think tourists choose to stay in local houses with local people during these experiences?

3. How do eco-tourists usually travel on their vacations?

Key Words:

Eco-tourism

Migration

Marine mammal

Eco-friendly

Background Information:

Adapted from The Nature Conservancy

According to the World Conservation Union, the definition of eco-tourism is, “environmentally responsible travel to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature, that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact, and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local peoples.” An example of this type of ecotourism would be a field trip to Costa Rica to volunteer with a sea turtle nesting group or rehabilitation center. The cost of the trip would benefit the community the sea turtles nest near and the volunteer work you provide will help stabilize the populations of sea turtles for future generations.

Most tourism today does not include this type of responsibility to the traveler and increased tourism in certain areas that are susceptible to degradation requires planning, management, and education of the travelers. Not only can ecosystems be destroyed by wrong practices, the local communities and cultures can become affected by foreign visitors

Tourism of any kind though, can provide opportunities for local communities to grow as well as provide scientists with vital information about the natural area and its wildlife. It provides generated revenue for the continued protection and growth of national parks and reserves as well as the safety and protection of the wildlife that may use the area for all or part of their lives. It also provides necessary education on which practices are harmful or hurtful to species and which practices are vital for their survival.

