Who Uses the Forest?

Write resource rules that weigh competing needs

WG.5.6 "Create basic policies designed to guide the use and management of Earth's resources and that reflect multiple points of view."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle four groups with a stake in the forest, underline what each wants or needs, and number two places where a benefit for one group could create a cost for another.

A Forest Under Pressure

1 In the 1880s, a district in British India faces a hard choice about its sal forest. Railways need strong wood for track ties, and contractors earn money cutting trees. Colonial officials say they must protect a steady timber supply. Under the Indian Forest Act of 1878, officials could declare land a reserved forest and restrict customary uses. That power did not settle a basic question: who should benefit from the forest? A nearby village gathers fallen branches for cooking fires and grazes cattle at its edge. Both activities matter to daily life, even though officials may view them as threats.

2 Now imagine that you advise this district before it writes local forest rules. A railway buyer wants reliable deliveries; a contractor wants enough timber to make a profit. Villagers want fuel and space for animals, while forest guards want rules they can actually enforce. Young sal trees need time and room to grow. Heavy cutting can leave too few mature trees for future use, and cattle can damage new seedlings. Banning all local access would protect some areas but would also force households to find fuel and grazing elsewhere. Allowing unlimited cutting or grazing could harm the same forest everyone depends on.

3 A workable policy must say what people may take, where, and under what conditions. It must also say who checks the rules and how people can raise objections. A fixed limit on timber would leave some wood standing, but it could reduce short-term sales. Setting aside an area for young trees would protect new growth, but it could close a familiar grazing place. Before officials choose limits, they could hear from villagers, contractors, and railway buyers. Records of trees cut and seedlings growing would help them review a rule later. These choices distribute both benefits and costs among groups.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Write one timber-cutting rule that addresses the railway buyer's need and the forest's future supply. What is one likely cost of your rule?

2. Write one fuel-collection rule that serves villagers without allowing unlimited forest use. Explain how it fits the passage.

3. Write one grazing rule that considers both villagers and young trees. What tradeoff would it create?

4. Write one rule for reviewing the forest policy that gives at least two groups a voice and uses evidence from the forest.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A river supplies drinking water to a village, irrigation for farmers, and water for a textile workshop. During a dry season, its flow drops. Write one paragraph proposing a water-use policy with a specific rule, at least two groups' views, a tradeoff, and a way to check or revise the rule.

ANSWER KEY

Who Uses the Forest?

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle four groups with a stake in the forest, underline what each wants or needs, and number two places where a benefit for one group could create a cost for another. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Write one timber-cutting rule that addresses the railway buyer's need and the forest's future supply. What is one likely cost of your rule?	**Allow a limited number of mature trees to be cut for the railway each year. The limit helps preserve future timber but may reduce contractors' short-term sales.**
2	Write one fuel-collection rule that serves villagers without allowing unlimited forest use. Explain how it fits the passage.	**Allow villagers to collect fallen branches for cooking fires, but not to cut living trees for fuel. The passage identifies fallen branches as a village resource and warns against unlimited cutting.**
3	Write one grazing rule that considers both villagers and young trees. What tradeoff would it create?	**Allow grazing at the forest edge but close areas with young trees to cattle. Villagers keep some grazing space but lose access to part of the forest.**
4	Write one rule for reviewing the forest policy that gives at least two groups a voice and uses evidence from the forest.	**Each year, officials should hear from villagers and contractors and review records of trees cut and seedlings growing before changing the rules.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

During the dry season, the village should receive enough river water for drinking before water is assigned to farms or the workshop. Farmers could use water on set days, and the workshop could use what remains after those needs are met. This would protect households and let farms operate, but the workshop might have to reduce production. A local committee with village, farm, and workshop representatives should check the river level each week and revise the schedule if the flow changes.

Accept other workable rules grounded in the passage, including different limits or access areas. Each answer should connect a specific rule to the groups and resource conditions named in its prompt.