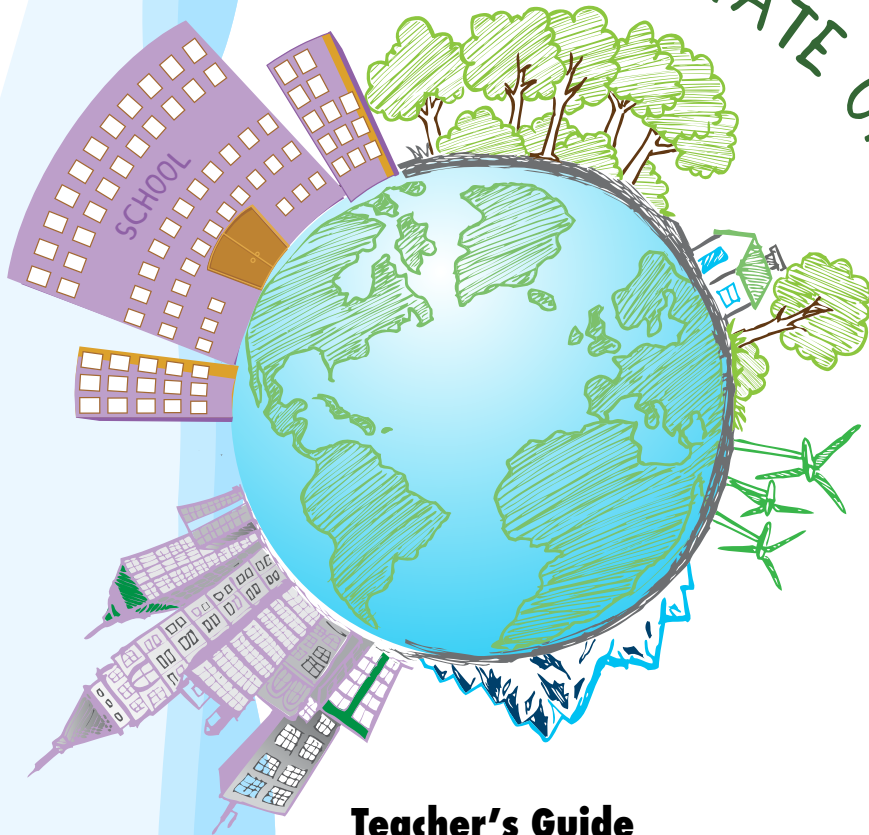


WHAT IS THE STATE OF OUR COMMONS?



Teacher's Guide

Grade: 6 - 8

Lesson: What is the State of Our Commons?

Number of Class Periods: 4 45-minute class periods (additional time may be needed for completion or presentation of State of the Commons reports)



The Healthy Commons Lesson Set was co-created by TerraCycle, The Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education, and Learner-Centered Initiatives.



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Standards

Common Core State Standards

ELA

Grade 6

Reading: Informational Text - 1
Writing - 1, 9
Speaking and Listening - 1, 2
Language - 1-6

Grade 7

Reading: Informational Text - 1
Writing - 1, 9
Speaking and Listening - 1, 2
Language - 1-6

Grade 8

Reading: Informational Text - 1
Writing - 1 b, c, d, 9
Speaking and Listening - 1
Conventions of Standard English - 1-6
MCREL Standards Level 3-5

EFS Standards and performance Indicators

Responsible Local and Global Citizenship

B. 2 Demonstrate individual and collective respect for themselves and the Commons.

Healthy Commons

E. 1 Define “The Commons” in their own words and in relation to their own experience. Distinguish between public, private, and Common and provide examples of how the latter can overlap with the first two.

E. 2 Articulate the distinguishing characteristics of a Commons and the types of measures required to keep different types of Commons healthy.

E. 3 Identify several examples of Commons in their school, town and in our world and explain how those Commons function—i.e., the rules for access and use and who or what enforces them.

E. 4 Research healthy Commons locally and/or globally and compare and contrast the various ways people use, protect and care for them.

E. 7 Engage regularly with some of the questions that need to be asked about the tenure, welfare and future of the Commons. Develop ideas, solutions and/or thoughts about the Commons and generate new questions that address areas with which they are grappling.

Sense of Place

- I. 6** Map or document assets and liabilities in their local community
- I. 20** Communicate their findings accurately and effectively (oral presentation, power point, spreadsheets, graphs, role play, mural, song, etc.).
- I.24** Produce an assets and liabilities inventory.
- I. 37** Communicate effectively about the project to an authentic audience outside of their school.
- I. 38** Teach about the project as a case study to students in a different grade level.

EFS Enduring Understandings (EU)

- EU 4** Recognize and Protect the Commons
- EU 5** Reconcile Individual Rights with Collective Responsibilities
- EU 9** Read the Feedback

LESSON SUMMARY

Students use their school and/or community as the context for learning about the Commons. They explore what defines a Commons, categorize spaces and things as examples, and walk their community to discover its visible and hidden Commons. Finally, students select one Commons to focus on, and create a “State of the Commons” report as a way of increasing school and/or community awareness about the Commons.

OVERARCHING QUESTION

What is the State of Our Commons?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

WHAT IS A COMMONS?

DO COMMONS HAVE COMMON CHARACTERISTICS?

WHERE ARE THE COMMONS IN MY SCHOOL AND/OR HOME COMMUNITY?

WHY ARE COMMONS IMPORTANT TO ME?

WHY ARE COMMONS IMPORTANT TO MY COMMUNITY?

WHAT/WHO IS CHALLENGING OR THREATENING THE COMMONS?

WHAT DO I KNOW THAT COULD HELP?

WHAT MORE DO WE NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT KINDS OF RULES, STRATEGIES, THINKING, EDUCATION WILL HELP US TAKE CARE OF COMMONS?

(EU 4, EU 5)

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Day 1 – Discovering the Commons

Review the “Discovering the Commons” diagram (see Resource 1) with the class, to ensure understanding of the Commons spaces and things (publicly owned or shared).

1. In pairs, students use the diagram to organize their thinking about common spaces and things found in their school community.
2. Pairs share and discuss as a whole class, while the teacher compiles all examples in each category.



DAY 2 - DEVELOPING OUR UNDERSTANDING

In small groups of 3-4, students select a Commons and work together to apply the questions posed in *Identifying And Understanding The Commons* (Jonathan Rowe, Tomales Bay Institute, see Resource 2), to that Commons, documenting any confusion or unanswered questions.

1. Each group chooses a Commons from their conversation on Day 1 to use as they read and respond to *Identifying And Understanding The Commons*.
2. They create a Commons poster comprised of their responses to the questions asked, as well as any questions or confusion that they may have as they work through them.
3. Post group work around the room.
4. Using a carousel strategy, each group moves from one poster to another, using Post It notes to leave comments, responses or pose questions on the posters, avoiding duplication of anything that has been left by a previous group.
5. Continue until all groups have reviewed each poster.
6. Groups gather their posters and discuss the feedback that they received.
7. Any remaining unanswered questions should be clarified with the entire class

DAY 3 - NOTICING THE COMMONS AROUND US

1. Using the school or their home community (as appropriate), students (see Resource 3) take a community walk and record the aspects of the Commons they see.
2. Back in class, they discuss how the walk helped them to better understand the characteristics of the Commons and how they exist in the community.
3. In writing, students respond individually to the questions, "Why are these Commons important to me?" and "Why are these Commons important to my community?" (see Resource 4)
4. At the end of this reflection, each student identifies a Commons from their school or home community that they feel is particularly important and that they would like to help others to better understand. This Commons will become the basis of their "State of the Commons Report."



DAY 4 - REPORTING ON THE STATE OF THE COMMONS

1. Review the State of the Commons Report description. (See Resource 5)
2. Using the second *Discovering the Commons resource*, students explore the idea of threats and signs of progress.
3. Students research and respond to the questions in the State of the Commons Outline. (See Resource 6)
4. Reports may be presented orally and/or refined and submitted as a writing project. This project can make an authentic contribution to the community if it is presented to a municipal authority or civic group. Examples include the City Council, a Town Supervisor's Office or a Town Meeting, the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, etc.*
(* see Sense of Place Standard I.37 in Assessment Table)

Instructional/Environmental Modifications/Differentiated Strategies

- Size and composition of groups can be adjusted to meet specific needs of students
- Students who need more guidance can be grouped with the teacher or an assistant to complete the activities.

Efs Assessment/Scoring Criteria

What do I need to collect or administer to prove that students have grown towards and/or achieved desired outcomes/standards?

Efs/National Standard	Efs/National Performance Indicator (letter and number)	Assessment Instrument	Scoring Criteria
B. Responsible Local and Global Citizenship	B. 2		Demonstrate individual and collective respect for themselves and the Commons.
E. Healthy Commons	E. 1 E. 2 E. 3 E. 4 E. 7	Community Walk Protocol Considering the Commons Reflection State of the Commons Report	Define “The Commons” in their own words and in relation to their own experience. Distinguish between public, private and Common and provide examples of how the latter can overlap with the first two. Articulate the distinguishing characteristics of a Commons and the types of measures required to keep different types of Commons healthy Identify several examples of Commons in their school, town and in our world and explain how those Commons function—i.e., the rules for access and use and who or what enforces them. Research healthy Commons locally and/or globally and compare and contrast the various ways people use, protect and care for them. Engage regularly with some of the questions that need to be asked about the tenure, welfare and future of the Commons. They will have some ideas, solutions and/or thoughts about the Commons, and is generating some new questions of her/his own about them with which he/she is grappling.
I. Sense of Place	I. 6 I. 20 I. 24 I. 37 I. 38	Authentic presentation of State of the Commons report to the community	Map or document assets and liabilities in their local community. Produce an assets and liabilities inventory. Communicate their findings accurately and effectively (oral presentation, power point, spreadsheets, graphs, role play, mural, song, etc.). Communicate effectively about the project to an authentic audience outside of school or Teach about the project as a case study to students in a different grade level.

Efs/National Standard	Efs/National Performance Indicator (letter and number)	Assessment Instrument	Scoring Criteria
Common Core Standards ELA Reading: Informational text	Key ideas and Details	State of the Commons Report	<p>Grade 6 Students Will: 1. Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>Grade 7 Students Will: 1. Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>Grade 8 Students Will: 1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p>
ELA Writing	Text types and Purposes	Journal Entries State of the Commons Report	<p>Grade 6 Students Will: 1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. d. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.</p> <p>Grade 7 Students Will: 1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. a. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. b. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence. d. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</p> <p>Grade 8 Students Will: 1. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented</p>

EFS/National Standard	EFS/National Performance Indicator (letter and number)	Assessment Instrument	Scoring Criteria
	EResearch to Build and Present Knowledge	Journal Entries State of the Commons Report	Grade 6, 7 and 8 Students Will: 9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
ELA Speaking/Listening	Comprehension and Collaboration	Whole Class and Small Group Discussions Carousel	<p>Grade 6 Students Will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, set specific goals and deadlines and define individual roles as needed. c. Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion. d. Review the key ideas expressed and demonstrate understanding of multiple perspectives through reflection and paraphrasing. 2. Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g. visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study. <p>Grade 7 Students Will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. b. Follow rules for collegial discussions, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. c. Pose questions that elicit elaboration and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant observations and ideas that bring the discussion back on topic as needed. d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others and, when warranted, modify their own views. 2. Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic, text, or issue under study. <p>Grade 8 Students Will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion. b. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed. c. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others’ questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas. d. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.

Efs/National Standard	Efs/National Performance Indicator (letter and number)	Assessment Instrument	Scoring Criteria
ELA Language	Conventions of Standard English	Journal Entries State of the Commons report	<p>Grade 6, 7, and 8 Students Will: Conventions of Standard English</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. 2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. 3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. 4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. 5. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. 6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Note to Teachers: Student attainment of Enduring Understandings can be monitored through the questions identified with (EU).