

How a Coal Mine Turns into a Working Farm

Objective: Read the article “Corn Grows Best in the Midwest”. Students will identify sequential steps that were taken, and record those steps on a timeline.

Overview

Students will read an article about the Cottage Grove Mine and how the land was reclaimed and turned into a farm. After reading the article, students will identify specific steps that were taken to do this, and then take that information to create a sequential timeline to show the steps.

Standards Addressed

National Science Education Standards Content Standard F

As a result of activities, students should be able to develop an understanding of changes in an environment, whether man-made or created by nature.

Materials

- Article on Cottage Grove Mine
- Highlighter or yellow marker/crayon
- White paper, 8.5 x 11”, cut in half lengthwise and taped/glued together to make a long strip of paper
- Crayons, colored pencils, or markers

Activity Steps

1. Read the article on Cottage Grove Mine together. This article focuses on how this company turned the coal mine into a working farm. After reading the article once, have the students go back and highlight specific steps that were taken to turn the mine into a farm. For example, “New soil had to be put into the ground.” Have students highlight 4-5 steps that span the process.
2. On the prepared white paper, have students divide the strip into the same number of steps that were highlighted to create a timeline. Students should draw a picture as well as write a description for each step. The description should be what was done and why it was done. Give the timeline a title and color.

Conclusion

Have students present their timelines to the class. Compare the steps that were chosen by each student. Which steps were common to most?

Extension

Students can research how long each step takes and the possible cost of each step.