



Working Forests Week 4th Grade Activity (Sample Speech)

INTRODUCTION:

- > **Celebrating Working Forest Week**
- > **Connection to Forestry (logger, forester, landowner, mill, etc)**

Oxygen: Trees are very important in the process of providing oxygen for us to breathe. If it weren't for trees we would all be in trouble. In fact, in the timber business, for every tree that we cut down we plant 5 trees to replace it. We have been so effective in our efforts to replant that today there are 2x the number of trees that were in America just 30 years ago...**2x**. So we aren't just out there just cutting down our forests...we are also replacing them with even more trees than before.

Animal Habitat: If you were standing in the forest and I showed up with a big tractor and started cutting down trees, would you stand there or would you run and get away to safety? I bet most of you would run...and that is just what most all of the animals do that are on a tract that we start cutting. They move out of our way and safely go on about their business. How many of you remember riding in your car and seeing a bug hit the windshield? Or maybe even a bird? What about a squirrel or raccoon? The fact is, a whole lot more animals killed or harmed by cars than by loggers. And I'm just talking about the cars in this room. Think of all the cars and trucks in Chiefland alone. Drivers do 100x more damage to animals than we do when we cut down trees. Now everyone who wants to give up their car and walk everywhere raise their hand...me neither. In fact cutting trees down helps a lot of animals by letting the sun in areas that were previously shaded. That means, a lot of shrubs and bushes can grow because of that sunlight and will become food and shelter (homes) for animals that could not grow before.

The Environment: I'm sure that all of you are concerned about the environment and that means you will grow up to like loggers and timber companies. You will like them because no one cares more about trees than people like us. We cut down trees to make a living. If we cut down all the trees and didn't replant trees, we would not have a job! Our forests provide clean water for all of us to drink. They filter water down into the ground and into the aquifer. We have a lot of rules that tell us to stay away rivers and streams, and to stay away from the homes (whether nests or burrows) of certain birds, like the Bald Eagles and gophers...all kinds of rules to make sure that we take care of the environment. There are certain areas that are protected and can never be cut down----like parks.

Recreation: I know a lot of you were concerned about what loggers do to the woods and how it affects recreation. There are some of you that are concerned that we might ruin your favorite hunting spot. Well you might not believe it but just

recently I watched 4 deer just 50 yards from our tractors and they were watching us. We don't scare any deer away. In fact, they are really curious about what we are doing and it is pretty common for them and other animals to watch us! Every year we have people that hire us to cut trees for them just to improve their hunting. Like we talked about before, when we cut trees it usually improves the amount of food available and also cover to hide in or live in. We are not bad for recreation --we are GOOD for recreation.

Harvesting more than we should: You may be concerned that we are cutting more trees than we should. Well, now that you know that we are planting more than we are cutting, I hope that you are not worried about that anymore. But if for any reason you still think we are cutting too many trees I want to tell you who decides how much wood we cut. Does anybody know who makes those decisions? Anybody? If we are cutting too many trees, it is your fault. That's right it is your fault ...and now we will play a little game and you can tell me how many trees to cut! (ask for a volunteer to help with the products).

All right, these pencils will represent the trees we cut down and you guys are going to help us decide which trees to cut and which trees to leave. All of these products are made from trees so all we have to do is decide which ones we can do without.

I'm going to "plant" pencils over here and we are going to decide which trees to cut and which trees we are not going to cut....together.

For every item or product that you need or want to have, we'll cut 2 trees. If you can do without an item or product, we'll leave 2 trees. If you're not sure, we'll cut 1 tree.

OK ... Tree number 1....piece of paper
Tree number 2...pencil
Tree number 3...ruler
Tree number 4...toilet paper
Tree number 5...chewing gum
Tree number 6...cinnamon
Tree number 7...gatorade
Tree number 8...Advil
Tree number 9...toothpaste
Tree number 10..insect repellent
Tree number 11..band aids
Tree number 12..crayons

RESULTS:

What If? What if you really were determined and you stopped using all the products that are made from trees? What would happen?

- 1) The mills or businesses that make all these products would shut down because no one was buying them...they would go broke.
- 2) We would stop cutting trees because we would have no mill that would buy them...We would go broke and have to find other jobs.
- 3) The 35 people that work for us would all lose their job.
- 4) And finally the worst part would be that if we are not cutting trees we would not be able to plant all those trees because we wouldn't be able to afford to. Our forests would eventually die.

I hope you've learned how Working Forests Work and how important they are to all of us....they provide products that we need and want.....they help the environment....they provide recreation areas.....they provide food and homes for wildlife....they help provide oxygen to us.

Do you have any questions?

Thank you again for allowing us to be here with you today.