

HUMAN GEOGRAPHY WITH DR SIOBHAN MADERSON

TALKING POINTS

KNOWLEDGE

1. List five examples of knowledge that would be considered Traditional Environmental Knowledge (TEK).
2. What is archival research?

COMPREHENSION

3. How is TEK different to scientific knowledge?
4. Why is TEK often undervalued by the scientific community?
5. Why is intensive agriculture leading to biodiversity loss?

APPLICATION

6. What questions would you ask a farmer to find out about their TEK?
7. How could you then use this TEK to improve 'scientific' understanding of the environment in which the farmer works?

ANALYSIS

8. As well as TEK, some geographers use the terms indigenous knowledge (IK) and local environmental knowledge (LEK). How would you define IK and LEK, compared with TEK?
9. Why is the knowledge you gained from reading this article not TEK?

SYNTHESIS

10. How would you encourage scientists and politicians to properly value TEK, and to include it within their research and policies?

CREATIVITY

11. What TEK or LEK does your family or community hold? What can you learn about changes to your local environment through conversations with family or community members?

ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO AT HOME OR IN THE CLASSROOM

Choose a group of indigenous peoples (such as the Sámi in Lapland or the Yanomami in Amazonia) and research their way of life. What TEK and IK do they hold, and how is it expressed through their culture and beliefs? Who has colonised their land and what impacts has this caused? What political and economic challenges affect these indigenous peoples and limit their capacity to use and share their TEK? How could their knowledge help us protect and preserve their environment? Create a poster or presentation to share your findings with your class.

Plant an area in your school or neighbourhood to provide a habitat for bees and other pollinators. Visit www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines for some advice on how to do this. Plant a range of flowers to ensure your patch has high biodiversity. Can you identify the different bees and other insects that visit the flowers?

Agricultural chemicals are a threat to pollinators. Visit a shop or garden centre (or their website) and do a survey of the garden chemicals they sell. What are they used for? Are there less harmful products that could be used instead? Write a letter to your local council asking what agrochemicals are used in parks and public spaces and suggesting environmentally-friendly practices they could adopt instead.

MORE RESOURCES

Watch Siobhan's 3 Minute Thesis talk about her research: www.vitae.ac.uk/events/three-minute-thesis-competition/3mt-2017/uk3mtsemifinalists2017

Read Siobhan's 'Making Sense of Society' article on P20: esrc.ukri.org/files/skills-and-careers/writing-competition/making-sense-of-society-the-shortlist-entries

The Department of Geography and Earth Sciences at Aberystwyth University has an outreach service. For more information on the topics their experts can offer, see: www.aber.ac.uk/en/dges/outreach