



Curriculum

Module 2 - Overview

Indigenous peoples of the Americas

Survivor – The Yanomami – A Race Against Time!

Suitable for Lower Secondary

Core Learning Outcome Level 5

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Grateful acknowledgements to Brian Hoeppe and Michael Boyle for suggestions and advice

In partnership with:



Association of Independent Schools of Qld

www.earthcharter.org.au

MODULE OVERVIEW – SURVIVOR – THE YANOMAMI – A RACE AGAINST TIME

CORE LEARNING AREAS

The learning outcomes covered in this module include:

Time, Continuity and Change 5.2

Key concept: Changes and Continuities

Core content: *Students represent situations before and after a period of rapid change.*

Place and Space 5.4

Key concept: Spatial Patterns

Core content: *Students use maps, diagrams and statistics to justify placing value on environments in the Asia-Pacific region.*

Systems, Resources and Power 5.1

Key concept: Interactions between ecological and other systems

Core content: *Students evaluate the relationship between an ecological system and/or economic system.*

Systems, Resources and Power 5.3

Key concept: Participation and decision making.

Core content: *Students use a structured decision making process to suggest participatory action regarding a significant current environmental, business, political or legal issue.*

THE BRINK EXPEDITION

The Yanomami ("human being") are the largest indigenous nation in the Americas that still retains its traditional way of life. They had very little contact with the modern world before the 1980s from which time they suffered hugely from Brazilian gold miners invading their land. The miners shot them, destroyed their villages and exposed them to diseases to which they had no immunity. These illegal gold prospecting activities have introduced other problems such as alcoholism, and mercury contamination. Twenty percent of the Yanomami died in just seven years due to massacres and diseases brought by invaders.

The Amazon is the largest tropical rainforest and the largest river basin in the world. It is located in South America, and with an area of more than 2.8 million square miles, is almost as big as Australia.

Brink will be working closely with Oxfam and Survival International to raise awareness of the plight of indigenous tribes and their natural environment in the mighty Indigenous Peoples of the Americas – Levels 5 and 6
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Amazon.

EARTH CHARTER

This module of work is closely tied to the principles expressed in the "Earth Charter" which is a declaration of "fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society in the 21st century". At present the Yanomami people are fighting to exist in such a society.

This unit aims to affirm the right of Yanomami to their spirituality, knowledge, lands and resources and to their related practice of sustainable livelihood (12b). It encourages students to take action so as to guarantee Yanomami's rights to uncontaminated soil and food sources, clean air and food security (9a). The students should recognise and preserve the traditional knowledge and spiritual wisdom in Yanomami culture that contributes to environmental protection and human well-being (8b).

RATIONALE

This module aims to engender in students an awareness and appreciation of the unique Amazonian environment and the indigenous inhabitants - the Yanomami. Students gain knowledge of the value of the Amazon and study the cultural aspects of the Yanomami that are inextricably linked to their natural environment. They gain an awareness of the threats to the Amazon and the impact of these threats upon the people and environment. Students use analytical and decision making skills in order to take action relevant to this issue.

KEY VALUES AND CONCEPTS

The most significant key value underpinning this unit is Ecological and Economic Sustainability which focuses on *'the need to protect environments for their intrinsic value, for their heritage value and as a resource to sustain life in the present and for future generations'* (SOSE syllabus p.2). Students' study of the importance of maintaining harmony between the environment and the indigenous inhabitants and taking positive action, enables them to develop an understanding of the concept of *stewardship*. This module also encompasses the other key values of Democratic Process, Social Justice and Peace as students also focus on the concepts of *human rights, equity and cooperation*.

In this module students actively interpret and critically analyse various forms of media and develop their own arguments and opinions. They are given opportunities to evaluate and express their feelings and beliefs and to develop equitable and just courses of action.

SKILLS

This module has been developed using *Blooms Taxonomy* (Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation) and *Multiple Intelligences*. It provides a range of activities that cater to various learning styles, thus engaging students and allowing them to become active learners.

The module enables students to develop various skills and competencies. These include literacy, numeracy and life skills such as; collecting information, analysis and organisation, communication, graphing and mapping, team work, problem solving and using technology.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

Key Question

What challenges are facing the Amazon and its peoples? What role do governments play in managing the development of the Amazon? How do activities in the Amazon affect individuals in Australia?

1. Where is the Amazon?
2. What is the value of this area?
3. What activities have impacted on this area?
4. Who are the indigenous people of this area?
5. How have the Yanomami (one indigenous group) traditionally lived?
6. What events have led to the breakdown of the Yanomami culture?
7. What actions have the governments of Brazil and Venezuela taken to manage development of the Amazon area? Who has benefited from this management?
8. What management strategies are being offered by interested parties?
9. What can an individual in Australia do to create a positive outcome for this issue?

KEY CONCEPTS

Environment
Sustainable communities
Bio-diversity
Justice
Exploitation

Culture
Economic system
Garimperios
Epidemic
Impact

Government, including legislation
Land Rights/Ownership
Indigenous peoples
Colonisation
Multinational corporations

ASSESSMENT IDEAS

1. Persuasive oral presentation - student takes on role of an interested party and advocates a certain course of action.
2. Research essay
3. Letter to President of Brazil or Venezuelan President arguing for a particular course of action.
4. Letter to Editor
5. PowerPoint Presentation
6. Creation of Web Site supporting a particular group
7. Tourist brochure
8. Pamphlet for a Non-government organisation that works in the Amazon