

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>TEACHER</b>	<b>GRADE</b>	<b>DATE</b>
Various	Tennessee Educator	K-5	Spring 2018

## **Ten Plants That Changed Tennessee Nomination Lesson Plan**

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OVERVIEW: THIS LESSON PLAN WAS DESIGNED TO HELP GUIDE STUDENTS AND TEACHERS IN THEIR NOMINATION OF A PLANT THEY BELIEVE HAS HAD THE LARGEST IMPACT ON TENNESSEE, ITS PEOPLE, CULTURE, AND HISTORY.

### **BACKGROUND**

Thousands of years ago, some of our country's first inhabitants are believed to have hunted and camped in what is now Tennessee. The Spanish passed through our area on three expeditions in the mid-1500's. In 1795, a territorial census revealed a sufficient population for statehood and Tennessee became the 16th state of the union in 1796.

Our state is skinny, just 112 miles wide, but stretches over 400 miles from the Appalachian Mountain boundary with North Carolina to the Mississippi River in the west. Tennessee is known as a hub of both blues and country music, and has played host to some of the most well-known musicians in history. People from all over congregate in Memphis each year for its famous barbecue event "Memphis in May." We have a lot to celebrate in Tennessee; but what about the plants that have impacted this great state?

Tennessee has a strong horticultural history. Beyond the basics of conversion of carbon dioxide to oxygen, a multitude of plants have been important to our history. During the first half of 2018 the UT Institute of Agriculture will be accepting nominations from students across the state to help choose the "10 plants that changed Tennessee." Elementary classes will be asked to choose a plant (or plants) to nominate that fit into one of 6 categories: environmental; economic or industrial; cultural/spiritual; historical; food/sustenance; and landscape. Plants will be judged by their impact – both positive and negative across all of our state's history.

This is more than just a fun exercise, based on the results of nominations, a panel of experts will choose an official list of the 10 plants that have had the broadest impact on Tennessee. This information will then be used to create educational resources for Tennessee's elementary schools in a variety of subjects including biology and history. This is your chance to play an important role in this initiative. We need your class to take time to ponder a plant or plants to nominate.

## **Teacher Guide**

### **Setting the Stage**

Ask students to think about where they see plants growing and how they use different plants in their daily lives.

1. What plant can you think of that might be important for the Tennessee economy or businesses or industries?
2. What plants are important in Tennessee history?
3. Are there any plants that are important for your or other cultures you know?
4. What plants do you know that help protecting our environment?
5. Are there any plants that hurt our environment?
6. What plants are important for the food we eat?
7. Are there any plants that help make farmers work harder?
8. What plant to you see around you are important in our home and school landscapes?

### **Helping your class understand the categories for nomination:**

Step one in identifying plants that impacted Tennessee is to understand the categories for nomination. This could be done in a variety of ways. One possible activity would be writing the six categories on the board and have them give examples (of any kind) for each (Economic, Historical, Cultural, Environmental, Food or Nutritional, Landscape).

As a follow up to this discussion, see if students can name a plant that might be associated with each category.

### **Enrichment:**

If possible take students on an outdoor walk to observe the plants they have at their school. This could include playgrounds, school gardens, etc. During the walk have students point out plants they see outside. After the walk, have a discussion with students about plants they saw and plants they know of but did not see.

### **Engaging multiple learning styles:**

Have the students create a poem using a plant they thought of during the earlier activities. This can help students express their feelings, values, and beliefs in a creative and artistic way.

In **acrostic** poetry the first letter in each line, when read vertically, spells out the name of something or conveys some other kind of message. Encourage students to consider the six categories for nomination and try to incorporate at least two of these categories into their poem. Students could use their plant in place of the below example.

**T**all and towering

**R**eaching upward

**E**xtending branches

**E**mbracing the sky

### **Activity**

Develop a creative way to nominate a plant or plants that have had an impact on Tennessee. Again, a class could nominate one plant as a group or many plants as individuals. This nomination can take any form you would like that fits into your class schedule.

**Each submission must include:**

The name of the plant, what category you are nominating it within, and justification of why this plant has had such a large impact on our state.

Please send your submission in before June 1, 2018

**Submissions can happen a variety of ways:**

On the website: **tenplants.tennessee.edu** (electronic form written submissions)

On Facebook: **fb.me/tenplants** (digital submissions, video, photos, etc.)

By Mail: (submissions of student artwork, drawings, creative work, etc.)

**Ten Plants That Changed Tennessee**

**Attention: Dr. Andy Pulte – PLSC #267**

**2431 Joe Johnson Drive**

**Knoxville, TN 37996**

The submission process is quick and easy and you should feel free to submit in a way that is easiest for you and your class. Additionally, you can feel free to nominate a single plant as a class, or have each student nominate their own plant.

**Questions?** Please feel free to reach out to us at [tenplants@tennessee.edu](mailto:tenplants@tennessee.edu)