Climate Change Collection Scorecard

Date: March 13, 2005

Reviewer: Jack Ganse

Name of resource: Time and Cycles: Dendrochronology

Sponsoring Organization: UCAR LEARN

URL: http://www.ucar.edu/learn/1_2_2_11t.htm

Site Homepage: http://www.ucar.edu/learn/

RESOURCE WITHIN A SITE? [Y] / N

FOUND THROUGH DLESE? [Y] / N

IF SO, WHICH COLLECTIONS? DLESE Community Collection (DCC), Community Review System (CRS)

RECOMMENDATION [YES] YES WITH RESERVATIONS NO

STARS 1 2 [3] 4 5 (LAME TO STELLAR)

NARRATIVE (USE OTHER SIDE IF NEEDED) This website presents a simple laboratory activity using simulated tree ring data. Students learn about tree rings and their growth, examine sample tree ring cores, and use the data to explain how the tree's growth and climatic conditions are related. Both a teacher guide and a student guide are included, along with a template for simulated tree ring cores.

INTENDED USE

___ REFERENCE
___ COMPUTER ACTIVITY
_X_ NON-COMPUTER ACTIVITY
EDUCATOR, LEARNER OR [BOTH] (CIRCLE) IF FOR LEARNER, EVIDENCE ITS BEEN TESTED? [Y] / N
[BEGINNER] OR ADVANCED (CIRCLE)

Easily Printed? Y / [N] HTML only, no PDF document…

BUGS & TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES (PROBLEMATIC TO ROBUST)

1 2 [3] 4

COMMENTS: Basic HTML with a few images. There is a broken link to the original USGS source for this activity.

SCIENTIFIC ACCURACY- FACTUAL ERRORS/OMISSIONS (NATIONAL ENQUIRER TO NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC)

1 2 3 [4]

EVIDENCE IT HAS BEEN REVIEWED FOR ACCURACY? [Y] / N

COMMENTS: Good references provided.

PEDAGOGICAL INFORMATION

____ REFERENCE ONLY
__X_ TEACHER GUIDE
__X_ MATERIALS LIST
__X_ ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES
__X_ TIMEFRAME PROVIDED
__X_ STANDARDS ALIGNMENT INDICATED

PROMOTES STUDENT LEARNING (WEAK TO STRONG)

1 2 [3] 4

COMMENTS: The activity has an intended audience of 6^{th} to 8^{th} grade, but I think it would be a little simplistic for 8^{th} graders. Students should be able to understand how to read tree rings after doing this activity, but I fear they will make only a cursory connection between tree rings and climate unless further support is provided beyond this activity.

APPROPRIATE/EFFECTIVE MULTIMEDIA DESIGN (WEAK TO STRONG)

1 [2] 3 4

COMMENTS: This site uses bare-bones HTML only. The one picture of an actual tree slice could be improved with a link to a much larger image.

VISUAL APPEAL (WEAK TO STRONG)
1 [2] 3 4
COMMENTS: The site is simple in appearance. It is not flashy, but neither is it complicated and overwhelming.

TEACHING TIPS: ANNOTATION DESCRIBING HOW SITE COULD BE USED OR ADAPTED FOR CLASSROOM: This is a good basic activity. The lab could be supplemented with actual tree cores that are collected by students, if trees are available nearby. A tree-corer would be needed for this. Alternately, a teacher could find out if sample tree cores are available to borrow from a local agency, such as the Forest Service, NOAA, NCAR, etc.

RECOMMENDATION: ANNOTATION DESCRIBING HOW THE DEVELOPER COULD IMPROVE THE SITE. This site needs an update to take advantage of current web technology:

- PDF versions of the student activity would be much appreciated.
- How about a video clip showing an actual tree core sample being taken?
- Fix the broken link to the USGS.

For 8th graders, this activity needs more support as far as understanding why tree rings are important in the study of climate. Maybe there should be beginner, intermediate, and advanced versions of this lab…

Revised 12/3/04