ACTIVITY:
“Marsh Mysteries”: A Quiz on Louisiana’s Wetlands

Objectives:
1. Use the Internet to create and score quizzes on wetlands, the Lake Pontchartrain Basin, or other topics.

Teaching Materials:
- Computer with internet provider
- Copies of “Marsh Mysteries: A Quiz on Louisiana’s Wetlands” handout (Page 287)

Getting Ready:
2. Organize students into partner pairs, if desired.
3. Be sure that students are familiar with use of the Internet and with the website.
4. Review the functions of Quiz Lab with students.

Procedure:
1. Sign on to Quiz Lab by going to http://www.funbrain.com and clicking on the Quiz Lab icon.
2. If you are a registered user, log on to the site. If you are not already registered, you may do so easily by following the simple steps outlined on the site.
3. Once you have a username and password, you can access your private area within Quiz Lab. You can sign on from any computer connected to the Internet.
4. Select a “Secret Word” for your students to use when signing on to take this particular quiz or any others you choose to make.
5. To construct a quiz on Louisiana’s wetlands, click on the “Create A New Quiz” link. Follow the online prompts about the type of quiz you want to make. Enter the questions and other information about your quiz.
6. When your students sign on, they will see the quiz that you selected for them. They take the quiz by answering each of the questions as they are presented.
7. At the end of the day or week (your choice), the results of student quizzes will be e-mailed directly to you. At any time, you can sign in and see your students’ scores for any of your quizzes by logging in with your username and password. Click on “View Student Scores” or “Gradebook.” You can even see details about any questions answered incorrectly.
8. Change any questions in any of your quizzes by selecting “View and Edit Quizzes.”
Extensions:

1. Make a handout for your students that tells them how to enter the Quiz Lab using their secret word. Click on the “Student Handout” link and print the page.

2. To access the huge library of quizzes made by other teachers, click on “Ready-Made Quizzes.” Select the grade level and subject of the type of quiz you want. You will then see a list of quizzes from which to select. Browse the selections carefully. If the one you choose meets your needs, click on “Import Quiz.” Otherwise, hit the BACK button to browse more quizzes. We have entered a quiz entitled “LA Marsh Mysteries” using some of the questions provided in this lesson. Look for it in Quiz Lab.

3. Share the wealth! Add your own quizzes to the quiz bank for other teachers to use.

Assessment Procedures:


2. Student scores on the Internet quiz “Marsh Mysteries” will be e-mailed to the teacher.
“Marsh Mysteries”
A Quiz on Louisiana’s Wetlands

In this activity you will check your knowledge of Louisiana wetlands by using the Internet to take an online quiz. When you have finished taking the quiz, your score will be reported to your teacher by e-mail. Just follow these simple directions:

   - Go to the “KIDS” section.
   - Click on “Take Your Teacher’s Quiz” to access the “Student Login” screen.
   - Enter your name and the secret word provided to you by your teacher.
   - As soon as you sign in you will see the quiz prepared by your teacher.
   - Take the quiz by answering each of the questions as they are presented by Quiz Lab.
   - That’s it! Your score will be e-mailed to your teacher.

II. How well did you do? What did you learn? Complete this self-assessment after you’ve taken the quiz.

1. Something difficult or confusing about the quiz was______________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

2. Something interesting or fun about the quiz was________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

3. The most important thing I learned from taking the quiz was____________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

4. I could improve my performance on the quiz by________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________

5. The quiz made me want to learn more about _________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________________________________
The majority of these questions came from the March 18, 2001 Times-Picayune article “Marsh Madness,” written by Bob Marshall, Outdoors Editor of the Times-Picayune.

1. The largest expanse of wetlands in the continental United States is in
   (a) Chesapeake Bay  (b) Alaska  (c) Louisiana

2. How much coastal land has Louisiana lost due to erosion?
   (a) 10,000 acres  (b) 50,000 acres  (c) more than 1,000 square miles

3. The major cause of Louisiana’s coastal land loss has been
   (a) natural subsidence of deltas  (b) hurricanes
   (c) nutria  (d) canal dredging

4. A wetland is
   (a) a natural resource  (b) a home to wildlife
   (c) a reservoir for floodwaters  (d) all of these

5. The heaviest Louisiana snowfall ever was
   (a) 2 inches  (b) 10 inches
   (c) 24 inches  (d) 8 inches

6. Wetlands are
   (a) fragile ecosystems  (b) being developed at a fast rate
   (c) often polluted by human actions  (d) all of these

7. Louisiana leads the nation in seafood production.
   (a) true  (b) false

8. The heaviest single-day rainfall in coastal Louisiana was
   (a) 22 inches  (b) 12 inches
   (c) 35 inches  (d) 3 feet

9. Louisiana contains the nation’s most prolific estuaries.
   (a) true  (b) false  (c) probably

10. How many species of snakes are found in the coastal wetlands?
    (a) 27  (b) 17  (c) 10  (d) none

11. Ducks fly south and trees drop their leaves during the fall due to falling temperatures.
    (a) true  (b) false

12. How many species of frogs are found in coastal Louisiana?
    (a) 18  (b) 27  (c) 45
13. The driest year on record in Louisiana was 2000.
   (a) true  (b) false

14. The following animals once thrived in Louisiana.
   (a) elk       (b) bison       (c) grizzly bear
   (d) red wolf (e) all of these

15. The state fish is
   (a) largemouth bass     (b) crappie
   (c) speckled trout       (d) bullhead catfish

16. The driest month of the year in Louisiana is
   (a) November (b) June (c) March (d) October

17. The state bird is the
   (a) white pelican       (b) brown pelican
   (c) bald eagle          (d) mockingbird

18. White pelicans migrate to Louisiana in the winter from
   (a) Florida (b) Cuba (c) Chalmette (d) American NW & Canadian West

19. The state reptile is the
   (a) king cobra          (b) king snake
   (c) alligator           (d) water moccasin

20. The state amphibian is the
    (a) green tree frog     (b) bull frog
    (c) toad               (d) box turtle

21. Louisiana is one of the oldest land masses in the nation.
    (a) true  (b) false

22. There are more white-tailed deer and other wildlife in Louisiana today than 50 years ago.
    (a) true  (b) false

23. Louisiana’s record high temperature was
    (a) 105°F, July 1997 (b) 110°F, July 1995  (c) 114°F, August 1936

24. The primary plant in the salt marsh is
    (a) Spartina alterniflora  (b) Roseau cane
    (c) St. Augustine grass  (d) Widgeon grass

25. The coastal marsh is New Orleans’ greatest protection against hurricanes.
    (a) true  (b) false
ANSWERS to “Marsh Mysteries” Questions:

1. C According to federal figures, 40% of the wetlands left in the continental U.S. (about 7,000 square miles) are in Louisiana, far more than any other state. Remember: 80% of the nation’s wetland loss has already occurred in Louisiana!

2. C LSU reported that from 1932-90, 687,502 acres (more than 1,000 square miles) were lost, an area about the size of Rhode Island. Since then, the loss has averaged about 25-35 square miles per year.

3. D A recent study by the federal government says 44% of Louisiana’s coastal land loss is due to canal dredging: 31% for oil and gas development; 13% for shipping.

4. D

5. C

6. D

7. False. Or true, depending on the year! Alaska is usually #1, with Louisiana #2, but it depends on the year.


9. Probably. State and federal research has shown that 85% of the commercial catch in the Gulf of Mexico depends on estuaries, most of which are in Louisiana.

10. A

11. False. It’s shorter days, not lower temperatures. Researchers believe that the number of hours of light in a day is the key to autumnal changes in nature.

12. A

13. False. Though 2000 was a pretty dry year with 48.19 inches of rainfall, Louisiana’s driest was 1889 when only 36.81 inches of rain were recorded.

14. E Surprise! All were abundant when the first Europeans arrived in the 17th Century. Habitat loss and unregulated hunting drove these species from the state. LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is trying to reintroduce the red wolf to south Louisiana.

15. B Crappie is also known as sac-a-lait.

16. D

17. B

18. D

19. C

20. A

21. False. Louisiana consists of thick layers of alluvial sediments that, in geologic terms, are relatively young. They’re not nearly as old as some of the rocks in states like Tennessee and Colorado.

22. True. In the early 1900s, habitat loss and unregulated hunting almost wiped out whitetail deer and most other game animals in Louisiana. Conservation groups organized in the 1930s by sportsmen initiated a comeback.

23. C Plain Dealing, LA recorded 114° F on August 10, 1936.

24. A Spartina alterniflora is also known as oyster grass. Its roots hold soil together and its stems provide food for mammals.

25. True. Scientists say 2-3 miles of marsh will reduce a storm surge by one foot. This is critical for New Orleans, a “city in a saucer” that is 15 feet below sea level in some places.