

**ACCOUNTS OF
MONTEVERDE:
CORTOMETRAJES**



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Description

In this lesson, students will analyze a short film about the Monteverde Reserve, then teach the class about it. Students will then investigate answers to questions asked about their presentation, writing a response to each in an informational, five-paragraph essay.

Subjects

English

Grade Level

9-12

Duration

60 minutes

Tour Links

- [Monteverde Cloud Forest, Costa Rica](#)

Essential Questions

- What is the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve?
- Why is the Monteverde Reserve under protection?
- What types of people are necessary to protect the cloud forest successfully?

Academic Summary

The Monteverde Cloud Forest: over 35,089 acres of protected land in Costa Rica, housing over 100 species of mammals, 400 species of birds, and 1200 species of amphibians and reptiles, and... founded by Americans?

That's right. In 1948, young men throughout the United States were called to military service in order to wage war on the Korean peninsula. This conflicted with the Religious Society of Friends (better known as Quakers), a religious group that not only objected to war and all forms of violence, but also actively promoted peace and pacifism. In 1949, four young Quakers from the Meeting of Friends in Fairhope, Alabama refused to register for the draft and were sent to prison. After their release, forty-four Quaker families left Fairhope and moved to Costa Rica. Pepe Figueres, the president there, had recently abolished the Costa Rican army. Could this be a place where the Quakers could finally live in peace?

After months of searching for a spot that would suit their new community, the Quakers finally settled on a piece of land in a cloud forest they named *Monteverde* (*Green Hill* in Spanish). The group bought about 1400 hectares (about 3500 acres) of this land, setting aside 554 hectares to protect their water supply and clearing the rest for housing and dairy farming.

In the 1960s, biologists, herpetologists (dedicated to the study of amphibians and reptiles), and ornithologists (dedicated to the study of birds), flocked to Monteverde, drawn by accounts of others viewing exotic creatures in its forest and intrigued by its English-speaking population. In 1970, two biology students from California visited the forest and immediately became concerned about its protection. At the rate the deforestation was going the whole forest would disappear, along with its fauna and flora. The students, George and Harriet Powell, worked with the Quakers and the Tropical Science Center in San José to protect the cloud forest. With their help, along with donations from the United States, the Monteverde Cloud Forest Biological Preserve was formed.

That was in 1972. Today, the Monteverde Reserve continues to increase its protective reach and spread the word of conservation to others. In this lesson, students will analyze a short film about the Monteverde Reserve, then teach the class about it. Students will then investigate answers to questions asked about their presentation, writing a response to each in an informational, five-paragraph essay.

Objectives

1. Students will analyze a short film about the Monteverde Reserve using guided questions.
2. Students will teach their classmates about the occupation covered in their assigned short film.
3. Students will formulate questions about their classmates' oral presentations.
4. Students will investigate answers to their classmates' questions, presenting their findings in an informational, five-paragraph essay.

Materials

- Computer Lab, with Internet connection
- Headphones or Speakers
- *Monteverde* *Ya!* Video Response Sheet

Procedure

I. Anticipatory Set (5 minutes)

- Write the words *bosque* and *nuboso* on the board. What words do we know, in Spanish or another language, that are similar to these words? The word *bosque* has a similar etymology to the English word *bush* — both come from the word *bosc* in Old French, meaning *wood*. This is the same root that gives us the words *bouquet* (in English) and *buqué* (in Spanish). The word *nuboso* is the adjective form of the Spanish word *nube*, or *cloud*. In turn, this word comes from the Latin word *nubes*, meaning the same thing. Knowing all of this, it is easy to remember that the word *bosque* translates to *forest*, and *nuboso* translates to *cloudy*. What, then, do you think the term *bosque nuboso* translates to? (Answer: *Cloud forest*.)
- Think-Pair-Share: What is a *bosque nuboso* (“cloud forest”)? (Or, what do you think a “cloud forest” is?) Think about the question for 10 seconds on your own, then discuss your thoughts with a partner for 30 seconds. Afterwards, share your opinions with the class.

Answer: A cloud forest is a tropical forest, often located near the peaks of coastal mountains, that usually has constant cloud cover throughout the year.

II. Body of Lesson (50 minutes)

- Monteverde Introduction: Today, we are going to learn about the Monteverde Cloud Forest in Costa Rica. Can you guess how it got its name? (*Monte verde* in Spanish translates to *Green Hill*.) The Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve (the part of the forest under protection) covers over 35,089 acres of land. Within the boundaries of the reserve, there are over 100 species of mammals, 400 species of birds, and 1200 species of amphibians and reptiles.
- Class Discussion: Why do you think the land is under protective care? How does one go about protecting land like this? What types of people are needed in order for the mission of the Monteverde Reserve to be accomplished successfully? Brainstorm as a class, writing student responses on the board.
- Circle any responses similar to pioneer, conservationist, guide, biologist, farmer, educator, researcher, specialist, milkman, tourism operator, or coffee grower. Then, fill in any missing occupations. These are the types of people we will be focusing on today.
- Split up the class into partners (or small groups, depending on how many computers are available). Then, pass out the *Monteverde ¡Ya!* video response sheet to each student. Assign an occupation to each group, having them write the occupation name on the top of their sheet next to “Cortometraje.”
- Direct students to the site entitled “11 Cortometrajes Sobre los que Viven y Trabajan en el Bosque Nuboso de Monteverde.” Here, students will find 11 short films, each one dedicated to a different occupation on the board. Each group should listen to their assigned *cortometraje*, then fill out the analysis worksheet in response to their findings.
- After each group has finished the assignment, they will present their findings to the class in the target language. After each presentation, open the floor up for

questions from the audience. Each group is expected to ask one question about the presentation. It can be something they wish to be clarified, expanded upon, etc. Write the questions on the board, leaving enough room for each presentation.

III. Closure (5 minutes)

- Class Discussions: What have we learned about the Monteverde Reserve today? Why is the land under protective care? How does one go about protecting land like this?
- At the end of the presentations, the board should be filled with questions. Instruct each group to review the questions asked about their presentation. Each group member should write down one question that interests them in particular (ideally a different question for each group member).
- Homework: Research an answer to one of the questions asked about your presentation. In complete sentences, write a five-paragraph informational response. Make sure to cite your sources!

Extension

On tour: Monteverde Cloud Forest

Make your way to Monteverde, perhaps the richest and best-known biological reserve in the world. The count is in: between 320 and 400 species of birds, between 2000 and 2500 species of plants, and 100 different mammals inhabit this place. (Almost certainly more, since new species are being constantly identified.) Hear the mysterious call of the three-wattled bellbird echo among giant oaks and palm trees. Bring a notepad and pencil (or if you're feeling creative, a video camera!). Interview an employee or native of the area. What do they know about the history of Monteverde? What do they think the future holds for the reserve? Can you classify this person in one of the categories from the cortometrajes (i.e. pioneer, conservationist, guide, biologist, farmer, educator, researcher, specialist, milkman, tourism operator, or coffee grower)?

Web Links

- <http://monteverdeya.wordpress.com/los-cortometrajes/>
“11 Cortometrajes Sobre los que Viven y Trabajan en el Bosque Nuboso de Monteverde” (Spanish). From “Monteverde ¡Ya!- Voces desde el Bosque Nuboso”, a collection of personal accounts and professional observations from those who live and work in the Monteverde Cloud Forest. “Monteverde ¡Ya!” is dedicated to raising awareness about changes in the environment that cannot be ignored, particularly in the Monteverde region of Costa Rica. This entire lesson plan revolves around the interviews from this site!
- www.flickr.com/photos/jacques-haeberle/sets/72157625961701558/show/
“Monteverde Then”, by Wonderful Life o6 (Flickr). A slideshow showcasing authentic photographs of the Monteverde Cloud Forest in the 1950s from Quaker pioneers.
- www.monteverdetours.com/history-of-monteverde.html
“History of Monteverde and the Quakers”, from the official Desafio Adventures Co. website. Provides a detailed history of the settling of the Quakers in Monteverde, and the founding of the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve through George and Harriet Powell.

Key Terms

- **el biólogo** biologist
- **el bosque nuboso** cloud forest
- **el cafetalero** coffee grower
- **cloud forest** a tropical forest, often located near the peaks of coastal mountains, that usually has constant cloud cover throughout the year
- **el conservacionista** conservationist
- **el educador** educator
- **el finquero** farmer
- **el guía** guide
- **el investigador** researcher
- **el lechero** milkman
- **el operador de turismo** tourism operator
- **el pionero** pioneer
- **el técnico** specialist

