Virginia Master Naturalist Program Basic Training

Forest Ecology and Management Assessment Ideas



Written assessment question ideas:

- 1. For each of these forest types, (1) list two tree species you may be likely to find in the overstory, (2) list three small tree or shrub species you might find in the understory, and (3) describe one other defining characteristic of this forest type.
 - a. Oak-hickory growing in the western part of the state
 - b. Bottomland hardwood growing on the coastal plain
 - c. Southern pine growing in the piedmont
- 2. Describe what selective cutting (high grading) is, why it is detrimental to the health and productivity of a forest stand, and how it is different than a silvicultural harvest.
- 3. Describe three factors that influence the species composition and distribution of trees in a forest.

Practical assessment activity ideas:

- 1. Visit a forested natural area (or look at pictures from one), identify the forest type, and describe what characteristics led you to recognize that forest type.
- 2. Visit a forested site and describe the characteristics of the forest floor, herbaceous layer, shrub layer, understory, and canopy. Are any of these components missing? What species can you recognize in each layer?
- 3. Give a 2 minute informal talk about a forest health issue, such as an invasive pest or disease.
- 4. Identify one approved project in the chapter that relates to Forest Ecology and Management *or* propose an idea for a new project on this topic.

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