

Teacher's Guide for ODYSSEY[®] *Keepers of the Glades*

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Alligators are known as the original “Keepers of the Everglades.” How did they get that nickname?

The Everglades is also known as “grassy waters” or “river of grass.” Pick a geographic feature in your city or state. What is its real name? How would you describe it using another name?

This ecosystem is a home to more than 600 kinds of animals and 900 plant species – plus the 60 or more mosquitoes!) This complex web of life has a wet-dry cycle that balances the cycle of life and death.

Why did Florida’s politicians set out to drain “the swamp” in the mid-19th century?

What crops did farmers grow? What industries developed to support this activity?

How did the community benefit?

Development continued in the early 1900s. Hundreds of miles of canals were dug in the Everglades. People bought land for farms. Catastrophic hurricanes in the Roaring Twenties killed thousands of people and destroyed property. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built more canals. Some citizens supported development; some spoke out on development’s negative impact on the Everglades.

Imagine that you live on a farm near the Everglades. Describe your life there in two to three pages OR

Imagine that you are an engineer who designs roads and canals. Describe why these structures are important to the area.

In 1900, Americans thought the Everglades was a disgusting swamp. By 2000, Americans considered it a national treasure.

What resources do we use to find out what South Florida and the Everglades were like in the 19th century?

Why do you think attitudes towards nature have changed so dramatically?

Wetlands depend on the regular overflow of the river. Business and commercial development in the wetlands typically has a negative effect on the environment.

What do the wetlands of mid-19th century Florida and early 20th century Louisiana have in common?

What natural resources were investors and suppliers seeking in each area?

What wetlands-based products and services do consumers buy?

Imagine that you are an investor who is financing a project in the early days of Everglades development.

What type of project are you supporting?

Write an ad encouraging people to move to the Everglades.

What points would you emphasize to attract them to the area?

Imagine that you are an environmentalist who is committing to restoring the natural harmony of the Everglades.

Do you have an area of expertise?

Write an ad (for TV, radio, or newspaper) encouraging people to support your cause.

Hundreds of plants and animals thrive in the Everglades but others are endangered.

Which endangered species live in the "river of grass"?

How did these animals (or plants) become endangered?

What efforts are underway to increase their numbers?