

Commonlit Connections - Lee Sherman and the Toxic Louisiana Bayou

Dylan Schombing

One hectare of old growth forest can store 1000 tonnes of carbon. We currently log 54,000 hectares of old growth forest per year. That's about 148 hectares per day, or 6.16 per hour. The funny part is, we know how bad this is for the environment and we aren't even doing anything about it. My letter connects to Lee Sherman and the Toxic Louisiana Bayou. Both my letter and the story suggest that we are destroying our environments and that we are well aware of it but still aren't changing.

We need to start being aware that our actions and consumption have consequences on the environment. We are in the midst of a climate crisis and having more forests will help us take more carbon out of the atmosphere, but what do we do? We log them. We log our forests for their wood because we want more things. If we don't start paying attention to how much this is hurting the environment, soon enough, we'll run out of forests to log.

In Lee Sherman and the Toxic Louisiana Bayou, Lee Sherman dumps toxic chemicals into the bayou despite him knowing how much harm it will do. The current situation with old growth forests is similar to this. We are destroying our forests and we know how bad it is. Lee Sherman probably would have lost his job if he hadn't cooperated and dumped the chemicals and in the end, he actually did end up losing his job, since he had to take a medical leave because of all the harm working with chemicals had done to him. This is similar to what we are doing now, since we are brushing aside the fact that old growth logging is hurting the environment because we make money from it, but soon, it's gonna come back to bite us if we keep logging and lose our old growth forests. Then, how are we supposed to make money off of trees that don't exist?

In conclusion, we are doing the same thing to our environment that Lee Sherman did in his story by logging our old growth forests without any care for the future. We need to start paying more attention to what we are doing to our environment before it's too late, and we're running out of time.