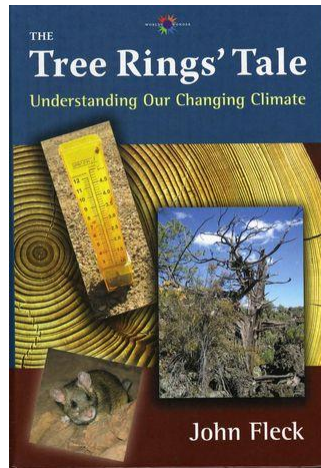


The Tree Rings' Tale



Brief summary and overall recommendation

Bibliographic info: Fleck, J. (2009). *The Tree Rings' Tale*. University of New Mexico Press: Albuquerque.

Audience: Middle

Brief summary: Set in the western USA, the science of tree rings (dendroclimatology) is used to tell how the climate has changed and how much water has been in the Colorado River each year for the past thousand years.

Main Climate Literacy Principle(s) (In bold)

1. The Sun is the primary source of energy for Earth's climate system.
2. Climate is regulated by complex interactions among components of the Earth system.
3. Life on Earth depends on, is shaped by, and affects climate.
4. Climate varies over space and time through both natural and man-made processes.
5. **Our understanding of the climate system is improved through observations, theoretical studies, and modeling.**
6. Human activities are impacting the climate system.
7. Climate change will have consequences for the Earth system and human lives.

Overall Recommendation: Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor

In-depth Review

Literary (Rating E): One of the strengths of this book is the choice of photos included to supplement the text. It is full of historic and modern photos of landscapes impacted by climate change. There are also photos of scientific instruments and equipment used by scientists.

The layout includes side bars of scientific explanations of specific science content allows for a little more depth and perspective to make connections to climate change. Throughout the book scientists, from the 1800's to the present, who study tree rings, are shown both from the research side and the personal side with biographical information. About half of the scientists represented are women, which is a high amount compared to most books with scientists in them.

Content (Rating E): This is one of the few children's climate change books that focuses on one topic in depth and one region, the Western US, to help students understand the scientific evidence explaining climate change. It informs them about the science of oceans, climate, trees rings, geology, astronomy, ancient people and how they all connect to provide a picture of what is happening to earth's climate and its impact on humans. Often climate change books mention sea level rising and flooding. This book focuses on the question of climate change and its impact on the water supply by exploring the possibility of a drought in the Colorado River system.

Every chapter includes a relevant science activity designed to support learning of content.

Environmental focus (Rating E): The book does not paint any doomsday scenarios. It allows students to look at data and how the data relates to climate change. It showcases the history of the Colorado River through the lens of climate change. The last chapter uses trees to help think about the future.

Solutions: This book does not contain the typical "what you can do to stop global warming" suggestions. It does not have solutions. Instead it sparks ideas and poses questions to think about the future without making predictions. The emphasis is placed on doing what scientists do- observe the weather, measuring temperatures for the effects of albedo, and more. Students doing the activities can find out for themselves about different aspects of climate change.

Resources: There is an extensive glossary, plus several recommended websites and books listed if you want to know more about climate change.

Unique qualities:

Focus on the West

History of dendrochronology

Scientist tree ring research

Activities at the end of each chapter

Overall Rating: Excellent Very Good Good Fair Poor

