

# CGC1P Unit 4: Canadian Industries

## Activity 2: Primary Industry: Forestry

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### Overview

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### Lesson

Canada is known internationally for its vast forests, so it's no surprise that the forestry industry is a big part of Canada's industrial economy. You might remember from the Introduction that there are two types of trees harvested (cut down) in Canada.

1. **Deciduous trees:** these trees are also called *hardwoods*. They take a long time to grow, so their wood is dense and hard. Examples of hardwoods are *maple and oak*. Hardwood is often used to make flooring or furniture.
2. **Coniferous trees:** these trees are also called *softwoods or evergreens*. They grow quickly, so their wood is soft. An example of softwood is *pine or cedar*. Spruce is made into 2X4's to build houses. Softwood is also used to make paper products.

**Old growth forest:** These are forests with huge, ancient trees that are sometimes a thousand years old. They are very valuable trees for logging companies. However, once they are gone, they cannot be replaced. The temperate rainforest of Vancouver Island is an example of an old growth forest.

### Environmental Issues

Many people refer to our forests as the *lungs* of the planet. This is because trees take in carbon dioxide and give off oxygen. Humans breathe out carbon dioxide, which is taken in by trees and trees give off oxygen, which is needed by humans to breathe. Therefore, many environmental activists are appalled by the rate at which our forests are being cut down. Clear-cutting is the process of harvesting trees by cutting down hundreds or thousands of hectares of forest at one time. It is cost efficient, so logging companies make more money. However, clear-cutting is damaging to the environment because it leads to the loss of animal habitat, to erosion, and to damage in river fish spawning beds because of soil erosion and run off.

Forestry is a multi-billion dollar industry in Canada. As of 2000, the forestry industry in Canada was worth **\$58 billion dollars per year** and employed indirectly and directly approximately one million people!

**Indirect employment:** These are jobs that are related to forestry but not directly. An example is a restaurant or grocery store that supplies food for loggers and their families.

**Direct employment:** These are jobs directly related to forestry. An example is a logger who cuts down trees.

### ***Harvesting Trees***

There are THREE ways to harvest trees from the forest. They are:

1. Clear-cutting: Cutting down everything over a huge area, leaving behind nothing but stumps.
2. Selective cutting: Cutting down only specific trees that the company needs.
3. Shelter Canopy: Leaving enough trees to keep a protective canopy over the soil.



An example of a clear-cut

There has been much controversy over the last ten years about clear-cutting practices. One very public protest was in British Columbia over an old growth forest (ancient trees that are hundreds or even thousands of years old) in Clayoquot Sound.

### **Assignment**

1. What is the difference between deciduous and coniferous trees?
2. What are some environmental issues associated with forestry in Canada?
3. What is the difference between direct and indirect employment?
4. What are the 3 ways of harvesting a forest?