

Name _____



Growth vs. Green

In *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss, the story explores an important conflict: the battle between economic growth and environmental preservation. The Once-ler arrives in a beautiful land filled with Truffula Trees, Bar-ba-loots, Swomee-Swans, and Humming-Fish. Instead of seeing the land's natural beauty, he sees a business opportunity. He chops down a Truffula Tree and creates a Thneed, a strange but useful product. Soon, people want more Thneeds, so the Once-ler builds a factory, hires workers, and cuts down even more trees to keep up with demand.

At first, his business grows quickly, bringing wealth and jobs. However, as more trees are cut down, the environment starts to suffer. The Lorax appears, speaking for the trees, warning the Once-ler that his actions are destroying the land. The Bar-ba-loots no longer have food, the Swomee-Swans can't breathe the smoky air, and the Humming-Fish are forced to leave their polluted water.

The Once-ler ignores these warnings because he believes success and money are more important. He keeps expanding his business until the very last Truffula Tree is cut down. Suddenly, his factory shuts down, his workers leave, and he is left alone in a destroyed land. Without the trees, he has nothing left to sell. His success was only temporary, but the damage to the environment is permanent.

The story shows that businesses and the environment are connected. While economic growth can bring success, ignoring the environment can lead to disaster. At the end of the story, the Once-ler realizes his mistake. He passes the last Truffula seed to a child, hoping they will rebuild what was lost. Dr. Seuss reminds readers that money and success should not come at the cost of nature. If people are not careful, they could end up like the Once-ler—alone in a world they have destroyed.