

Natural and cultural landscape in Palmaria island (Portovenere - SP)

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The Portovenere landscape, together with the Palmaria, Tino and Tinetto islands, are truly unique in terms of geo-morphology, ecology, anthropic landscape and architecture, each closely interconnected. In 1997 it was included in the World Heritage Site list. The area is protected and managed by Ente Parco Naturale Regionale di Porto Venere.

Usually students don't see and appreciate the features of the area where they live. How to recognize what is "natural" and what was built or modified by man is sometimes very difficult for them. This activity wants to give them tools for a correct landscape comprehension. The final goal is to increase their awareness of the richness of this place, because it is important to know both the natural and the human history if we want to maintain and increase the value of this territory.

We will start our research from the definition of cultural landscape as "the environment modified by the human being in the course of time, the long-term combination between anthropic action on this environment and the physical constraints limiting or conditioning human activity".

First of all we will brainstorm and introduce the concepts of natural and cultural characteristics of places; then students will try to identify these characteristics in their community.

Afterwards students will study the geology of the area: the different kinds of rocks, the main geologic and surface processes that modified and sculpted the landscape. They will learn to read geologic maps and to collect samples of rocks in order to organize a little but complete exposition.

During the on site surveys on Palmaria island, students will make descriptions and take pictures of the main different features of natural and human landscape. An exposition of the pictures and descriptions will be organized at school.