



Habitat Explorations

Grade Range: Elementary School

Lesson Time: 40 minutes

Key Terms

Burrow	Shelter
Habitat	Soil
Home	
Living	
Nature	
Protection	

Materials and Resources

Habitat Four Corners Activity
 Habitat Comparisons Worksheet
 Animals and Their Homes Sort Cards

Activity Overview

Are you ready to go on a habitat exploration? If you took a trip around your neighborhood, you would see an incredible variety of habitats, everything from parks to ponds. In this activity, students will be explorers who travel around their communities to observe various land and water habitats. Students will collect, record, organize, and compare data about the variety of plants and animals in different habitats.

Essential Question

1. How can there be so many similarities among organisms yet so many different kinds of plants, animals, and microorganisms?

Objectives

- Observe land and water habitats
- Describe the variety of living things found in different habitats
- Collect, record, organize, and compare data on different types of plants and animals in the habitats

Introduction

To begin this activity, have students complete the Habitat Four Corners Activity using the provided materials. Prior to the students' arrival, post one of the four different habitat pictures in each corner of the classroom, and cut apart and shuffle the plant and animal cards. Tell the students that each corner of the classroom represents a different habitat: pond, park, river, or garden. Explain that in nature a habitat is a place where many plants and animals live. Hand each student a random card, face down. Tell the students that when you say "go," they should flip over their card and go stand in the corner with the habitat where their plant or animal would live. Once all students have chosen a habitat, have them discuss with their corner's group why they chose that habitat for their plant or animal. Have each group choose a spokesperson to share what plants and animals live in that habitat and why these organisms choose to live there. Explain to students that they will explore a variety of land and water habitats that exist around them. Tell the students to use the Habitat Comparisons worksheet to collect, record, organize, and compare data about the plants and animals in different habitats.

zSpace Activity

Activity Questions Provided in StudioA3

Answers may vary. Sample answers are provided below.

1. There is no place like home! Your home is a special place where you find shelter, protection, food, and water. Most likely, your home is located in a neighborhood, an area where many people live near each other in homes.
2. Plants and animals have special homes, too. However, in nature, their homes are found in “neighborhoods” called habitats, areas where many different animals and plants live together. Look at these examples of homes and habitats in nature. What is the difference between a home and a habitat?
A habitat is a place in nature where many different plants and animals live. A home, on the other hand, is a specific shelter within a habitat where a certain type of animal lives. For example, bees live in a beehive home within a forest habitat.
3. A home is a shelter for one type of animal. A habitat is a place where many different plants and animals live together in nature. Today we will explore some homes and habitats that you might find near where you live. Name one habitat that could be found near your home.
A habitat near my home could be a garden or a park.
4. Did you know that a garden is a habitat? Many plants and animals live there together. Take a look at this garden habitat that might be right outside your front door. Move three things that live in the garden under the Note that says “Living Things.” Take a photo.
Photo: Bugs, butterflies, and flowers.
5. If you look below the garden, you will see another habitat that is home to many animals, such as insects, worms, and small mammals. It is the soil and underground tunnels! Soil is the upper layer of earth where plants grow and animals burrow or dig. Why do you think the soil habitat is important for these living things?
Soil is a safe place where plants can find the nutrients to grow and animals can find shelter and protection.
6. Down the street from your home, you see another habitat for animals and plants. It is a park with lots of large trees that provide homes for animals to live in. Move two animals that might make this tree their home into the tree. Take a photo.
Photo: The bird, owl, bee, and/or squirrel placed on the tree.
7. While you are in the park, you see a duck flying to a pond. This is the duck’s habitat. It lives both in and around the pond. It will build a nest here as a home where it can raise its young. Explore the other living things in this pond habitat. What other animal could live both in and around the pond?
Another animal that could live in and around a pond is a frog.
8. As you leave the pond, you remember a time when your family went to a nearby lake. This habitat was much larger than the pond and was home to many different animals. Why did these animals choose to live here?
These animals can find food, shelter, protection, and water in this habitat.
9. Now it is time to return to your home because you are going fishing at the local river later today. You start to think about the living things that you will see in this habitat. Add models of animals that you would find in and around this river. Take a photo.
Photo: Fish, beaver, snake, and lizard placed in and around the river.
10. When you get to school the next day, you tell your friends about the homes and habitats you saw the day before. You and your friends decide to compare two different habitats: a pond and a garden. Move these animals into their correct habitats. Place the animals that could live in both habitats underneath the middle label. Take a photo.

Photo: The fish, turtle, frog, and duck should be placed in the pond habitat; the rabbit and mouse should be placed in the garden habitat; and the insects, snail, and worm should be placed underneath the middle label.

11. Now you and your friends decide to compare another water habitat and land habitat: a river and a park. This time, some of the animals and plants are in the wrong habitat. Can you help fix the mistakes? Move the plants and animals into their correct habitats. Take a photo of the finished scenes.

Photo: The crocodile, fish, and salamander should be moved to the river. The owl, sparrow, and bee should be moved to the park.

12. The next time you step outside your house, see what habitats you can find! Or better yet, see what habitats you can find outside your classroom the next time you go to recess!

Closing

Questions for Discussion

Answers may vary. Sample answers are provided below.

1. What is a habitat?

A habitat is a place in nature where many plants and animals live.

2. What is the difference between a habitat and a home?

A habitat is a place in nature where many different plants and animals live. A home, on the other hand, is a specific shelter within a habitat where a certain type of animal lives. For example, bees live in a beehive and bears live in a cave. Both of these animals' homes could be found in the same forest habitat.

3. What do all habitats provide to living things?

Habitats provide food, water, protection, and shelter that living things need to survive.

Differentiation

Supports for Struggling Learners

- Group students heterogeneously to allow students with a strong command of the English language to assist in reading or interpreting questions
- Use text to speech for struggling learners
- Provide a glossary of terms used in this activity
- Allow students to provide answers that are handwritten, typed, or verbal
- Have students work as partners or in small groups

Supports for All Learners

- Give students choices in the materials that they produce to demonstrate their learning based on learning style (creating charts/graphs, PowerPoint, making 3D presentations, creating videos/movies, blogging, making posters, skits, creating a board game)
- Provide tiered assignments based on readiness:
 - Tier 1: *Emerging learners* can sort pictures of animals and their homes using the Animals and Their Homes Sort Cards
 - Tier 2: *Proficient learners* can choose a habitat and identify the plants and animals that live there
 - Tier 3: *Advanced learners* can compare two different habitats using a Venn diagram graphic organizer
- Enrichment: Students could each make a shoebox diorama of a chosen habitat, including the plants and animals that live there, and present the diorama to the class.

- Enrichment: Students could research the living and nonliving factors of a specific habitat and create a T-chart with the factors labeled “Living” and “Nonliving.” Students could then share their work and exchange feedback with a partner who completed a similar T-chart.

Resources

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