

TOPIC: ANIMAL HABITATS

SUBJECT AREAS: KINDERGARTEN SCIENCE

UNDERSTAND (BIG IDEAS):

- Plants and animals have observable features

Essential questions:

- What are the basic needs of an animal?
- Why are habitats important to animals?
- Why do different animals have different homes?
- What makes a habitat a good home for an animal?

FIRST PEOPLES PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING :

- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

KNOW (CONTENT):

- Basic needs of plants and animals

DO (CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES):

- Make exploratory observations using their senses
- Experience and interpret the local environment

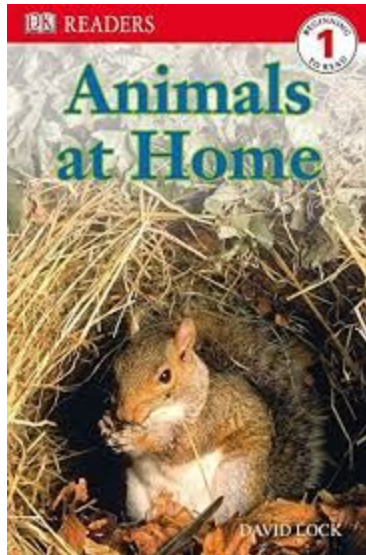
LEARNING ACTIVITY:

The class has been learning about urban animals that live around our school. We have spent a bunch of time exploring our forest behind the school, looking for animals and signs of animals, searching for tracks, looking for nests and animal homes. In our last lesson, we used "habitat placemats" and toy animals to play with and have also used these during our story workshop to create stories about animals. This lesson we will be furthering our knowledge on animal habitats particularly for the animals that live around our school (birds, squirrels, rabbits, mice). It takes place outside in our school's forest.

Introduction

- Teacher reads "Animals at Home" by David Lock. This is a good book because it focuses on the animals that

are around our school. At each animal, we stop and discuss the habitats of each. Examples of questions, “Why would a bird want to live up high in a tree?,” “Why would a mice want to live in the ground?” etc.



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- When we finish the book, the teacher holds up the habitat placemats from last day and asks which animal might want to live in each habitat.

Activity

- Students are asked to create a home for an animal in the forest. They can choose their favourite animal and build a home for them. They are to use materials in the forest to build the home. We will also have additional materials prepared that they can use - shovels, twine (for tying), bucket of water, etc. Students can choose to work independently, in pairs, or in a group.
- Students are encouraged to decorate their homes. For instance, maybe they would like to make a “welcome rug” using leaves. Maybe they would like to make a pinecone mosaic at the entrance of the home. The class will discuss some decorating ideas together.
- Students are given the option to plan/sketch their home before going right to building it
- When the students are building their homes, the teacher will go around and ask questions like: “Why did you build the home here? What makes this a good home for the (rabbit)? Do you think the rabbit could want to live where a (bird) lives? Why/Why not?”
- The students are encouraged to pretend they are the animals in the forest and play in the home that they made.

Conclusion

- Students share their animal homes to the rest of the class. The class responds by playing the “What if” game where they can ask a question about the home - “What if it rained? Would this still be a good home?” “What if the bird couldn’t fly? Could it still live up in the tree?” etc. We discuss the strengths of each home and see if there are any improvements we could make to the home to make it more habitable.

Extension Activity:

- “Others Are Coming!” Game. Students collect a pile of 10 pinecones that are “food” for their animal. The object of the game is to try to get as much food as you can. You can do this by guarding your food so they don’t get taken or by venturing out to another animal’s home and trying to take one of their pine cones.
- Rules: You can only take one pine cone at a time. You must bring it back to your home before getting another pine cone. If someone is guarding their pile of food, you cannot take a pine cone from them.
- The person who has the most pine cones at the end of the game wins
- Possible discussion topics after the game - Importance of protecting your food, risk of leaving their home to get food

SCAFFOLDING

- Some students may need advice or additional suggestions when building their homes. Students who are planning their homes before building will provide the opportunity for the teacher to see who may need guiding questions and suggestions.
- If a teacher sees a student who doesn’t seem to be building a home, she will offer suggestions and ask guiding questions to help give them ideas (“What do you know about a rabbit’s home? Okay, so you know that rabbits like to live in holes. How do you think you could build a hole for them? Where would be a good spot to put that hole?”)
- The teacher may want to pair a student who is having troubles building a home with a student who has a good understanding of habitats. She will stay close by to offer guiding questions and make sure that the struggling student is able to contribute.

WAYS TO DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION

- Pre-teach vocabulary before reading the book
- Refer to pictures when describing key terms like "habitat"
- Allow choice on working independently, in partners, or in a group

CREATIVITY IN THE LESSON

Students are asked to build a home for an animal that lives in the woods. They have knowledge of the animals and their habitats and are now able to put this knowledge into action by creatively demonstrating their understanding by using materials in the forest to build an animal home. The homes have parameters on them which does limit student creativity, but allows the teacher to see if the students are understanding the concept of habitats. They are still allowed to be creative with their home and are encouraged to add interesting details, like decorating the home with leafs, pinecones, etc.

ACADEMIC RUBRIC

BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	APPLYING	EXTENDING
The student is beginning to consider the basic needs of an animal.	The student understands an animal's basic needs and is starting to consider how a habitat can provide these needs.	The student can describe some of an animal's needs and how certain habitats meet those needs.	The student can explain an animal's specific needs and describes the aspects of the animal's habitat that fulfill those needs in detail. The student creates a home that is completely appropriate for their animal of choice.

CREATIVITY RUBRIC

BEGINNING	DEVELOPING	APPLYING	EXTENDING
The student has ideas on how to create an animal habitat but is unable to build one.	The student is beginning to mimic the animal homes seen previously (in the book from this lesson and discussed in class).	The student creates a simple, functional habitat that is appropriate for the animal.	The student demonstrates considerable lateral thinking in the creation and decoration of their animal home. They use found objects to improve the appearance and function of their animal habitat.