

Create an Animal



Overview

Students use their knowledge of habitats to create an animal and the habitat it lives in.

Objectives

Students will:

- learn about the components of a habitat.
- demonstrate their knowledge through a craft project.

Subjects

science, art

Materials

paper (card stock or tag board are preferable), craft supplies: some suggestions- googly eyes, pipe cleaners, tissue paper, sand, glitter, colored paper, raffia, feathers, glue, markers, scissors

Duration

45 minutes to 2 hours depending on time devoted to follow-up activities

Background

A habitat provides an organism with everything to survive. Habitats vary tremendously in terms of size and appearance. Regardless of size or location, a habitat needs to include important things such as food, water, shelter, protection, light and air.

Pests also need these things. In IPM, we use the knowledge of what specific pests need in their habitat to control them. Once we know what they get from a habitat, we can take things away or modify the habitat. In this activity students use their knowledge of habitats to create an animal (or pest) and its habitat.

Doing the Activity

Step 1: Discussion. Ask: *What is a habitat?* A place where a living thing lives and gets what it needs to survive. *What needs to be in a habitat?*

Responses may include: food, water, shelter, air, light, space, temperature, humidity, protection from predators, etc. Based on their responses, discuss why each of these things is needed for living things to survive.

Step 2: Craft Activity. Tell the students: your task is to create an animal and its habitat out of the art supplies we have brought (or draw.) Keep in mind all of the things needed in a habitat. The animal should also fit into the habitat. For example, if you create a hot-pink animal, then a part of the habitat may need to be hot pink to provide protection for the animal from predators.

Instruct students to write in the top corner of the paper : their name, name of their animal, where it lives, what it eats and what eats it (its predator). Encourage the students to be creative and descriptive. This does not need to be an existing animal! See the student example.

Step 3: Create a story. (optional) Ask the students to think about the animal they created. Have them write a story about an adventure or typical day for their animal. Older students should include descriptions of the habitat and how it provides food, water, shelter and other needs for the animal. (See student example).

Closure/Assessment: Ask: *How many people created the habitat first? How many people created the animal first? What did you need to think about when you created the habitat?*

Review key concepts by asking: *Who can remind me of one thing that needs to be in a habitat? What would happen to your animal if we took away its food? Water? Shelter? Protection?*

Enrichment/Adaptations

1. Create a pest. Who is it a pest to (humans, other imaginary animals, etc.)? What makes it a pest?
2. Create the natural enemy of the pest.
3. *For older students:* A major part of IPM is modifying the habitat so the pest can no longer get what it needs there. Ask students to write and share with the class what they can you do to the habitat they created so that the animal can't live there anymore. Some solutions include taking away the sources of water and food, changing the temperature, humidity, light, air, or protection, or adding more natural enemies. These are all things we do in IPM with real pests.

Student Example

The Black, Red-eyed Dragon

by Dezi C.

4th grade, Emerson Elementary
Saginaw, Michigan

Name: Black, Red-eyed Dragon

Where it lives: Planet Mercury

What it eats: meat of baby grunts

What eats it: grunts



The Black, Red-eyed Dragon is like a beast. Its habitat is on planet Mercury. It lives on a volcano. Its skin is like an egg. The skin protects its body.

The Black, Red-eyed Dragon eats baby Grunts because that is all there is to eat. Its home is a cave. The Black-Red-eyed Dragon drinks the lava from the volcanoes. Grunts eat Black, Red-eyed Dragons when they are weak. If a Grunt tries to eat it when its healthy, it will fly away.

The Black, Red-eyed Dragon lives for 50 years then it lays eggs. The eggs hatch in 8 months. When its two, it grows spikes on its back. At age 10 its eyes turn red. At age 20, it grows wings and lives on.