

FIRST GRADE ORGANISMS STUDY

CLASS: ORGANISMS: HABITAT

Students will learn what all organisms need to survive. Students will create a dirt habitat for small creatures.

Pre Activity:

Do!

Habitat Guessing Game

Make a chart on the board. It should have three columns labeled with the following titles: habitat, plant, and animal. In the habitat column, list several well-known environments, such as desert, ocean, pond, north pole, and rainforest. Leave space between each environment so that students will have room to draw in the connected columns. Begin by asking one student to draw a plant that lives in the first habitat: the desert. Once the student completes his/her drawing in the correct chart position, let the rest of the class guess what it is. Repeat this procedure with the animal column. Repeat until your chart is complete! For an extra challenge, keep one habitat name covered, and draw the plant and animal yourself. See if your students can guess the habitat where they come from!

Think! Discuss or Write

What do all living creatures need in order to live? (food, water, shelter, space) Ask students to name an animal and describe one of its needs: food. For example, polar bears eat fish because they need food. Fruit bats eat fruit because they need food. Birds eat seeds because they need food. Continue this discussion by asking students to name specific other needs, such as the animal's shelter.

Post Activity:

Do!

Habitat Murals

Invite students to work in groups to create classroom murals of special habitats. Using long sheets of butcher paper and any decorating materials (crayon, marker, and magazine cut-outs work together nicely!), have students create an image of a specific habitat. Encourage them to include animals, plants, shelters, and food sources so that people admiring their work can see how important each habitat is for these living things. Invite each group to present their artwork to the class, sharing the important information they have included in their environment mural.

Learning Goals Reinforced:

- Living things need food, water, space, and shelter in their habitats.
- There are many different environmental habitats in the world.

Think! Discuss or Write

Show students pictures of different environments/habitats (prairie, grassland, desert, rainforest, ocean, wetlands, etc). Take a poll, asking students: Where would you most like to visit? You can chart their answers. Ask students to explain what makes that habitat special and why they would like to go there.

Links:

http://www.uen.org/utahlink/activities/view_activity.cgi?activity_id=3792

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/Animals/CreatureFeature>

FIRST GRADE ORGANISMS STUDY

CLASS: ORGANISMS: ADAPTATIONS

Students will learn about physical and behavioral adaptations that help creatures fit into their environment. Students will meet animals from the zoo that have unique adaptations.

Pre Activity:

Think! Discuss or Write

What do your feet help you do? Make a fun list of things you can do with your feet that you would not be able to do without them. Then ask students to think of duck feet. How are they different from ours, and what different things can they do with them. Expand on this conversation by showing different animal feet and asking students to explain what they are good at doing.

Post Activity:

Do!

Adaptation Mix Up Books

We know that animals' bodies are adapted to live in their environments. Let's see what happens when your students get to mess around and change those perfectly adapted bodies! Create an Animal Mixed-Up Book (see below for template) by giving each student three small papers that are divided in half horizontally by a dashed line. Instruct students to draw the top part of the animal (head, arms, and wings) above the dotted line. The bottom of the creature, legs and tails, should be drawn below the dotted line. Watch students draw an animal on each of three pages, being sure that the animals are 1. in the middle of the paper and 2. the same size (width). Once the drawings are complete, cut on the dotted line and staple your three animals together. Flip the top or bottom flaps to make some mixed up animals! Discuss how their lives would be different if they had these different animal parts.

Learning Goals Reinforced:

- Animal bodies have adapted to their environments.
- Adaptations allow animals to live successfully in their environments.
- Adaptations affect how animals look and behave.

Think! Discuss or Write

Name your favorite animal. Describe one physical adaptation (body part) that your favorite animal has that makes it so special.

Link:

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/Homework/adaptation.htm>

FIRST GRADE ORGANISMS STUDY

CLASS: ORGANISMS: CAMOUFLAGE

Students will learn that camouflage serves a very useful function in animal lives. Students will play a camouflage game that challenges them to hunt for food in a candy-corn forest. Students will also meet animals from the zoo to bring these concepts to life.

Pre Activity:

Do!

Story Time

Read *The Mixed Up Chameleon* by Eric Carle. Ask students to notice how the main character can change colors and imagine why he would do that. As you read the book, ask students if they think that the chameleon will be able to live the same way now that he is changing into other animals. Once the book is complete, ask students to think about what the chameleon learned about himself and why it is best for him to live his life like a regular, color-changing lizard.

Think! Discuss or Write

Where are good hiding places? What are good tips for being an excellent hider?

Post Activity:

Do!

Beautiful Butterflies

Decorate your classroom with beautiful, but sneaky, butterflies! Pass out blank butterfly templates (for an example, see below). Instruct students to color the butterflies so that they can hide somewhere in the classroom. Encourage students to look for different colors and patterns on the walls and cabinets. Once a student finishes coloring a butterfly, hang it in its habitat and marvel at how well it hides.

Learning Goals Reinforced:

- Animals use camouflage to blend into their surroundings.

Think! Discuss or Write

How does looking like its habitat help an animal? Discuss many animals that are good at hiding (alligators, frogs, and bugs, to name a few) to come up with a few ways that blending into the environment helps an animal live.

Link:

<http://www.howstuffworks.com/animal-camouflage.htm>

FIRST GRADE ORGANISMS STUDY

CLASS: ORGANISMS: BATS

Students will learn all about this unusual mammal. Students will observe bats from our zoo and discuss the myths that surround these animals.

Pre Activity:

Do!

Story Time

Read Janell Cannon's book *Stellaluna*. Ask students to compare the behavior of Stellaluna while she lived with the bat family with how she behaved while she lived with the bird family. Use it as a way to introduce the confusing concept: although bats fly, they are not birds and are not meant to live as birds. They are mammals. Make a list of these observations.

Think! Discuss or Write

What makes a bat a mammal? What characteristics do bats share with all mammals? What makes them different from other mammals?

Post Activity:

Do!

An Echolocation Game

Since many bats (microbats) have poor eyesight, they rely on their sense of hearing to find food and travel safely in the night. Play this game to test your students' ears. Before you play, mark several (4-5) spots in the classroom with a big dot (red construction paper works well). Point out these spots to the students and tell them that they will have a listening challenge. Make all students put their heads down at the desks and tell them that they will hear a sound and wait until you say "Look Up!" before they open their eyes. Sneak to one spot and make a sound (suggestions: ring a bell, bounce a ball once, or blow a whistle). Quickly, quietly, return to your starting spot and tell the students to "Look Up!" Ask students to guess which spot you were standing on when you made the secret sound. Continue playing this game with the different spots, sometimes varying it by bringing in other objects to make sounds. Test students to see if they can determine what item made the sound they heard. Once done, congratulate them on using their bat ears for really good listening.

Learning Goals Reinforced:

- o Many bats (microbats) use echolocation to move safely through the night.

Think! Discuss or Write

Do you think bats are animals that we should be frightened of? Why or why not?

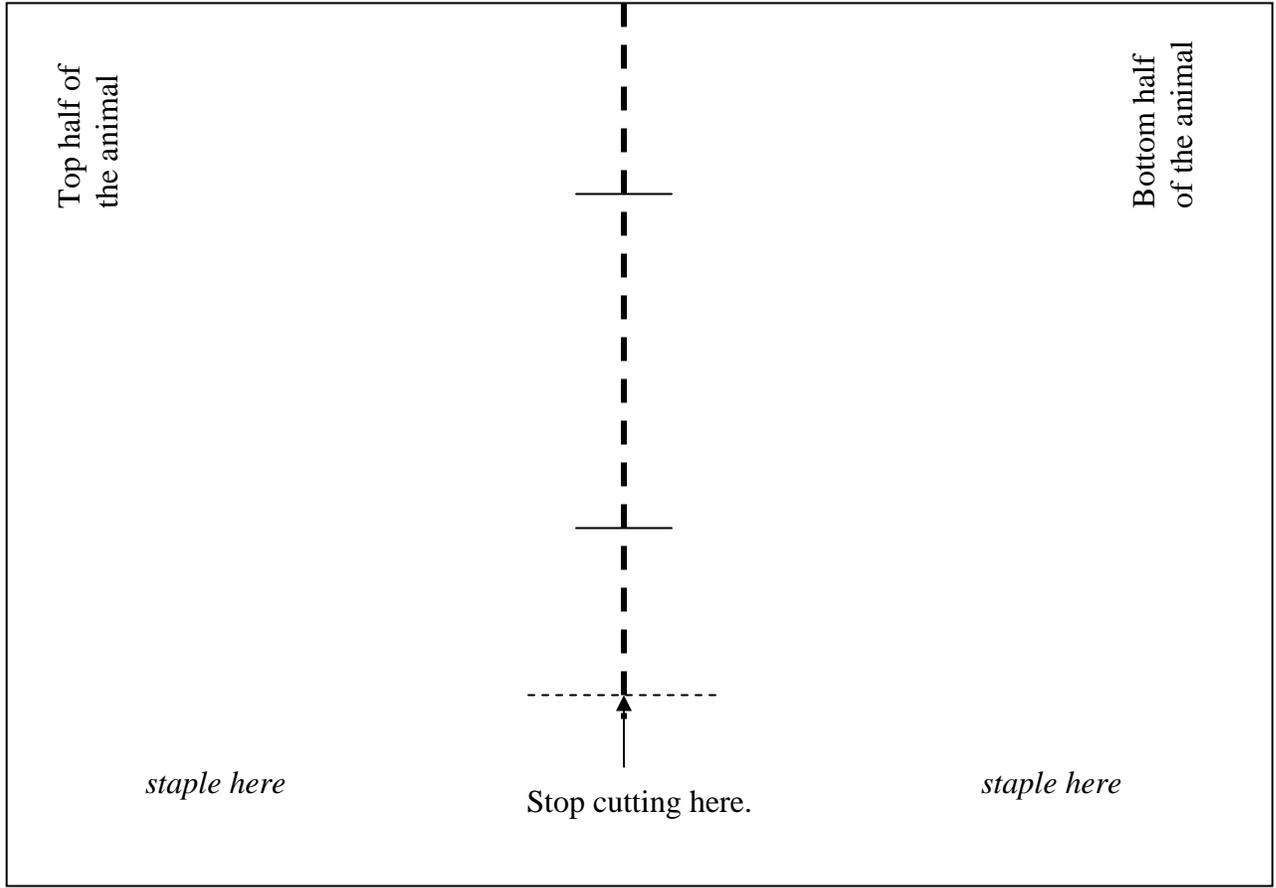
Link:

<http://www.bats4kids.org/>

Making a Mixed-Up Book!

Cut out 3 or 4 pages for a Mixed-Up Book. Draw the top half of an animal above the dotted line and the bottom of the animal below the line. Be sure to make the body wide enough to span between the two short solid lines (so that all animal bodies will line up when the pages are together.)

Cut on the dotted line. Staple pages together.



Beautiful Butterflies Template

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

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