

Animal Habitats

Companion Text: Night Symphony, written by Lara Binn, and illustrated by Valia Ovseyko

Subject Area & Grade Level: Science, 1st Grade

Materials: Large butcher paper, coloring supplies

Objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic requirements for life: food, water, sunlight, space, shelter, water, and minerals (soil)
- Explain what a habitat is
- Recognize that within an individual ecosystem, there are a multitude of habitats

Staging Activity

Read the story once through without stopping. Then, ask students if they remember the first animal mentioned—a mouse. Reread the first line of the story, and then ask if mice really live in houses. (Sometimes but not usually, hopefully!) Tell students that you are going to play a game where you will name a place that an animal lives, and they will shout out the animal. Sometimes there will be more than one right answer. As you name each habitat, write it in a list on the board (or a piece of paper if working with a small group). Try these animal habitats:

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|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| • nest (bird) | • roost (bat) | • rotting wood (millipede) |
| • web (spider) | • earth hole (mole) | • flowing water (salmon) |
| • warren (rabbit) | • colony (ant) | • field nest (mouse) |
| • den (fox) | • holt (otter) | • soil (worm) |
| • hive (bees) | • sett (badger) | • forest floor (salamander) |
| • tree hole (owl) | • drey (squirrel) | • tree (woodpecker) |
| • moist soil (termite) | • dead leaves (snail) | • lodge (beaver) |

Core Activity

Ask students why they think animals need such specific habitats—what does a habitat give to an animal? Discuss their responses, guiding them to see that a habitat meets an animal's basic requirements for life: food, water, sunlight, space, shelter, water, and minerals. Remind students that we are animals, and ask them to think about how our habitat provides the life requirements for us (i.e., Where does our food come from? Where does the water in our city/town come from?) Ask students to consider whether or not they think our community does a good job of protecting and preserving our resources so that our basic needs can continue to be met.

Extension

Assign one of the habitat-animal pairs from the staging activity to each student, and have students research what it looks like. Together, construct a mural of a forest ecosystem with each habitat included. Students could draw animals, or cut and glue pictures printed off the internet.

