



To Each His Own Habitat
2nd Grade
Science/Drama
by Linda Gold

Science, Standard 2.2.1 Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about patterns of living things (plants and animals, including humans) in different habitats. Emphasize the diversity of living things in land and water habitats. Examples of patterns in habitats could include descriptions of temperature or precipitation and the types of plants and animals found in land habitats.

Drama, Standard 2.T.CR.4:
Define roles and responsibilities and participate in group decision making.

Standard 2.T.P.2:
Demonstrate the ability to work effectively alone and cooperatively, with a partner or in an ensemble.

Standard 2.T.R.1:
Demonstrate audience skills of observing attentively and responding appropriately.

Objective: The students will learn about the animals that live in the desert, the tundra and/or the ocean. They will use discriminating thinking skills when comparing similar animals that live in different habitats. When representing animals from a habitat, the students will speak loudly and clearly for their audience to hear.

Materials:

You will need to have pictures of animals from the different habitats. If you choose, you may use the ones attached to this lesson plan.

Warm-up: Animal Basket (10-15 min.)

Animal basket is a variation of fruit basket. It is played the same way, substituting animals for fruit. One chair for each participant is placed in a circle. One player stands in the middle of the circle. This player does not have a chair. Select three animals from the habitat that you are studying. Assign each participant, including the player in the middle, one of the animals. For example, if you are studying the desert, you may choose a camel, a rattlesnake and a gecko. You would then go around the circle saying camel, rattlesnake or gecko to each child. They will remain the same animal throughout the game. Decide how each animal will move and demonstrate the movements to the class. Do not have any of the animals crawl. There is too much danger of having fingers stepped on. Explain to the students that their goal is to stay out of the middle. The goal of the person in the middle is to get out of the middle. The middle person will call out an animal and all of that type of animal will trade chairs. While they are trading chairs, the player in the middle will sit in one of their chairs, leaving a new player in the middle.

If the player in the middle would like everyone to change places, they will call out the name of the habitat. When the name of the habitat is called out, everyone must find a new seat. They are not allowed to move over just one seat. They must move at least two places. Players are also not allowed to return to the seat they were just in. However, they may return to that seat later in the game, if they choose.

Some children love to be in the middle and will hang around the middle, waiting for everyone else to find a seat. I always add the rule that no one can be in the middle more than once. If they end up in the middle more than once, the teacher should choose someone to take their place. I do not allow the students to pick someone. I have found that there are those who will hang around the middle so they can pick the next person!

Instruction (5-10 min.)

Show the pictures of the animals that live in the habitat you are studying. Point out some of the unusual features. (For example, the large ears on the desert fox and the jackrabbit; the colors that help the animal camouflage.) Ask the students why the animals have these features and how these features help them to survive in their habitat. You can compare animals from different habitats, such as the desert fox and the arctic fox.

Improvisational Activity: Queen or King of the Habitat

The teacher has been named queen/king of the habitat and is in need of animals to help her in her court. All of the animals in the habitat want to be part of the queen's/king's court. Divide the class into groups of 4-7 players. Each group will need to choose an animal from the habitat that they will all portray. Everyone in the group must be the same animal. The group must also come up with some ideas on how their animal can help the queen/king. Encourage them to come up with more than one idea. The animals are invited to come before the queen, one group at a time. They bow before the queen and request to be part of her court. The queen then asks them how they can help her. If she likes the answer they give, she may choose to invite them in. Otherwise, she may ask them what else they can do for her. Once they have given a satisfactory answer, the queen invites the students to be part of her court.

Evaluation/Discussion

What is the name of the habitat these animals are from? Could these animals live in any other habitat? Why not? Good job everyone. Give yourselves a round of applause.