

## LESSON: How Are We Alike, How Are We Different?

GRADE: 2

### OBJECTIVES:

#### Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity

- **2-LS4-1** Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.

### MATERIALS & RESOURCES:

- Access to *Square of Life, Studies in Local & Global Communities* website.  
<http://ciese.org/curriculum/squareproj/>
- Computers & Internet access
- Notebooks and pencils

### PRESENTATION:

Students will review the information that participating schools have submitted to the Project Database and look for similarities and differences among the plants, animals, and non-living things that were listed. They will compose a narrative based on their conclusions.

### DIRECTIONS:

#### Teacher Preparation:

This activity is best done in a computer lab where all students have online access. If this is not possible, the information can be printed out ahead of time and distributed to the students. The ideal situation is to have each student, either in pairs or in small groups, access the Project Data Area and look at the square data information submitted by other classes. (See Materials & Resources list above for website address for *Square of Life Project*.) For younger students, the teacher may want to assign a particular school to each group and that would be that information that they would compare to their own. Older students may want to compare several schools to their own and to one another.

For example:

First graders in Maine might want to pick a school in Florida to compare to their own. Fifth graders from Florida might want to choose four or five schools from different parts of the country or the world and look at similarities and differences among all of them.

1. After they have taken notes on the similarities and differences between/among their own square findings and the findings of the school(s) they have chosen, the students should go back to the discussion area to see if they can find interesting facts about the other school in their letter of introduction.
2. They will then compile all this information into a final report which should include the following:
  - A brief description of the writer's own school environment and what was found in the square
  - The name of the school(s) whose square findings they are comparing to their own or to others, including any information about the environment of that school that they think might have affected what was found in the square
  - A comparison of the squares selected
  - Possible reasons for similarities and differences
  - Conclusions or lessons learned

**Note:** Teachers of very young students may want to write one collaborative report with input from each group of students. Teachers can also select one piece for posting or have each group write a report and post them all as one entry. For example: **Final Reports from \_\_\_\_\_ School, Grade 2, Groups 1-5.**

3. Student final reports will be published in the **Student Area**. The teacher may post the reports and illustrations to a class or school web page and send us the URL, which we will link to the student area. Otherwise, send all reports to the Project Leader as Word documents, as PDF files, PowerPoints in electronic format to the Project Leader. Images should be sent as jpegs or gifs and they should be no larger than 75kb each. Please do not send more than six images per report. **Important:** Please note the following: We will assume that any pictures and/or text that we receive has been reviewed by your school district administration and have been authorized to be placed online. We will not include student last names or other personal information with the information we post. You must follow your district's **Acceptable Use Policy** on publishing student work online.

**TIME:**

**90 min**

## **PROCESSING THROUGH THE SIX PILLARS:**

### **WHAT?**

- What objects are different in the squares you compare?
- What objects are alike in the squares you compare?

### **SO WHAT?**

- Are there objects that are different that could be found in both areas?
- Are there objects that are unique (only found) in one of the areas?
- Does this uniqueness make them any less important on our earth?

### **NOW WHAT?**

- Can our actions in one area impact (harm or help) the environment in another area? How?
- What can a good citizen of the earth do to appreciate and understand that all life on earth is connected?