

LESSON: Critter Building

GRADE:

K

OBJECTIVES:

Earth and Human Activity

- **K-ESS3-1.** Use a model to represent the relationship between the needs of different plants and animals (including humans) and the places they live.

Life Science

S.K-2.LS.1 Understand and apply knowledge of the characteristics of living things and how living things are both similar to and different from each other and from non-living things.

- Living things share some common characteristics that are both similar to and different from non-living things.
- Different species of plants and animals have different observable characteristics by which they can be classified.

MATERIALS & RESOURCES:

- Junk box with things like:
 - Rubber bands
 - Cardboard rolls from paper towels or toilet paper
 - Ribbon
 - Wood scraps
 - Pins
 - Paperclips
 - Staples
- Pictures of animals with different characteristics
- Tape
- Scissors
- Cardboard
- String
- Wire
- Foil
- Construction paper

PRESENTATION:

Talk about all the different kinds of “critters” the children have observed on the playground, parks and back yards. Be sure to include worms and bugs, birds and mammals, even humans. Explore with the class the needs of the “critters” and where they live. In nature, animals may slither, hop, and/or climb. Some dig holes; others steal those holes. Some build nests and others use cavities in trees for their homes and some just nest in tall grass. Some animals set traps to catch their food; others chase, wait, or poison their prey. What are their needs for survival?

DIRECTIONS:

1. Ask students about any animal behavior they have observed; eating, hunting, defending it’s self, how the animal moves from place to place, and how it hides or where it lives.
2. Pass out *Do--It--Yourself Critter Instructions* (next page), one for each group. Tell them that today they are going to create a “critter” and they will define those characteristics for it. Tell them they may use any of the materials in the junk box or around them.
3. Divide the group into small groups of 2 or 3, so that you have 10 groups. If possible, go outdoors to complete the activity.
4. When all have completed their critters, have them write a description of their process, decisions and results. Also, write what they learned about the needs of the critters. Do all animals have the same needs or do they have differing needs? Do humans have needs? What are they?
5. Have groups use this description to explain their critters for the rest of the group. Have each small group ask the class to think of similar animals. This will help them see that while their designs are unique, there are similarities also.

TIME:**90-120 min.**

PROCESSING THROUGH THE SIX PILLARS:

WHAT:

- What makes the critters different from each other?
- What needs are common to all critters for survival? (food source, clean water, air, safety)

SO WHAT:

- What can happen to a critter if their basic needs for shelter, food, clean water and air are destroyed?
- Do we respect a critter less for being different? Please say why or why not.

NOW WHAT:

- How can we be good neighbors to critters?

Do--It--Yourself Critter Instructions

Suggestions for possible critter development; you can easily think of others:

Critter that can catch a slow---moving land animal

Hide under the soil

Move very quickly

Hunt mammals at night

Eat eggs with hard shells

Live in the water

Have a hard shell to protect them

Live in rotten logs and stumps

Can catch a flying insect

Could dig up roots and search for grubs in them

Make nests of leaves and grass

Live in holes in trees

Move very slowly

Live in trees

Stay in Iowa during the winter

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