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Quick & Easy Habitat Education Activities Creepy Crawly Exploration

Developed by Starflower Foundation

First Grade
20-30 Minutes
Outdoors

1-4

<p>Description: Students go to the habitat area where exploration stations are set up. Using plastic cups and spoons, students collect ‘creepy crawly’ invertebrates they find in the soil duff. Students try to identify these tiny animals using an invertebrate identification sheet and share their finds with other students. Students return the animals to the soil duff or use them in the ‘Organisms’ science kit terrarium.</p>	<p>Vocabulary Observe: <i>to watch carefully with attention to detail or behavior with the purpose of arriving at a judgment; to make a scientific observation on or of</i></p>
<p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students use observation skills to find tiny living creatures in the habitat area. • Students identify these tiny living creatures using scientific tools of inquiry: magnifiers and visual keys. • Students observe that certain types of habitat, such as soil duff and rotting logs, are better than others for finding invertebrates and other organisms. • Students practice how to be respectful to tiny creatures in habitat areas. 	<p>Washington State EALRs Science 1.1 Use properties to identify, describe, and categorize; and use characteristics to categorize living things. Seattle School District Standards 2.1, 2.2 We can learn about things around us by watching carefully or by doing something to things to see what happens. 1.1, 2.2 Magnifiers can let us see things that we don’t expect and often give us more information than we can get with our senses alone. 1.2, 1.4 There are plants and animals living in almost every kind of environment 1.4, 1.5 Animals eat plants or other animals for food, and may also use plants for shelter and nesting. 2.1, 2.4 A lot can be learned about plants and animals by watching them closely, but care must be taken not to mistreat them. Science Kit: Organisms</p>
<p>Print Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master: ‘Creepy Crawly Invertebrate ID Sheet’ <p>Kit Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeweler’s loupes (‘Private Eyes’), or other magnifiers: 1 per student • Clear plastic cups and spoons: 1 each per student • Laminated copies of ‘Creepy Crawly Invertebrate ID Sheets’: 1 per group • 1 Clear plastic container for class ‘zoo’ 	

<p>Before Activity: Locate 6 ‘creepy crawly exploration stations’ in an area in the habitat that is likely to have invertebrates easily available for students. Look for areas with forest duff, decaying leaves, woody debris, fallen branches, and nurselogs or stumps. Determine group size. Supply each station with one spoon, cup, and magnifier for each child in a group, plus one ‘Creepy Crawly Invertebrates ID Sheet’ per station. The placement of these supplies will identify the stations and the area that students can search for invertebrates. In a central location, place a plastic container “zoo” in which students can place creepy crawlies that they want to share with the class.</p> <p>Activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide the class into 6 small groups. Before entering habitat area review proper handling of living creatures and outdoor etiquette. Prepare students by asking questions such as: “Do you think we can find some creepy crawlies in the habitat? Where might we look for these creatures? In the soil? Under fallen leaves? In rotting logs? On plants? What is evidence of creepy crawlies? Holes in leaves? Holes in the bark of trees? Spider webs? Etc. These are all clues of creepy crawlies that we will look for in the habitat.” • Go to an ‘exploration station’. Demonstrate how to look for ‘creepy crawlies’ in leaf litter, in soil duff, and under fallen branches and rotting logs. Demonstrate using plastic spoons and clear plastic cups to carefully handle creepy crawlies. Demonstrate using magnifiers to look at invertebrates. Show how to use the ‘Creepy Crawly Invertebrate ID Sheet’. Point out the location of the plastic container “zoo”. • Direct students to their stations. Ask students to divide the materials at the stations (cup, spoon) and tell them they will need to share the ID Sheet. Have students look near their station for creepy crawlies. Have students use spoons to place creepy crawlies into the cups and use magnifiers to examine them up close. • Assist students as needed to make sure they find a creepy crawly. Assist students in attempting to identify their invertebrate on the Creepy Crawly Invertebrate ID sheet. • Form a circle and share what students found. Ask each student to share one description of a creepy crawly that they examined. Help with prompts such as: How does it move? Does it have legs? How many legs does it have? What shape is it? What color is it? Does it match any of the animals on the invertebrate ID sheets? • Ask, “What questions do you have about your creepy crawlies? (what do they eat, how long do they live, how do they have babies, etc). How could you find out the answer?” (careful observations, research, conduct an experiment) • Ask students to carefully return creepy crawlies to the habitat area or use them in terrariums for the ‘Organisms’ science kit.
