



Earth and Its Inhabitants – Grades 3-5

Nebraska Science Standards

2.3.1 Students will investigate the characteristics of living things

2.3.1.a Differentiate between living and nonliving things

2.3.1.b Identify the basic needs of living things (food, water, air, space, shelter)

2.3.1.c Identify external parts of plants and animals

2.3.1.d Observe and match plants and animals to their distinct habitats

Objective: The objective of this activity is to familiarize the students with the relationship between the Earth and its inhabitants and to help them distinguish between living and nonliving things in the environment.

Materials (provided by CSM):

- Outdoor scavenger hunt worksheet (Grades 3-5)

Discussion (Questions to ask the students)

- Why is it important to understand the relationship between the earth and its inhabitants?
 - Living organisms are all around us. There are animals, insects, plants, and much more! All of these organisms contribute to our environment.
 - How do they contribute to the environment? Why is it important to respect and help ALL of Earth's Inhabitants?
- Describe the impact a bee has on pollination/fertilization of plants?
 - Bees pollinate/fertilize plants, flowers, and crops that help them to diversify.
- Why is biodiversity important?
 - Biodiversity boosts ecosystem productivity where each species, no matter how small, all have an important role to play. For example, a larger number of plant species means a greater variety of crops. Greater species diversity ensures natural sustainability for all life forms.
- What do trees do?
 - Take in carbon dioxide and provide oxygen. Trees keep the soil in place and provides homes for living things.
- What is deforestation? Why is this bad?
 - Explore the loss of habitats, soil erosion and impact on global climate change (carbon emissions trap heat, results in NOT just a 70 degree day in February...what is the true impact on a global scale?

- Glaciers melt, disrupts ocean currents, causes tsunamis and other severe weather patterns
- Why is it important to classify living things?
 - Classification makes it easier to study and understand the behaviors, lives, and evolutionary progression of millions of life forms.
- What is taxonomy?
 - System used to classify living things into large categories (kingdoms) all the way down to very specific names for each living thing (species).
 - Allows us to group living things in various ways so they are easier to study
- Kingdom: Plantae
 - Flowering - has seeds
 - Pine tree, sunflower
 - Non-Flowering - does not have seeds
 - Algae, moss, ferns
- Kingdom: Animalia
 - Vertebrate - has backbone
 - Birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, fish
 - Invertebrate - does not have backbone
 - Insects, worms, arachnids, myriapods

Activity Description:

This activity is designed for students to explore the outdoor environment surrounding their school. To complete this nature treasure hunt, students are asked to find living and nonliving things using a Nature Scavenger Hunt worksheet. CSM students help the children explore, answer questions, and encourage them to be creative and curious about their surroundings.