

# There's No Place Like Home

<b>Grade Level:</b>	First Grade
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<b>Length of Unit:</b>	Seven lessons

## I. ABSTRACT

Our unit focuses on living things and their environment. Our first grade team has divided this curriculum, and each teacher has become a specific habitat specialist. As the children rotate from class to class each week, the students learn to define the term habitat, identify five specific habitats, and match animals and plants to the various land and water habitats. Activities vary in each classroom environment but include literature, music, writing, math, science, social studies, and art. The students will learn the meaning of "There's no place like home" from an animal's point of view.

## II. OVERVIEW

- A. Concept Objectives
  - 1. Students will be able to match certain animals with their habitats.
  - 2. Students will be able to observe how certain animals are suited to where they live.
  - 3. Students will be able to identify basic needs of animals.
  - 4. Students will be able to understand that animals depend on other living things for food.
- B. Specific content from *Core Knowledge Sequence*
  - 1. Habitats
    - a. Living things live in environments to which they are particularly suited.
    - b. Specific habitats and what lives there
      - (1) Desert
      - (2) Forest
      - (3) Meadow
      - (4) Pond
      - (5) Underground
    - c. The food chain: a way of picturing the relationships between living things.
- C. Skills
  - 1. following directions
  - 2. listening skills
  - 3. map skills
  - 4. problem solving

5. comparing
6. sequencing
7. classifying
8. applying key vocabulary

### III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

- A. For teachers:
  1. Hirsch, Jr. E.D. *What Your First Grader Needs to Know - Revised Edition*. New York: Doubleday, 1997, ISBN 0-385-48119-5.
  2. Lauber, Patricia. *Who Eats What?: Food Chains and Food Webs*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995, ISBN 0-06-022981-0.
  3. Moore, Jo Ellen. *Habitats*. Monterey, CA: Evan-Moor Corp., 1995, ISBN 1-55799-508-7.
- B. For students:
  1. Kindergarten science topics which provide students with necessary prior knowledge:
    - a. Plants and plant growth
    - b. Animals and their needs
    - c. Seasons and weather
    - d. Jane Goodall
  2. Kindergarten geography topics which provide students with necessary prior knowledge:
    - a. Geography: spatial sense
    - b. An overview of the seven continents

### IV. RESOURCES

- A. "Desert Life Booklet." *Teacher's Helper* - Grade 1, February / March 1996, pp. 11-19.
- B. "Desert Wildlife." *Teacher's Helper* - Grades 2-3, April / May/ June 1996, pp. 11-20.
- C. East, Pam. *Ants*. Huntington Beach, CA: Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1997, ISBN 1-576609-113-0.
- D. Everts, Tammy and Bobbie Kalman. *Animal Homes*. New York: Crabtree Publishing Company, 1994, ISBN 0-86505-616-1.
- E. Fleming, Denise. *In the Small, Small Pond*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1993, ISBN 08-050226-43.
- F. Gibbons, Gail. *Deserts*. New York: Holiday, 1996, ISBN 0-8234-1276-8.
- G. *Is This a House for Hermit Crab?* Lincoln, NE: GPN, 1993. (Reading Rainbow video)
- H. Lauber, Patricia. *Who Eats What?: Food Chains and Food Webs*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995, ISBN 0-06-022981-0.
- I. *The Magic School Bus Gets Ants in Its Pants*. New York: Scholastic, 1997, ISBN 1-56832-743-9. (video)
- J. Molengraft, Lisa. *Big Book of Everything for First Grade*. Instructional Fair, ISBN 1-56822-205-x.

- K. Moore, Jo Ellen and Joy Evans. *Habitats - Oceans and Ponds*. Monterey, CA: Evan-Moor Corp., 1986, ISBN 1-55799-092-1.
- L. "Over in the Meadow." Weston, CT: Weston Wood Studios, 1957. (filmstrip)
- M. Pluckrose, Henry. *Under the Ground*. Chicago: Children's Press, 1994, ISBN 0-516-08122-5.
- N. "Squish. . . Squish. . . Squish. . . Wading Through Wetlands." *Copycat*, May / June 1998, pp. 4-14.
- O. "This Place Is Dry! - Exploring the Desert." *The Mailbox - Primary*, April / May 1996, pp. 6 - 14.
- P. Tresselt, Alvin. *The Gift of the Tree*. New York: Lothrop, Lee, and Shepard Books, 1992, ISBN 0688106854.

## V. LESSONS

### Lesson One: Who Lives Here?

- A. Objective: Students will develop an understanding of what a habitat is and what it contains.
- B. Materials:
  - 1. *Is This a House for Hermit Crab?* video (25 minutes)
  - 2. *Animal Homes* by Everts
  - 3. "Find the Habitat" worksheet - Page 5 in *Habitats* by Moore
  - 4. a collection of pictures showing various habitats
  - 5. VCR
  - 6. television
- C. Key Vocabulary:
  - 1. habitat
  - 2. natural
  - 3. environment
  - 4. survive
  - 5. There's no place like home.
- D. Procedures / Activities:
  - 1. Begin with the question "Where do you live?"
  - 2. Then ask "Where do animals live?"
  - 3. Show the video *Is This a House for Hermit Crab?*
  - 4. Discuss how the various animals selected their homes.
  - 5. Define the term "habitat."
  - 6. Show pictures of different habitats and discuss "What kind of animal could live or survive in this habitat?"
  - 7. Complete "Find the Habitat" worksheet .
  - 8. Read the book *Animal Homes*.
  - 9. Discuss the saying, "There's no place like home" from an animal's point of view.
- E. Evaluation / Assessment: The students will complete the worksheet which will be placed in their science journal. The students will be able to explain the term "habitat."

### Lesson Two: A Walk in the Desert

- A. Objectives: Students will be able to describe a desert.

Students will be able to identify plants and animals that live in the desert.

- B. Materials:
1. *Deserts* by Gibbons
  2. various cactus and succulent plants
  3. "A Giant Cactus" worksheet - Page 11 in *Teacher's Helper* Grades 2-3 April / May / June 1996
  4. "Welcome to the Desert" song (Appendix A)
  5. world map or globe
  6. scissors
  7. glue
- C. Key Vocabulary:
1. desert
  2. rainfall
  3. evaporates
  4. cactus
  5. succulent
  6. nocturnal
- D. Procedures / Activities:
1. Prepare the classroom by creating a desert environment. Display objects commonly found in the desert: rocks, sand, cactus, succulent plants, animals, etc. Make the room temperature quite warm on that particular day. Also display a variety of books about the desert around the room.
  2. Begin by reading *Deserts* by Gibbons.
  3. Locate desert areas throughout the world on a map or globe.
  4. Discuss the variety of plants and animals that live in the desert.
  5. Show the plants that can survive by gathering and storing water.
  6. Discuss the temperature changes that occur in a desert.
  7. Identify nocturnal creatures of the desert and their survival techniques.
  8. Complete "A Giant Cactus" worksheet.
  9. Sing "Welcome to the Desert." (Appendix A)
- E. Evaluation / Assessment: Students will complete "A Giant Cactus" worksheet which will be placed in their science journals. Students will be able to distinguish between deserts and other habitats. Students will be able to name some of the living things that live in the desert.

### **Lesson Three: Deep into the Forest**

- A. Objectives: Students will identify and learn facts about animals that live in the forest habitat.  
Students will become familiar with the characteristics of a forest habitat.
- B. Materials:
1. *The Gift of the Tree* by Tresselt
  2. chart paper
  3. markers
  4. crayons
  5. scissors

6. glue
  7. "True Facts About Forest Animals" mini-book (Appendix B)
- C. Key Vocabulary:
1. forest
  2. den
  3. protection
  4. hibernate
- D. Procedures / Activities:
1. Create a forest environment in the classroom. Make several large trees, and place various woodland animals either in the trees or on the ground beside the trees. Display books about the forest and other items such as pinecones, acorns, and leaves.
  2. Review the definition of habitat.
  3. Ask the students "What do you know about the forest?"
  4. Discuss and make a class list of the animals the students could name.
  5. Then ask "Where in the forest do these animals live?"
  6. Discuss ideas and add this information to the list.
  7. Read *The Gift of the Tree* by Tresselt.
  8. Discuss any animals from the story that were not mentioned on the class list. Add these animals to the list.
  9. Make the mini-book "True Facts About Forest Animals." (Appendix B)
    - a. Pass out all three pages of the booklet.
    - b. Have the students cut the pages apart and cut out the animals.
    - c. Staple the pages together while the students put the animals in a row on their desks.
    - d. Color the animals while the other students are finishing.
    - e. Once everyone is ready, read the facts to the class and have them glue the animal that matches the fact on the correct page.
    - f. When all the animals have been glued on, the students can draw a forest scene around each animal.
- E. Evaluation / Assessment: Students will complete their mini-book "True Facts About Forest Animals" which will become part of their science journal. Students will be able to name living things found in the forest.

#### **Lesson Four: The Meadow**

- A. Objectives: Students will be able to identify the meadow habitat.  
Students will be able to identify what animals live in the meadow.
- B. Materials:
1. K-W-L chart
  2. "Over in the Meadow" filmstrip and cassette
  3. Pictures of meadows and animals that live there
  4. Beaver puppet pattern - Page 9 of "Squish...Squish...Squish" *Copycat* May / June 1998
  5. brown paper bags
  6. glue
  7. twigs

8. markers or crayons
  9. filmstrip projector
  10. cassette player
- C. Key Vocabulary:
1. meadow
- D. Procedures / Activities:
1. Create a meadow environment in the class. Display books about life in the meadow. Have plants native to this habitat throughout the room as well as animals (real or stuffed).
  2. Using a K-W-L chart, discuss with the students what they know about meadows and who lives there.
  3. Show the filmstrip "Over in the Meadow."
  4. Review the chart. Add or delete information based on the information presented in the filmstrip.
  5. Display pictures of meadows and animals that live there.
  6. Discuss what they have in common and what makes them different.
  7. Sing the song "Over in the Meadow."
  8. Each child will make his own beaver puppet.
    - a. Color and cut out parts.
    - b. Glue head on bag bottom.
    - c. Glue front paws under flap.
    - d. Glue hind feet on bottom edge of bag.
    - e. Glue tail on back of bag.
    - f. Tape a small twig to front paws.
- E. Evaluation / Assessment: Students will be able to describe a meadow habitat. Students will use their puppet to tell other classmates about animals who live in the meadow.

### **Lesson Five: Into the Pond**

- A. Objective: Students will become familiar with plants and animals that live in a pond. Students will be able to distinguish a pond from a river and an ocean.
- B. Materials:
1. bulletin board with pond animals
  2. "Pond Life" poster - from *Habitats* by Moore
  3. *In the Small, Small Pond* by Fleming
  4. "Ponds" worksheet - Page 8 in *Habitats* by Moore
  5. Old McDonald song translated by the class (Appendix C)
  6. crayons
- C. Key vocabulary:
1. pond
  2. freshwater
- D. Procedures / Activities:
1. In addition to the pond habitat bulletin board, display several pond related books for reference. On a small scale, create a classroom pond in an aquarium. Gather plants and small creatures such as minnows or tadpoles for a short stay. Display

freshwater fish posters available from your local Game and Freshwater Fish Commission.

2. Review the meaning of a habitat.
  3. Define the term “pond.”
  4. Introduce pond animals on the poster. Allow the students to guess the names of some of these living things that they can identify.
  5. Read *In the Small, Small Pond* by Fleming.
  6. Complete “Ponds” worksheet - Page 8 in *Habitats* by Moore
  7. Sing “Old McDonald” - Have the students supply the missing words to describe a pond animal and the sound it makes.
- E. Evaluation / Assessment: Students will complete the worksheet, and then it will be placed in their science journal. Student will be able to write about life in a pond in their creative writing journal.

### **Lesson Six: What Can I See Under the Ground?**

- A. Objectives: Students will learn about the animals found under the ground, particularly ants.  
Students will become more aware of the variety of animals who spend time underground.
- B. Materials:
1. *Under the Ground* by Pluckrose
  2. *The Magic School Gets Ants in Its Pants* video
  3. “Amanda the Ant” booklet - Pages 10-12 in *Ants* by East
  4. crayons
  5. scissors
  6. stapler
  7. VCR
  8. television
  9. Old McDonald song
- C. Key Vocabulary:
1. underground
  2. insect
  3. hibernate
  4. colonies
  5. workers
- D. Procedures / Activities
1. Create an underground habitat in the classroom with a unique bulletin board of the underground world. Display books about animals that choose to live under the ground. Set up an ant farm. Bring in some earthworms for a few days to observe their movement and function in the soil.
  2. Share the book *Under the Ground* by summarizing the text.
  3. Discuss the animals which live under the ground and why they are suited to live there.
  4. Explain the directions to make the booklet “Amanda the Ant” before passing out the copies.
    - a. Cut out the pages.

- b. Sequence the pages.
  - c. Color the pages.
  5. Begin watching *The Magic School Bus Gets Ants in Its Pants*.
  6. While the video is on, the teacher goes around the room to staple the booklets together.
  6. After the video is over, read the booklet again and discuss the video topic - life underground.
  7. Sing "Old McDonald" - Have the students supply the words so the song is about life under the ground.
- E. Evaluation / Assessment: Students will be able to describe underground animals. Students will follow directions and develop word meaning.

### **Lesson Seven: Who Eats What?**

- A. Objectives: Students will realize the importance of all animals and plants in a food chain.  
Students will draw a food chain from their favorite habitat.
- B. Materials:
1. *Who Eats What?: Food Chains and Food Webs* by Lauber
  2. chart paper
  3. construction paper
  4. pencil
  5. scissors
  6. "Food Chain" worksheet (Appendix D)
- C. Key Vocabulary:
1. food chain
  2. energy
  3. food web
  4. link
- D. Procedures / Activities
1. Ask the students to share some of the information they have learned about habitats.
  2. Discuss animals and plants from each water or land habitat that was studied.
  3. List the ideas on chart paper for future reference.
  4. Read *Who Eats What?*
  5. Define the term "food chain."
  6. Reread the story focusing on the different food chains from each habitat.
  7. Explain that all living things need food of some kind to give them energy and keep them alive. The same is true for all animals.
  8. Define a food web as being made up of many food chains.
  9. Complete the "Food Chain" worksheet (Appendix D).
    - a. Each student will draw their own picture of a food chain.
    - b. Then they will label their picture.
    - c. Have the students share their food chains by explaining who eats what and which habitat it represents.
  10. Give the students a piece of construction paper.

11. Fold the paper in half the long way and then fold it long ways again to form four rectangles.
  12. Cut on the folded lines so all the rectangles are cut apart.
  13. Think of a food chain.
  14. Write one word at a time on each strip of paper to form a food chain.
  15. Make each link of the food chain into a circle and connect the links.
  16. Share the food chains and then display them in the classroom.
- E. Evaluation / Assessments: Students will complete the “Food Chain” worksheet and then place it in their science journal. Students will be able to explain a food chain.

## VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

A program entitled “There’s No Place Like Home” will be presented to parents. The students share the information they learned during this unit and show the activities they completed. Each class will be assigned a particular habitat as part of the program; they will sing a song, recite facts, or put on a short play about assigned habitat. Simple props or costumes can be made in the classroom and incorporated into the program. In addition, each class will prepare a tasty treat such as Crunchy Cactus Treats or Ants on a Log to be shared with the audience.

## VII. HANDOUTS / WORKSHEETS

See Appendixes

## VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Bash, Barbara. *Desert Giant: the World of the Saguaro Cactus*. San Francisco: Sierra Club / Little, Brown , 1989, ISBN 0-8335-4225-7.
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- Behrens, June. *Look at the Desert Animals*. Chicago: Children’s Press, 1973, ISBN 0-516-07616-7.
- Behrens, June. *Look at the Forest Animals*. Chicago: Children’s Press, 1974, ISBN 0516076299.
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- Berger, Melvin. *Where Do Animals Live?* New York: Newbridge Communications, 1996, ISBN 1-56784-019-1.
- Bittinger, Gayle. *Exploring Sand and the Desert*. Everett, Washington: Warren Publishing House, Inc., 1993, ISBN 0-911019-58-8.
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- Cochran, Judith. *Integrating Science and Literature*. Nashville, Tennessee: Incentive Publications, 1992, ISBN 0-86530-198-0
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- Kalamn, Bobbie. *What Are Food Chains and Webs?* New York: Crabtree, 1998, ISBN 0865058768.
- King, Jeanne and Ellen Krogman. *Rivers and Ponds*. Huntington Beach, CA: Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1997, ISBN 1-57690-114-9.
- Marks, Marilyn. *Exploring Habitats*. Cypress, CA: Creative Teaching Press, 1998, ISBN 1-57471-367-1.
- Norris, Jill. *Pond and Stream Habitats*. Monterey, CA: Evan-Moor Corp., 1996, ISBN 1-55799-568-0.
- O'Brien, Patricia. *Forest and Meadow Habitats*. Monterey, CA: Evan-Moor Corp., 1995, ISBN 1-55799-387-4.
- O'Brien, Patricia. "Investigating Deserts." *The Good Apple Newspaper*, Issue 127, pp.10-15, 1998.
- Over in the Meadow: An Old Counting Rhyme*. New York: Scholastic, Inc., 1992, ISBN 0590728091 ( based on original book by Olive A. Wadsworth).
- Powell, Terri and Vonda Mason. *Deserts*. Cypress, CA: Creative Teaching Press, Inc., 1992.
- Schultz, Danielle. *Terrific Topics: Woodland Animals*. Greensboro, North Carolina: Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company, Inc., 1997.
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- Sterling, Mary Ellen. *Our Environment*. Huntington Beach, CA: Teacher Created Materials, 1991, ISBN 1-55734-272-5.
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## Appendix A

### Welcome to the Desert

*Oh, the days are hot: the nights are cold:  
The weather it is dry,  
With rocks and sand and lots of space,  
Sometimes the wind blows by.*

#### Chorus:

**Come see the desert - it's a pretty place to be!  
Just keep your cool and watch your step,  
For you may have company!**

*Look, there's a giant cactus tree,  
Saguaro is its name,  
It stores water for dry times,  
And you should do the same.*

#### Chorus

*When the sun goes down, the air turns cool,  
More critters start to roam.  
They're hungry and they search for food.  
The desert is their home.*

(tune of "Oh, Suzanna")

# True Facts

## About

### Forest Animals

Illustrated by \_\_\_\_\_

#### Appendix B

Raccoons will eat almost anything.  
Raccoons are interesting eaters because they use their front paws much like hands.

A skunk sends out a stinky spray to defend itself against larger animals that threaten to eat it.

Squirrels build nests in the tree branches and gather acorns from the oak trees in the fall.

The owl has keen eyesight that helps it locate its prey at night.

## Appendix B

The porcupine has quills that it uses for self defense.

When the mother opossum leaves the den, the baby opossums ride along. Opossums eat grasses, fruits, nuts, worms, and even snakes.

Snowshoe hare sheds his beautiful red-brown coat in the fall. He grows a new white coat for the winter.

# Forest Animals

Cut the animals out on the black line. Glue them on the correct page in the True Facts About Animals book.



## Appendix C

### "Old McDonald" Habitat Song

Old McDonald went to \_\_\_\_\_: ee, ie, ee, ie, oh!

And in \_\_\_\_\_ there was a \_\_\_\_\_: ee, ie, ee, ie, oh!

With a \_\_\_\_\_ here, and a \_\_\_\_\_ there,

Here a \_\_\_\_\_, there a \_\_\_\_\_

Everywhere a \_\_\_\_\_.

Old McDonald went to \_\_\_\_\_: ee, ie, ee, ie, oh!

#### Example:

Old McDonald went to a pond: ee, ie, ee, ie, oh!

And in the pond there was a fish: ee, ie, ee, ie, oh!

With a splash, splash here, and a splash, splash there,

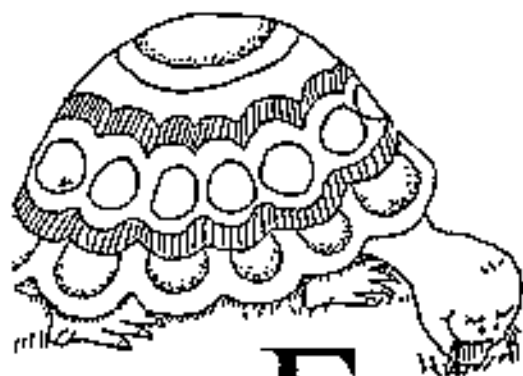
Here a splash, there a splash

Everywhere a splash, splash.

Old McDonald went to the pond: ee, ie, ee, ie, oh!

The students can make up their own versions using any of the habitats and animals which live in that particular habitat.

Appendix D



Name

Date

# Food Chain

Think about your favorite habitat. Draw a picture of a food chain that might be in your favorite habitat.