

Exploring Plants and their Homes

Post-Visit Activity

Activity 2: Habitat Comparison

Materials Needed

“Habitat Data Sheets” from each group.

Print out from Attachments: Habitat Photos, Habitat Parts cards

Overview

This lesson will review and summarize the observations that students made during their visit to the Garden. This opportunity for students to compare observations with classmates is an important part of learning how to talk about science phenomenon, and to consolidate their learning. You should frame their observations of physical characteristics of the environment as evidence and focus on comparing the evidence from their walk through different habitats. Not all students will have been to the same places at the Garden so they will have different observations to compare. In the recording of observational evidence, you want to record key distinguishing characteristics of each habitat—not all of the things the children saw—to help them develop a construct of what “belongs” in each type of habitat.

Procedure

1. Review the Habitat Data Sheets from the visit to the Garden to see which habitats were visited by students. Then print off the photos in the attachments for the appropriate habitats that were visited. Place the photos across the top of a bulletin/white board.
2. Print out the Habitat Parts cards from the Attachments and place these along the left side of the bulletin/white board—creating a grid that will be filled in with the final consensus observations.
3. Place the children in the same groups that they were in during the field trip and give them back their observation sheets.
4. Use the following questions to guide a discussion and solicit information from the students across all the habitats visited.

Grades: 1 &2

Guiding Question

How similar and different are the plants in forests, ponds, coastal sandplain, bogs, and streams?

Timing 30 minutes

MA STE Standards addressed in lesson

1-LS1-1: Use evidence to explain that (b) plants have roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruits that are used to take in water, air, and other nutrients, and produce food for the plant.

1-LS3-1: Use information from observations (first-hand and from media) to identify similarities and differences among individual plants of the same kind.

2-LS4-1: Use texts, media, or local environments to observe and compare (a) different kinds of living things in an area, and (b) differences in the kinds of living things living in different types of areas.

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- ❖ What kinds of animals and insects did you see?
- ❖ How much sunlight was hitting the ground in this habitat?
- ❖ What was the average temperature?
- ❖ Could you see any water? *If yes*, was it flowing or standing still?
- ❖ What was the soil made of? What was its texture?
- ❖ Were there many trees there?
- ❖ Were there lots or just a few kinds of plants there (flowers, grasses, ferns)?
- ❖ What kind of leaves did you see on the plants—needles, large, small, waxy, fuzzy?

5. From the discussion, record KEY characteristics from each habitat so students will easily see similarities and differences across habitats. Below are the main distinguishing features to record.

Habitat Parts	Habitats at Garden of the Woods				
	Forest	Coastal Sandplain	Bog	Pond	Woodland Stream
Common Animals	grey squirrels, chipmunks, birds	bees, beetles, butterflies	spiders, ants	frogs, dragonflies, damselflies turtles	birds, mosquitoes
Amount of sunlight, summer temperature	Dappled warm	A lot hot	A lot hot	A lot hot	Shady cool
Water and soil observations	Soil is moist and full of chewed-up leaves and small insects	Dry, hard soil	No soil, moss is moist	Water is still, Soil: silt, muddy	Water is flowing, Stream bottom: rocks, mud, pebbles
Common Plants	Evergreen (white pine); deciduous (oak) Ferns, spring flowers	Grasses, asters, goldenrod	Moss, pitcher- plant, ferns	Highbush blueberry, Buttonbush, duckweed, water-lily	Skunk cabbage, moss, ferns

6. You can use attached photos for the plants and animals, and icons for the other habitat parts such as water, soil and sunlight.

Common Animals

Common Plants

Amount of Sunlight,
Summer Temperature

Water & Soil Observations

Attachment: Habitat Parts cards and photos



Pond: Bullfrog



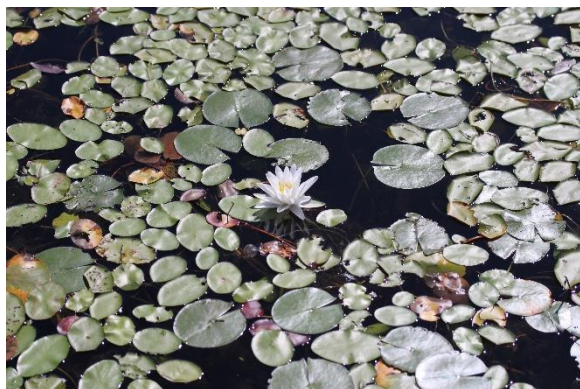
Pond: Green frog—note lines on back legs and a ridge of skin down the back from the eye.



Pond: Eastern Painted Turtle with Duckweed



Pond: Damselfly (Ebony Jewel wing)



Pond: water lily



Pond: Dragonfly (Slaty skimmer)

Attachment: Habitat Parts cards and photos



Pond: Highbush blueberry



Pond: Buttonbush



Coastal Sandplain: New England Aster
with bee



Coastal Sandplain: Calico aster



Coastal Sandplain: butterfly weed with
tiger swallowtail



Coastal Sandplain: Goldenrod with
rusty patch bumblebee

Attachment: Habitat Parts cards and photos



Coastal Sandplain: Milkweed beetle
and monarch butterfly egg



Coastal Sandplain: Dragonfly



Coastal Sandplain: blister beetle



Coastal Sandplain: Crab spider on Joe
Pye weed



Forest: Black oak tree with flowers



Forest: Club moss (living fossils)

Attachment: Habitat Parts cards and photos



Forest: caterpillar



Forest: chipmunk



Forest: wild turkey



Forest: grey squirrel



Forest: pine



Woodland stream: Sensitive fern

Attachment: Habitat Parts cards and photos



Woodland Stream: Skunk cabbage leaves



Woodland stream: Skunk cabbage flower



Woodland stream: grasses



Woodland stream: Pincushion moss



Woodland stream: Baltimore Oriole
with black cherry fruit



Bog: Sphagnum moss

Attachment: Habitat Parts cards and photos



Bog: Leopard frog



Bog: golden club



Bog: Pitcher plant leaf



Bog: Pitcher plant flower



Bog: Pitcher plants



Bog: Spider on Sphagnum moss

Forest



Coastal Sandplain



Bog



Pond



Pond



Hop Brook, Spring