

POND SCAVENGER HUNT

Lesson by: Ennea Fairchild

Grade Level: 5th

Focus: This lesson will teach 5th graders about various animal and plant life common to Indiana ponds.

Objectives:

1. Students will learn to identify and describe animals, insects, and plants specific to Indiana.
2. Students will draw pictures and write brief descriptions of the objects they have identified.
3. Students will explore a pond and learn about plants and animals that live in or around the pond. This will be completed after discussing the meanings of ecosystems, producers, consumers, decomposers, predators, and prey.

Standards:

EL 5.7.1 2006

Ask questions that seek information not already discussed.

PE 5.5.2 2008

Perform activities safely and follow rules.

SCI 5.3.1 2010

Observe and classify common Indiana organisms as producers, consumers, decomposers, predator and prey based on their relationships and interactions with other organisms in their ecosystem.

Background:

We define an ecosystem as “the plants and animals that are found in a particular location.” These plants and animals depend on each other to survive. In a delicate balance, these life forms help to sustain one another in regular patterns. Disruptions to an ecosystem can be disastrous to all organisms within the ecosystem. As an example, consider what happens when a new plant or animal is introduced into an ecosystem, where it did not before exist. The new organism competes with the natural organisms from that location for available resources. These unnatural strangers can push other organisms out, causing them to become extinct. This can then effect still other organisms that depended on the extinct organism as a source of food.”

Materials:

1. Paper
2. Pencil
3. Crayons/Colored Pencils/Markers
4. Pond Scavenger Hunt worksheet (1 per student)
5. Whistle (if needed)

Procedure: (Approximately 30 Minutes Total)

1. Prior to field trip, discuss the definition of an ecosystem “
2. Define and discuss the meanings of producers, consumers, decomposers, predator, and prey.
 - a. Producers are organisms, like green plants, that produce their own food by the sunlight’s energy. Then green plants, for example, are eaten by consumers in this case, grazing animals like the zebra.
 - b. A consumer is the organism that obtains nutrients from other organisms.
 - c. A decomposer is an organism of decay. They break down the remains of dead animals and plants, releasing the substances that can be used by other members of the ecosystem. Examples include: worms, fungi, slugs, and flies.
 - d. Predators hunt and kill other animals for food. Animals like lions, wolves, snakes, and sharks are all classified as predators.
 - e. Scavengers (or prey) are animals that feed on the dead bodies of other organisms. Animals such as vultures, hyenas, and griffins and all classified as scavengers. Scavengers eat the food that has been killed and left behind by predators. Scavengers are a very important group because they dispose of the carcasses of animals that have been left to decompose.
3. Ask the students: *Is a pond considered an ecosystem? What makes it an ecosystem? What plants and animals are typically found in a pond? What can cause disruptions to a pond ecosystem? What are some producers that can be found around a pond? Consumers? Decomposers? Predators? Prey/Scavengers?* These questions will help them understand what makes a pond an ecosystem, before they visit Camp Adventure.
4. Before arrival to Camp Adventure, print off one copy of the scavenger hunt (attached) for each student.
5. Once the students arrive at Camp Adventure, distribute one scavenger hunt list and a pencil to each student.
6. Walk to the pond at Camp Adventure with students.
7. Explain to the children that they will be searching around the pond for objects/creatures that meet the descriptions on the scavenger hunt item lists.
8. **IMPORTANT:** Make sure the students understand the barriers of how far they are allowed to go. Make sure there is a teacher/parent volunteer watching the children at all times. Tell the students to not go into the pond, or get too close.
9. Tell students to follow the instructions given on the Pond Scavenger Hunt worksheet.
10. Allow the students 10-15 minutes to explore the pond area for their items.
11. After 10-15 minutes blow the whistle to signal the end of the scavenger hunt, or tell the students to stop looking and gather around.
12. Walk back to the Camp Adventure Classroom, or gather around the picnic tables located near the pond.
13. Distribute crayons/colored pencils/markers for the kids to color their drawings. Discuss the objects/creatures that were discovered.
 - a. Possible discussion questions: *What things did you find? What things where you searching for that you did not find? What was the most exciting thing creature you found? What consumers, decomposers, predators, and prey did you identify around the pond? What makes them consumers, decomposers... etc.?*


Evaluation:

1. Collect the pictures and descriptions of the objects/creatures the students discovered.
2. If the students did not locate each of the items on the list, have them complete the worksheet by identifying and drawing a creature/organism/plant that could be found in a pond ecosystem, for each remaining category.
3. Make sure to choose each child to describe at least one thing they discovered to ensure that they know what they were looking for and can relate it to the scavenger hunt.
4. After the students return to school, have them write a short essay about what they learned. Have them explain each item and why it was a consumer, decomposer, producer, etc.
5. In a few weeks, test them on this material.

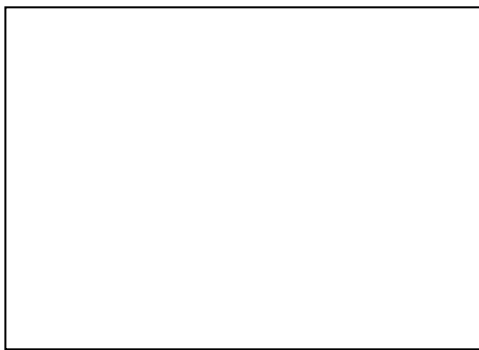
Pond Scavenger Hunt

DIRECTIONS: Identify each plant/animal by writing what it is on the line provided. Then draw a picture of the plant/animal. Find as many as you can... Good luck!

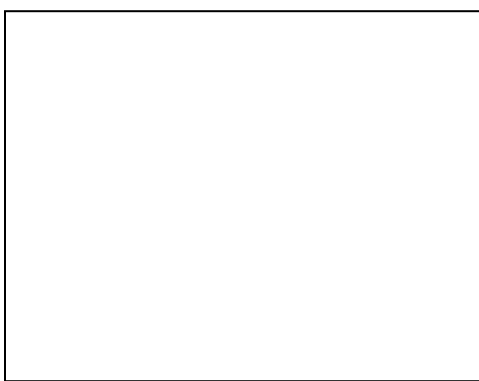
1. Find a DECOMPOSER.



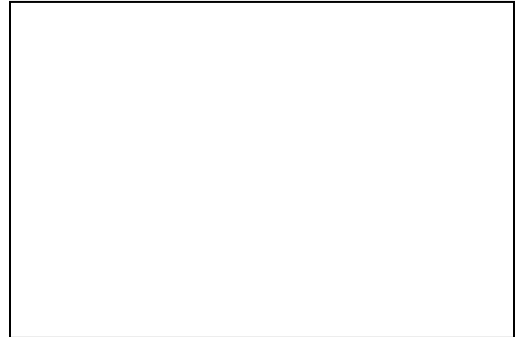
2. Find a CONSUMER.



3. Find a PRODUCER.



4. Find a PREDATOR.



5. Find a SCAVENGER.



