



Elements of Habitat Session Outline For the Outdoor Skills Program

- I. Welcome students and ask group what they remember or learned in the last session.

- II. Habitat Lessons
 - a. Activity: Habitat Scavenger Hunt
 - b. Activity: Habitat Match
 - c. Activity: Wants Vs. Needs

- III. Frisbee Moment: the student that receives the Frisbee will list one of the survival items (food, shelter, water and space). Have the student toss the Frisbee to another person to name another survival item. Continue all around to all the students, as they will repeat the four survival items a number of times.

The Outdoor Skills program is a partnership with Nebraska Games & Parks and the UNL Extension/4-H Youth Development Program to provide hands-on lessons for youth during their afterschool time and school days off. It provides the opportunity to master skills in the areas of hunting, fishing, and exploring the outdoors. This educational program is part of the 20 year plan to recruit, develop and retain hunters, anglers, and outdoor enthusiasts in Nebraska.

Inventory

Session: Elements of Habitat

Kit Materials & Equipment

- Habitat scavenger hunts
- Dry erase markers
- Bottle of water
- Granola bar
- Small box of cereal
- Wants and needs laminated signs
- Space laminated card
- Habitat match cards (in plastic labeled shoebox.)
 - a. Habitats (*Deciduous Forrest, Shortgrass Prairie, Tallgrass Prairie, Wetland, Urban/City Town*)
 - b. Bird Images (*Great Blue Heron, Bluejay, Rock Dove, Cardinal, Red-winged Blackbird, Mallard (male), Ring-neck Pheasant, Wild Turkey, Mourning Dove, Indigo Bunting, House Sparrow, American Robin, American Goldfinch, Hairy Woodpecker, Long-billed Curlew, Dickcissel, Western Meadowlark, Ruby-throated Hummingbird*)

Session: Elements of a Habitat

Title of Activity: Habitat Match

Objectives: Participants will

- 1). Learn that all animals have a specific type of habitat they prefer.

Method: Students match images of Nebraska birds with the correct habitat in which the bird would be found.

Materials Contained in Tub:

(located in shoe box)

Large laminated habitat pictures

Small laminated bird images

Materials Needed for Activity:

none

Duration: 20 minutes

Group Size: any

Setting: Indoors or Outdoors

Key Terms: habitat, food, water, shelter, space, arrangement.

Background:

All living organisms need four things to survive: food, water, shelter, and space. And, they need to find all of these things in a specific arrangement.

Most animals are adapted to living in a specific type of habitat. For example, a duck has webbed feet and a beak designed to pull food out of the water.

For this reason, ducks are adapted to wetland or pond habitats. Another example is a badger. They are a short and squat animals designed to be camouflaged in a prairie. They also have large claws for digging in the prairie soils. For this reason, we always find badgers in prairie habitats.

In this activity, students will evaluate each bird – look at their coloration, adaptations, and food needs to help them determine what habitat the bird is best suited.

The Activity:

Before the activity:

1. Hang the large, laminated habitat pictures around the room.
2. Lay out all the small, laminated animal cards for students to place on the laminated habitat pictures.

Doing the activity:

1. Ask students where they think they would find a duck? (most likely students will answer a pond, wetland, lake, or stream). Ask student why a duck would be found in these habitats.
2. Explain to students that most animals are adapted to living in a specific habitat and that the animals characteristics (their feet, mouth/beak, coloration, size, etc) are best suited to a specific habitat.
3. Tell students that their job will be to select one animal and place this animal in the habitat in which they think the animal belongs. Provide each student with a piece of tape and allow them to choose an animal.
4. Give students time to place their animal in the habitat they think it

belongs. This can be done all at once, or by allowing each student individual time to place their animal with the other students watching.

- After all animals have been placed, have a group discussion to determine if there are any animals which should be moved. Explain to students that some animals can be found in many different kinds of habitats. A coyote is a good example of this – coyotes have adapted to living in forests, prairie, desert, and even urban habitats

- Finish the activity by summarizing to students the habitat needs of animals – food, water, shelter, space, all in the proper arrangement.

Additional Resources:

- Project BEAK (Bird Education and Awareness for Kids)
www.projectbeak.org
- Nebraska Bird Library
www.nebraskabirdlibrary.org

ANSWERS:

Bird	Shortgrass Prairie	Deciduous Forest	Wetland	Tallgrass Prairie	Urban (city or town)
Long-billed Curlew	X				
Hairy Woodpecker		X			X
American Robin		X			X
Mourning Dove					X
Cardinal		X			X
Red-winged Blackbird			X		
Western Meadowlark	X				
Bluejay		X			X
House Sparrow					X
Wild Turkey		X	X	X	X
Rock Dove					X
American Goldfinch		X			X
Mallard			X		
Ring-neck Pheasant				X	
Indigo Bunting		X			
Ruby-throated Hummingbird		X	X		X
Dickcissel	X			X	
Great Blue Heron			X		



Shortgrass Prairie



Deciduous Forest



Tallgrass Prairie



Wetland



Urban (City or Town)



American Robin



Bluejay



House Sparrow



Hairy Woodpecker



Red-winged Blackbird



Western
Meadowlark



Long-billed Curlew



Mourning Dove



Cardinal



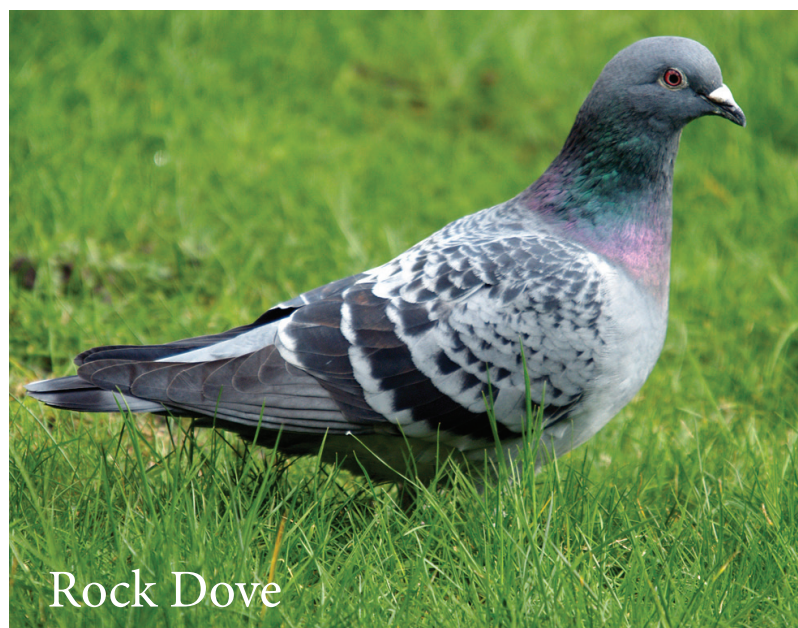
American Goldfinch



Dickcissel



Great Blue Heron



Rock Dove



Indigo Bunting



Ruby-throated Hummingbird



Wild Turkey



Mallard (male)



Ring-neck Pheasant

Session: Elements of a Habitat

Title of Activity: Habitat Scavenger Hunt

Objectives: Participants will

- 1). Discover that all animals need food, water, shelter, and space to survive.

Method: Students go on a scavenger hunt looking for the different components of an animal's habitat.

Materials Contained in Activity

Tub:

Habitat Scavenger Hunts, Dry Erase Markers and Colors

Materials Needed to Conduct Activity:

none

Duration: 30 minutes

Group Size: any

Setting: Outdoors

Key Terms: habitat, food, water, shelter, space, arrangement.

SET Abilities: observation, summarize/relate

Background:

All living organisms need four things to survive: food, water, shelter, and space. And, they need to find all of these things in a specific arrangement.

The Activity:

Before the Activity

Make sure you have enough scavenger hunts and markers/crayons for each child to have one.

Procedure

1. Give each student a copy of the Habitat Scavenger Hunt and a marker or crayon.
2. Allow students to explore the school grounds for each component of an animal's habitat. When they find it, cross it off.
3. When the students are done, group together to discuss their findings. Ask students if they found every component of each animal's habitat. If they didn't, does this mean the animal is not in the area (no, the animal may find food, water, or shelter from an area the student did not see).
4. Ask students if other animals could use the same sources of food, water, and shelter (yes, lots of animals can use a puddle, stream, or pond for water), and one tree can provide shelter for numerous animals – squirrels, rabbits, bats, birds).

Wrap Up



















Journal time!

1. Have the write and draw their favorite wildlife animal in their journal.
2. On the bottom of the page students will write the four components that make up a habitat.
3. Students then will draw a picture with animal illustrating the habitat needs.
4. Ask the students to share their habitats.

Habitat Scavenger Hunt

As you walk outside, look for the following animals and parts of their habitat – food, water, and shelter

Animal				
Food				
Water				
Shelter				

Session: Elements of a Habitat

Title of Activity: Wants vs. Needs

Objectives: Participants will

- 1). List basic needs of all living species – food, water, shelter, & space.
- 2.) Discover that although some things we have make life nicer or easier, they are not needed for survival.

Method: Students sort items into two categories – wants and needs. Then, discuss why they put each item in each category and change it if needed.

Materials Contained in Activity Tub:

Bottle of Water, Granola Bar, Small Box of Cereal, Small toy house to represent shelter, Piece of paper with the word “Space” written on it to represent “space”, random book, pair of sunglasses, old or toy cell phone, box of crayons or markers, toy car (to represent an actual car), watch, A bag or pillow case to hold all items, Copies of “Wants” and “Needs” signs. Orange cones.

Materials Needed to Conduct Activity:

none

Duration: 15 Minutes

Group Size: any

Setting: Indoors or Outdoors

Key Terms: habitat, food, water, shelter, space, arrangement.

SET Abilities: compare, categorize/order/classify

Background:

All living organisms need four things to survive: food, water, shelter, and space.

And, they need to find all of these things in a specific arrangement. For example, if a bobcat can find

food and shelter in one area, but must walk 100 miles to find water, it probably won't survive very long. Or, if a Dark-eyed Junco can find food and water in one area, but there are no cavity nests to take shelter from the cold, it will not survive the winter.



(Dark-eyed Junco)

Humans, too, are an animal which needs four things to survive: food, water, shelter, and space. Although we do not get our water from the same place as a bobcat or Junco, we still need it to survive. And, we may not eat insects like the Junco, but we still need food to survive.

Humans also have many things that are part of our lives, but are not completely necessary for survival. Sunglasses and cell phones are nice to have, but we can survive without them. Cars make getting our food from the grocery store easier, but we can survive without cars (we can grow our own food, walk to the store, or trade with a friend for food). In the end,

humans are just like any other living creature – we only need 4 things to survive: food, water, shelter, and space. And, we, too, need these things arranged in a way which we can use all of them.

This activity will re-enforce the need of humans to have the four components of a habitat and show students that although many other items are nice, they are not necessary for survival.

The Activity:

Before the Activity

1. Tape the “Wants” sign to the front of one side and the “Needs” to the front of the other side of a table.

2. Place all items in the bag.

Procedure

1. Talk with students about what is included in an animal’s habitat – food, water, shelter, space.

2. Invite one student to pull one item out of the bag and place it in the “Wants” or “Needs” category. Then, the student must explain why they categorized the item as a “Want” or “Need.” If a student places an item in the wrong pile, do not say anything... simply allow the item to stay in the wrong pile.

3. Continue this process until all items from the bag have been placed in either the “Wants” or “Needs” pile.

4. Once all items have been placed, ask the class if they see any items on the table that they think need to be moved from the “Wants” to the “Needs”.... or from the “Needs” to the “Wants”? If a student comes to the front to move an

item, they must explain why they moved the item.

5. Finish the activity by working as a group to ensure the “Wants” pile includes: granola bar (or item representing food), bottle of water, toy house (representing shelter), and the “Space” card. And, the “Wants” pile includes all other items from the bag.

6. To explain space, select an area that could represent a small space. Use the orange cones provided in the kit to make a small approximately 3’x3’ square. The square may need to be smaller if there are less than 12 students in the group. Select a student to stand in the middle of the square. Ask if they feel there is enough “space” for them. Continue to add students until all 12 are in the square. Question their comfort as students are added. Explain how this represents space.

7. Have a class discussion on why all the “Wants” items are truly “Wants.” For example, books are important to learn new things, but you can also learn by talking with others, asking questions of your teachers or parents, etc. A pair of sunglasses might be nice on a sunny day, but you could also shade your eyes with your hand, wear a hat, or sit in the shade.