



Table Rocks Curriculum

Habitat Scavenger Hunt

Objective: Students will identify the essential components of a *habitat* by completing a classroom scavenger hunt. Students will also learn about some of the animal residents in each of the *habitat* types represented on the Table Rocks.

Benchmarks Targeted: 1 and 2 (Grades 1-5)

Oregon Standards:

Subject Area: Life Science

Common Curriculum Goals: Diversity/Interdependence: Understand the relationships among living things and between living things and their environments.

Benchmark 1: Describe a habitat and the organisms that live there. Identify how some animals gather and store food, defend themselves, and find shelter.

Benchmark 2: Describe the relationship between characteristics of specific habitats and the organisms that live there.

Common Curriculum Goals: Organisms: Understand the characteristics, structure and functions of organisms.

Benchmark 1: Describe the basic needs of living things.

Subject Area: English/Language Arts

Common Curriculum Goals: Speaking and Listening: Listen critically and respond appropriately across the subject areas.

Subject Area: English/Language Arts

Common Curriculum Goals: Writing: **(All Grades)** Demonstrate knowledge of spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and penmanship across the subject areas.

Length of Lesson: 30 minutes

Materials:

- ✓ “Habitat Scavenger Hunt Clues” cards (included with this lesson)
- ✓ Photos of the four plant communities of the Table Rocks
- ✓ Photos of common animals of the Table Rocks (see list at end of lesson)
- ✓ BLM Table Rocks website: (under the heading “plants” and “wildlife” find photos of each of the four plant communities of the Table Rocks and the many animals that make their home there.) <<http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/ablerock/index.php>>

Key Vocabulary: *chaparral, ecology, habitat, mixed woodland, mounded prairie/vernal pool, oak savannah*

Background:

See Chapter Introduction.

Procedure: (adapted from Earthchild 2000, Earth Science for Young Children by Sheehan and Waidner).

Preparation:

For young children to understand the concept of *habitat* and how different *habitats* meet the needs of their inhabitants, students should begin by contemplating the necessary things their own home environments provide. Set up a scavenger hunt around the classroom to illustrate the five *habitat* requirements: food, water, air, shelter, and space. Print out the Habitat Scavenger Hunt Clues cards included with this lesson or write each of the following clues on slips of paper. Hide the clues (except for the first one) around the room in the suggested places:

- “I’m something you need each day, especially after you run and play. I fill you up as you drink me down, so go to the place where I can be found. What am I?” (**water**)
 - *DO NOT hide this riddle, but hold it for the first clue.*
- “Your empty stomach can wiggle and pull; I fill it up until it’s full. There are many places you can find me, from in your fridge to on a tree! What am I?” (**food**)
 - *Place this riddle near the sink.*
- “Though I’m all around, I can’t be seen. You need me all the time, and I must be clean. I enter through your mouth or nose, but try to grab me and off I go. What am I?” (**air**)
 - *Place this riddle near the refrigerator, lunches, cafeteria, or snack area.*
- “In the wind and rain I keep you alive – I’m necessary to survive. From predators you can hide and keep yourself safe inside. What am I?” (**shelter**)
 - *Place this riddle near a fan or hang it so it dangles in the air near a window.*
- “Take me away and you’d be cramped; no place to play and no place to stand. I give room to move around and where I am, growth abounds. What am I?” (**space**)
 - *Place this riddle on the door or door frame, on or near the ceiling, or on a wall.*

Activity:

Grades 1-2: For emergent readers, read the clues aloud to the students.

Grades 3-5: To begin the hunt, hand a student the first clue to read aloud.

Allow students to guess the answer to the riddle. Move to the place described (the first clue, for example, will lead you to the sink, where water is found) and allow a few students to hunt for the next clue. Continue the hunt until all of the clues are discovered.

Follow-up:

Conclude by having the students recall their basic needs (water, food, air, shelter, and space) and where these needs can be met. Gather students in a comfortable place and show them photographs of common animals found on the Table Rocks (see “Plant Communities and Animals of the Table Rocks” at end of lesson). Encourage discussion about plants and animals the students have seen around the valley and on the Table Rocks. Have students attempt to guess where each animal gets its food and water, where it lives, and how much space it needs. Introduce the four plant communities of Table Rocks (*oak savannah, chaparral, mixed woodland, and mounded prairie/vernal pools*) and begin to introduce the differences between them. This is a great pre-hike introduction that allows students to gain knowledge of the animals and *habitats* they may encounter.

Adaptation:

Grades 3-5: Discuss the definitions of *habitat* and *ecology*. Have students discuss the basic necessities of a *habitat*. See if they can come up with the five necessary components of *habitat* (food, shelter,

water, air, and space) on their own first. Have students create their own riddles and decide where to place the clues.

Extensions:

- **Grades 3-5:** Have students draw pictures of one of the Table Rocks animals discussed, write a brief summary of that animal's *habitat* or write a short poem about a Table Rocks animal and its *habitat*.
- **Grades 3-5:** Have each student choose one Table Rocks animal and research specifically how its *habitat* provides each of the five necessary resources. For example, what is its preferred prey? Does it build a nest or burrow, or find shelter in some other way? How much space does it need? How often does it need to drink? Field guides are a good source for this kind of information.

Discussion Questions:

Give three examples of animals that live in each of the four *habitats* (plant communities) on the Table Rocks. In each case, how does the *habitat* provide what the animal needs?

*The Pacific tree frog, for example, lives in the **mounded prairie/vernal pool habitat**. As a tadpole, it lives in the **vernal pools**, breathing through gills and eating algae that grow in the water. As the pools dry up, the tadpole develops lungs and matures into a frog. It hops away into the cover of the prairie grasses, where it feeds on insects. See "Plant Communities and Animals of Table Rocks" at the end of the lesson for more suggestions.*

Name some ways humans negatively or positively affect *habitat* on the Table Rocks.

Positive -- Designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) by the BLM and protected by the BLM and The Nature Conservancy. Because the Table Rocks are an ACEC, there are limitations on what activities are allowed there (for example, dogs, horses, and camping are not allowed). Such restrictions help minimize our impact on the land. Environmental education programs raise awareness of the sensitive *habitats*, the unusual biodiversity, and the endangered species present at the Table Rocks, as well as encouraging appropriate behaviors (picking up trash, staying on the trail).

Negative - Increased use and misuse by hikers (bringing dogs and horses, hiking off the trail, picking wildflowers) and introduction of nonnative species such as Himalayan blackberry and star thistle.

References:

Sheehan, Kathryn, and Mary Waidner. Earthchild 2000, Earth Science for Young Children. Tulsa: Council Oaks Books, 1998.

Table Rocks Environmental Education. 2007. USDI BLM. 16 October 2007
<<http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/tablerock/index.php>>.

Plant Communities and Animals of the Table Rocks

Oak Savannah

Acorn Woodpecker
Western Scrub-jay
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Oak Titmouse
Western Bluebird
Brown-headed Cowbird
Ash-throated Flycatcher
Red-tailed Hawk
Pocket Gopher
California Ground Squirrel
Black-tailed Deer
Western Vole
Gopher Snake
Western Fence Lizard
Racer
Oak Gall Wasp
Wild Turkey

Chaparral

Lesser Goldfinch
Spotted Towhee
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Anna's Hummingbird
Chipping Sparrow
House Finch
Lazuli Bunting
Bewick's Wren
Brush Rabbit
Mountain Cottontail
Black-tailed Jackrabbit
California Ground Squirrel
Deer Mouse
Kangaroo Rat
Gopher Snake
Racer
Western Rattlesnake
Striped Whipsnake
Western Fence Lizard

Mixed Woodland

Western Tanager
Black-headed Grosbeak
Pacific-slope Flycatcher
MacGillivray's Warbler
Rufous Hummingbird
Cooper's Hawk
Great-horned Owl
Dusky-footed Woodrat
Ringtail Cat
Western Gray Squirrel
Striped Skunk
Mole
Porcupine
Raccoon
Western Skink
Alligator Lizard
Pacific Tree Frog
Western Toad

Mounded Prairie/Vernal Pools

Prairie (Grassland)

Lark Sparrow
American Kestrel
Violet-green Swallow
Turkey Vulture
California Ground Squirrel
Western Vole
Valley Pocket Gopher
Black-tailed Jackrabbit
Mountain Cottontail
Coyote
Bobcat
Garter Snake
Western Rattlesnake
Western Skink

Vernal Pools

Pacific Tree Frog
Western Toad
Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp



Hunt Clues

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Your empty stomach can wiggle and pull; I fill it up until it's full. There are many places you can find me, from in your fridge to on a tree! What am I?

Though I'm all around, I can't be seen. You need me all the time, and I must be clean. I enter through your mouth or nose, but try to grab me and off I go. What am I?

In the wind and rain I keep you alive – I'm necessary to survive. From predators you can hide and keep yourself safe inside. What am I?

Take me away and you'd be cramped; no place to play and no place to stand. I give room to move around and where I am, growth abounds. What am I?



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