

Home sweet home

SCIENCE KS2
1 hour (including 10 or more mins outside)

This lesson will open your class' eyes to the hidden habitats around them, and begin to recognise and identify how animals have adapted to life in their natural homes.

Equipment

Card pairs featuring habitats and animals (see prep)
Paper with printed grid
Pens
Clipboards
Magnifying glasses

Lesson Aims

Students will be able to recognise that habitats are found all around us, and understand that animals have adaptations that make them suited to their homes.



Key learning outcomes

Following this lesson, students will be able to...

Define the term 'habitat'

Identify and give examples of a variety of habitats and microhabitats

Interpret how the features of living things are suited to their habitats

Apply learning to design a fictional animal well-adapted to its habitat

Time

Activity

Prep

- Create a set of cards (approximately 3-5 pairs per group), one half featuring a habitat and the other half featuring an animal that might live in each habitat. Make sure you're familiar with your outdoor space to establish any safety and practical considerations, and for ideas of what your class might find in their exploration.

5 mins

- Introduce the topic and an outline for your lesson, asking your pupils if they know what the word is for where an animal lives (habitat).
- Ask if anyone can think of a type of habitat and name a few key examples (e.g. forest, river, mountain etc).
- With each habitat named by the class, get them to also name an animal that lives there, and write them on them on the board.
- Come back to your list (or a few highlighted examples) and discuss – what do these animals have that make them really good at surviving where they live (adaptations)? E.g. Squirrels have claws for climbing, a tail for balance, fur for warmth.

20 mins

- Divide class into small groups, and using the habitat cards, ask the groups to match up habitats to the animals that live in them.
- Go through the answers as a class and choose two animals to focus on, and review their adaptations. A combination of terrestrial and aquatic (or maybe something that can fly!) is ideal for contrast – e.g. a rabbit and a fish.
- Ask if the rabbit would be good at surviving in the fish's habitat (and vice versa), and why not? What would it need to be able to survive there? Permission granted to be a little silly here!

10 mins

- Ask the class where animals might live on your school grounds? What habitats they think you might find outside? Think big and small – include microhabitats like moss and beneath rocks!
- Fill out grids as a class (grid of 4 to 9 big squares: adjust according to your space): write (or draw) one habitat you expect to find outside on each square.
- Prepare to go outside, explain that you're going to go on a "habitat hunt"!

10 mins

- Pair off your students
- Send pairs off on the hunt for the habitats on the sheets: They will have 5 minutes (or more depending on the size of your exploration zone) to find them, and note down any others they can find that something might live in!

15 mins

- Call everyone in and regroup.
- Did anyone find all the habitats on their grid? Where were they?
- Round up any additional habitats everyone found and discuss what kind of animals they think might live there.
- Finish off your session with a review of your class' highlights: Which was the smallest habitat they found? Which was their favourite? Did they spot anything else during their exploration?

Further work:

Ask students to choose their favourite habitat of the day and design an imaginary creature, labelling the characteristics that would make them particularly suited to that habitat.