WHAT'S THAT, HABITAT?

OBJECTIVES

Students will: 1) identify their own basic or needs for food, water, shelter and space in a suitable arrangement; and 2) generalize that wildlife and other animals have similar basic needs.

METHOD

Students draw pictures of people's and animal's homes, comparing basic needs.

BACKGROUND

This activity is similar to "Habitracks." One option is to use "Habitracks" with 4th and 5th grade students, and "What's That, Habitat?" with 2nd and 3rd grade students. Use either activity after "The Beautiful Basics" and "Everybody Needs A Home," especially with 2nd grade students and older. The same drawing used in "Everybody Needs A Home" can be used to start "What's That, Habitat?"

See "The Beautiful Basics" and "Everybody Needs A Home" for more background.

The major purpose of this activity is for students to understand that animals—including people, pets and wildlife—have some of the same basic needs.

MATERIALS

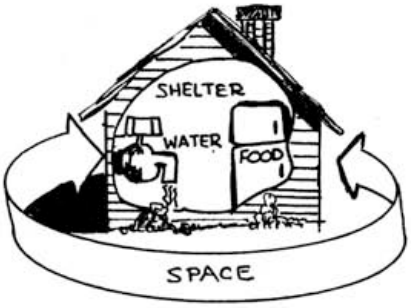
drawing paper; crayons or chalk

PROCEDURE

1. List the following words on a chalkboard: **food, water, shelter, space.**

Age: Grades 2-3
Subjects: Science, Language Arts, Art, Social Studies
Skills: analysis, comparing similarities and differences, discussion, drawing, generalization, reading, writing
Duration: two 20-minute sessions, or one 40-minute session
Group Size: any
Setting: indoors
Conceptual Framework Reference: I.A., I A.4., I.C.I., I.C.2.
Key Vocabulary: habitat, survival needs, food, water, shelter, space, arrangement
Appendices: None

2. Read each word aloud, asking the students to repeat the words after you. (They may say the letters of the words and use the words for spelling.)
3. Food and water will be easy concepts for the students to understand. They are familiar needs for themselves each day. Shelter and space will be more difficult. Ask the students to explain what shelter and space are. Make sure the meaning of all four words is clear before you proceed.
4. Give the students drawing paper and chalks or crayons. Ask the students to draw a picture of where they find food, water, shelter and space. (NOTE: If the students have made drawings in "Everybody Needs A Home," use those same drawings instead of making new ones!) Ask the students to label the parts of their drawings where they find their food, water, shelter and space. For example:



NOTE: Food and water will not be difficult to identify. Shelter could be shown in a number of ways. Here, for example, it is shown by labeling the roof. Space can be shown as the area outside and inside the house or apartment. Shown here, it includes the house and yard. Space can also include the neighborhood. (Space actually includes all the areas used for survival.)
5. Once the drawings are complete, write two more words on the chalkboard: **arrangement, habitat.** Say the words aloud, asking the children to repeat them after you. (Again, these words may be used for spelling.)
6. Tell the students that when **food, water, shelter** and **space** go together in a special way, so that animals—including people—can live, we call that place a **habitat**. The **food, water, shelter** and **space** are in an

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arrangement that makes it possible for animals to live. (OPTIONAL: Ask the children if they could live in a home where the bathroom was four miles north, the kitchen was 12 miles west and the bedroom was nine miles east. The answer, of course, is likely, "No," since the "arrangement" is not suitable for a person. Some animals do travel great distances in their habitat, however.)

7. Ask the students to write the word "habitat" in big letters at the top of their drawings. Talk with them about the meaning of habitat.

8. Give the students another piece of drawing paper. Ask them to think of an animal—any animal. Ask a few students what animal they are thinking of. Identify whether the animals they named are "wild" or "domesticated." You will probably get both. If you don't get both, ask the students to think of the kinds of animals that are missing. It is important to make sure the students are thinking about both wild and domesticated animals.

9. Ask the students to draw a picture of their animal in a place where it lives. Ask the students to make sure they include: food, water, shelter and space in an arrangement that they think would make it possible for the animal to survive.

10. Ask the students to talk about their drawings, pointing out the habitat components they have included.

11. Ask the students to write "habitat" in big letters on the top of this drawing too. Talk with the students about how humans and other animals need food, water, shelter and space. The arrangement is different for each, but all have similar basic needs. When food, water, shelter and space are arranged in a way that is suitable for an animal to survive, we call that place where these things are available a habitat. When the students have an understanding of "habitat," write a few sentences on the chalkboard defining habitat. As much as possible, make use of the ideas the students suggest. For example: **Habitat is a place. It has food, water, shelter and space. These are things that animals need to live.**

Possible sentences for older students: **Food, water and shelter must be within a useable range for each animal. Different kinds of animals need different kinds of food, water and shelter and different amounts of space.**

12. The students may now write these sentences on the back of one of their drawings or on a piece of writing paper. They may also read the words in the sentences you have put on the board, after you. They may also write their own sentences about what habitat is, drawing pictures to go along with their words.

AQUATIC EXTENSION

Ask the students to think of an aquatic animal—any aquatic animal. Ask the students to draw a picture of their animal in a place where it lives. Ask the students to make sure they include: food, water, shelter and space in an arrangement that they think would make it possible for the animal to survive. Ask the students to talk about their drawings, pointing out the habitat components they have included.

EVALUATION

1. Choose which things wildlife need to survive: food, water, shelter, space, arrangement. Explain.
2. Choose which things people need to survive: food, water, shelter, space, arrangement. Explain. Write a sentence about what people and wildlife need to survive.
3. Tell a story. In the story, tell how a habitat meets the needs of different kinds of animals.