

Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders and Creepy Insiders

Around One Log Activities



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My Log Home– In this activity, students will observe a rotting log and then write a short story from the perspective of an animal residing in or around the log.



Predator vs. Prey– In this activity, students will choose a predator-prey pair and create a poster that describes survival techniques used by both.



What if?– In this activity, students explore the consequences of removing components of a rotting log habitat.

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My Log Home

Introduction

In *Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders and Creepy Insiders*, author Anthony Fredericks introduces children to a rotting log habitat. Some logs are large and some are small, but they are all part of a very important ecosystem. In this activity, students will observe a rotting log and then write a short story from the perspective of an animal residing in or around the log.

Materials Needed

- ◆ Magnifying glass
- ◆ Pen or pencil
- ◆ Notepaper

Key Concepts

- ◆ All organisms have different needs.
- ◆ The environment must supply the needs of the organisms.
- ◆ Behavior is influenced by internal cues (hunger) and external cues (change in environment).

For standards correlation please see our website.

Procedure

1. Invite students to take a field trip around the school grounds, or find a rotting log or branch in a park or yard and make observations.
2. Encourage students to first look at the log with their eyes, then to look closely with a magnifying glass.
3. Ask students to write down their observations. Here are some questions to direct observations:
 - ◆ What condition is the bark in? Is it missing?
 - ◆ What does the log smell like?
 - ◆ Is there plant growth on the log? Fungi (mushrooms), mosses, or algae?
 - ◆ Is there any evidence of animal activity? Insect holes, sawdust, webs, animal dens?
 - ◆ Is the log hollow or solid? Wet or dry?
4. Ask students to pretend that they are a "log" animal who lives in or around the log. Have them describe their home based on the observations and what the student knows about the animal chosen.

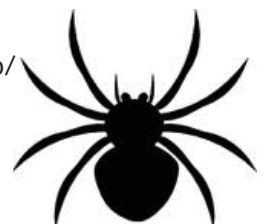
Nature Connections

- ◆ This book lends itself to a delightful readers theatre adaptation. Invite students to create a readers theatre script using the creatures in this book along with a narrator. They may wish to use words or phrases from the book or create their own original dialogue for the critters.
- ◆ Invite students to pretend that they are moving to a forested region somewhere in the world. Encourage students to write a postcard about their life in the forest to a family member who stayed behind.

Additional Resources

Learn more about forests from these web sites:

- ◆ <http://lsb.syr.edu/projects/cyberzoo/coniferous.html>
- ◆ <http://www.gp.com/EducationalinNature>
- ◆ <http://www.sierraclub.org/ecoregions/boreal.asp>
- ◆ <http://www.fw.vt.edu/dendro/Forsite/contents.htm>
- ◆ <http://lsb.syr.edu/projects/cyberzoo/deciduous.html>





Predator vs. Prey

Introduction

In the book *Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders and Creepy Insiders*, author Anthony Fredericks introduces readers to the mini-habitat of a rotting log and all of the creatures that inhabit the log. In this activity, students will choose a predator-prey pair and create a poster that describes survival techniques used by both.

Materials Needed

- ◆ Poster Board
- ◆ Art Supplies
- ◆ *Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders and Creepy Insiders* - by Anthony Fredericks

Key Concepts

- ◆ Behavior is influenced by internal cues (hunger) and external cues (change in environment.)
- ◆ Organisms' patterns of behavior relate directly to the environment.
- ◆ Organisms can cause changes.

For standards correlation please see our website.

Procedure

1. After reading *Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders and Creepy Insiders*, divide the class in half. Designate one half of the class as "predators" and the other half as "prey."
2. Pair each "predator" with a "prey" and have the two students decide which animals from the book they will portray.
3. Encourage the pair to construct a poster on the life of a forest predator trying to catch its prey and the prey's attempt at escape.
4. Encourage the students to use both illustrations and descriptions in their posters.
5. Have each pair stand before the class and present their poster. Ask each one to describe their animal's actions and attempts at survival.

Nature Connections

- ◆ Invite students to imagine that they are in a forest. What types of plants or animals do they see? What are some of the geographical or geological features in that forest? Invite students to assemble a "forest information book" that could be distributed to local travel agencies, other classes in the school, or community organizations.

Additional Resources

Defense mechanisms commonly used by animals:

- ◆ **Speed** - rabbits can outrun a fox or zig and zag to confuse a predator
- ◆ **Camouflage** - animals blend in with their environments to avoid being detected
- ◆ **Trickery** - False features that appear to be enormous eyes or appendages can serve to dissuade potential predators
- ◆ **Physical Features** - A turtles hard shell or a porcupines sharp quills
- ◆ **Chemical Features** - skunks not so pleasant smell or a dart frogs poison



What if?

Introduction

In the book *Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders and Creepy Insiders*, author Anthony Fredericks introduces children to the animals that reside in a rotting log habitat. In this activity, students explore the consequences of removing components of the habitat.

Materials Needed

- ◆ *Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders and Creepy Insiders* - by Anthony Fredericks
- ◆ Notepaper
- ◆ Pen or Pencil

Key Concepts

- ◆ Plants are the base of an ecosystem.
- ◆ All animals depend on plants.
- ◆ Plants and animals have life cycles.

For standards correlation please see our website.

Procedure

1. Ask students to write about the importance of a rotting log. Why is it important for the animals living there? Why is it important for humans?
2. Now, invite students to put on their thinking caps and decide what some of the consequences might be for each situation below.
 - ◆ What if all the rotting logs in the world were eliminated? What would the effect be for the animals living on each one?
 - ◆ What if all "rotting log" animals become extinct? What would be the overall effect on forest life?
 - ◆ What if all the forests in the world were to suddenly disappear. What would be the consequences?
 - ◆ What if there were no more insects? What effect would that have on life in the forest?
3. Invite students to share their thoughts in front of the class.

Nature Connections

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Additional Resources

Find out more about rotting logs from these websites:

A Rotting Log Habitat

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/nr/wildlife/animalinn/activity-log.htm>

How Rotting Wood Effects the Environment

<http://www.mamashealth.com/saveearth/>

The 5 Stages of Rotting Logs

<http://peasemt.pbworks.com/w/page/15444992/The-Rotting-Log>