



**Fair Hill Nature Center**  
**Stewards of Tomorrow**  
**School-based Outdoor Learning Experiences**



**FALL MWEE: OUTDOOR ACTIVITY: WHAT LIVES HERE?**

FHNC Objectives*	Connection to CCPS Focus Concepts and Objectives
<p><b>FHNC Objectives: Students will be able to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the basic needs of plants and animals (food, shelter, air, water).</li> <li>2. Explain the concept of “habitat”.</li> <li>3. Describe how plants and animals depend on each other in order to survive in their habitat.</li> <li>4. Describe how people have had an impact (change) on a habitat.</li> </ol> <p><u>Materials:</u>            Schoolyard Survey:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ data sheet per group</li> <li>✓ 1 clip board per group</li> <li>✓ 1 pencil per group</li> </ul> </p>	<p><b>Focus Concept:</b> External Parts to Meet Needs</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> Students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the basic needs of plants and animals (food, shelter, air water).</li> </ol> <p><b>Focus Concept:</b> Organisms’ Responses to Environment</p> <p><b>Concept Overview:</b>            Animals’ needs are impacted by their environment. Animals eat the food that is available in their environment. Animals depend on plants and other animals to survive in their environment. They are a source of food for each other and depend on each other for reproduction.</p> <p><b>Objectives:</b> Students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain how plants and animals help each other.</li> <li>2. Explain how plants and animals respond to their environment.</li> </ol>
<p><b>* Note: the What Lives Here? activity is designed to be repeated over the course of a school year so that students can study and collect data on schoolyard areas during different seasons and observe ways in which they are used as habitat by living organisms.</b></p>	

<b>Preparation</b>	<p>Determine location of three study areas in schoolyard ( a paved area, a grassy or manicured lawn area, and a more “natural” area such as a hedge row, wooded area, garden).</p> <p>If you can enlist the aid of another teacher or adult volunteers, divide the class into 2-3 study groups of about 10-12 students or smaller. Prepare a clipboard with data sheet and pencil for each group.</p>
<b>Activity</b>	<p>Each group of students will visit each of the study areas. If done at the same time, start each group at a different study area and rotate until they have visited all areas.</p>

	<p>At each area they will make observations and the adult will fill out data sheet.</p> <p>Have students look for and point to different kinds of plants and animals found in each location; adult will place a tally for each kind of plant and each kind of animal on data table in the appropriate box. If a group needs more structure, the adult can point out different plants and have the students keep a verbal count of the number as the adult makes tally marks. Common names of plants and animals can also be listed (ant, grasshopper, worm, etc.)</p> <p>Have students decide on the <u>amount</u> of organisms found in each study area. Adult will circle this amount (Lots!—Some—Few—None) on the data sheet.</p> <p>Note that weather observations can be recorded on the data sheet as well.</p> <p>Talking points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If animals are observed, ask what things within the study area will help them survive (<i>food, shelter, water</i>). Is anything needed for survival missing? Is this a good habitat for each kind of animal observed?</li> <li>• How are animals that are observed “designed” (external body parts) to get the things they need?</li> <li>• If plants are observed, ask the students how their basic needs are met. Based on the number of plants present, is this area make a good habitat in which plants can live?</li> <li>• If the study is done during different seasons, how do the plants observed change through the school year?</li> <li>• What do the plants in the study area offer to animals? <i>Shelter, food, shade, etc.</i></li> <li>• How have people changed the area within the study area? What was it like before? How does a change in a habitat affect plants and animals that live there?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Other activities for schoolyard nature studies</b></p>	<p>1. Create an <b>Unnatural Trail</b>  Before the outdoor lesson, distribute items that are not natural, and with which the students will be familiar (water bottle, straws, baggies, styrofoam cups or plates, etc.). As you travel from one study area to another, have the students point to the placed objects that are not part of nature Ask why these objects might not be good for wildlife. Point out that litter is another way people have an impact on habitat. After all groups have been on the Unnatural Trail and before going inside, have the class pick objects up and sort into recycling and trash bags.</p> <p>2. Conduct a <b>Sound Survey</b>: students sit or lie down on their backs with both fists held up in the air. Every time someone hears a new sound (like wind in the grass, falling leaves, rushing water, or “unnature sounds”, like</p>

	<p>airplanes, machines, etc.) he/she lifts one finger. Who has the best hearing? Vary the game by listening for only animal sounds or for only different bird songs. Record these on the back of the Who Lives Here? data sheet.</p> <p>3. Conduct a <b>Color Survey</b>: Get children to concentrate more deeply on any natural setting by asking them how many different colors and shades of colors they can see in front of them without moving from where they are standing. Call out colors and have them point to something with that color and describe what they are pointing to. Or hand each a different color chip to each students and have them look for and point out things they can spot with that color.</p>
<p><b>Ways to use observations/ data</b></p>	<p>Using the tally marks on the What Lives Here? data sheets that indicate the numbers of kinds of animals and plants observed in each of the study areas, create a bar graph to illustrate the data collected for animals and that for plants.</p> <p>Ask the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Which study area had the most kinds of animals?</li> <li>2. Which study area had the most kinds of plants?</li> <li>3. Why did a particular [state] area have more kinds of animals and plants than the others?</li> <li>4. How could you change the study areas that had fewer kinds of animals and plants so that more kinds of animals and plants could live there? [<i>Provide more suitable food, homes, water to increase habitat</i>].</li> </ol>