

URBAN HABITATS

GRADE LEVEL(S) 1

LESSON OBJECTIVE

Los Angeles is filled with many different habitats. These habitats range from city parks to mountains, from ponds to the beach, and all of them have different factors that make them unique. By looking at different areas in and around Los Angeles, students will be able to learn about their community and what makes it unique, as well as what organisms are suited to live there. Students will be able to:

- ✓ Identify different habitats in and around Los Angeles
- ✓ Describe some of the major habitats found in Los Angeles
- ✓ Recognize external features necessary for survival in one habitat vs. another
- ✓ Identify an animal's habitat based on its external features
- ✓ Recognize a 2-D representation of Los Angeles

EDUCATION STANDARD(S)

California Science Standards, Grade 1

Plants and animals meet their needs in different ways. As a basis for understanding this concept:

1. Students know different plants and animals inhabit different kinds of environments and have external features that help them thrive in different kinds of places.
2. Students know both plants and animals need water, animals need food, and plants need light.
3. Students know animals eat plants or other animals for food and may also use plants or even other animals for shelter and nesting.

Environmental Principles & Concepts (EEI) corresponding learning objectives:

- Recognize that natural systems (environments) provide the resources (goods and ecosystem services) for survival for plants and animals.
- Provide examples of the external features of plants and animals that help them live in a particular environment and obtain the resources they need to survive there.
- Describe human activities that can influence the function of natural systems and the availability of resources for plants and animals.
- Explain that if there are significant changes to natural systems (environments) plants and animals may not be able to survive in those areas.
- Provide examples of things that humans do that can influence the availability of resources needed by plants and animals (including humans).

MATERIALS NEEDED

Large fold out map of Los Angeles (Such as the Borch fold out Los Angeles map), long rope or chalk (to draw on blacktop), Los Angeles Habitat Cards, Organism Cards

DIRECT INSTRUCTION

- Hold up a large fold out map of Los Angeles and point out where they live/are and where the beach and mountains are (it is crucial that students understand the map and where they are on the map before preceding).
- Point out some of the key features that the students might know in order to give them reference, such as the beach, downtown, and their neighborhood.
- Lay the map down on the floor in a large open space. Take the rope or chalk and create an outline of Los Angeles around the map (make it large enough where students can walk around inside it).
- Point out the same locations (beach, downtown and their neighborhood) on the larger outline.
- Hold up a habitat card and ask the students to *describe what they see*. Ask them *if they know where in Los Angeles they might find that particular habitat?* (If students do not know, help them find the location in Los Angeles that the habitat can be found)
- Next, locate their Los Angeles habitat on the map and place it in the corresponding area on the large chalk/rope outline.
- Once all of the cards have been placed, give the students a few minutes to walk around and take a virtual tour of LA.
- After the student have had enough time to take the virtual tour ask them what some of the differences are among the various areas.
- Take out the organism cards, show the picture, and read the back of the card to find out the animal's needs.
- Point out some of the external features of the animal. Ask the students: what is it used for? Which habitat would be the best home for this animal?
- After each card is read, have a few students stand in the Los Angeles habitat where they think that animal is likely to live. Have the students explain why they chose one habitat over another.
- If students select different habitats for the same organism, begin a discussion about the organisms adaptations and where they will be best suited.
- If students select an incorrect habitat correct them by asking questions that help them determine the correct answer. Such as:
 - What does your animal eat and is it found there?
 - Can they get enough water?
 - Is there a good place for them to hide? Where?
 - Ask students what a certain feature on an animal would be good for? (heron's long legs are good for wading.)
- When all organisms have been shown and placed in their proper habitat, remind the students that all of the habitats are located in their city of Los Angeles.



Sandy Shore

- The sandy beach area next to the ocean
- Always changing because of the waves and tides
- Heavily used by people



Oak Woodland

- Big trees (oak)
- Trees are spread out and are surrounded by bushes and grasses.
- Acorns, from the oak trees, are food for many animals.



Downtown - City

- Tall buildings that trap heat in the summer, wind in the winter
- Lots of metal, concrete, and wires
- Noisy



Chaparral

- Steep hills
- Very dry
- Low bushes, shrubs,
and grasses



Salt Marsh

- Thick, tall grasses
- Found near coast
- Covered by salt water



Western Gull

- Webbed feet to help it swim
- Eats crabs, dead fish, or anything it can find



Pigeon

- Feet good for holding onto branches and wires
- Beak good for pecking and eating seeds and small bits of food
- Live in large groups



Heron

- Long legs good for wading
- Long pointy beak good for catching fish
- Nests in marsh grass



Ground Squirrel

- Live in underground burrows
- Eat seeds, bugs, and plants
- Good paws for digging



Deer

- Eat grasses and leaves
- Fast runner
- Hide in the woods