



Habitat Discovery & Sensory Boxes Classroom Activity



SYNOPSIS

While you may not have animals at home, we can still be scientists and create our own habitats to explore! For this two-part lesson, we will focus on four habitats: desert, grasslands, ocean, and mountains. We will introduce each habitat and discuss the animals that we could find living in each unique place. Later, we will use this knowledge to collect materials and build a model of each habitat.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to identify four different habitats and some of the plants and animals that live in each habitat.

NGSS CONCEPTS

K-LS1-1. Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.

K-ESS2-2. Construct an argument supported by evidence for how plants and animals (including humans) can change the environment to meet their needs.

K-ESS3-1. Use a model to represent the relationship between the needs of different plants or animals (including humans) and the places they live.

MATERIALS - Lesson 1

- Habitat coloring fact sheets
- Animal coloring sheet
- Coloring materials: crayons, markers, colored pencils
- Scissors
- Extra materials: magazines, family photos, picture books

LESSON 1

1. To start the lesson and generate curiosity about habitats, introduce the student to the different habitats using the habitat fact coloring sheets. This could also be done with a short video.
 - [Wild Animal Habitat](#) - Little Smart Planet
 - [Animal Habitats](#) - Learning Junction
 - [Habitats](#) - Mark Drollinger
2. Read the facts about each habitat and have the student color the picture.
3. Ask the student questions about each habitat. Is it hot or cold there? Is it wet or dry? What is different or special about each habitat?
4. To further the understanding of each habitat, discuss with your students what different animals might be found in each location.
5. Have the student color and cut out each animal. This is a scientific diagram, so the colors should be accurate.
6. Next, have the student sort the animals into each habitat. Ask them if animals can live in a place like this if it gets too hot or too cold outside. What would help the animal to live here? What would they eat? Where could they live?
7. Ask if they want to find other pictures of this habitat online or maybe in a book at home. Try to identify habitats in movies they like or places they've been with family. Bring out family photos and/or clippings from magazines to sort and reference.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING - Lesson 1

- Ask the student to tell you a story about each habitat and the animals that live there. You could also play a guessing game where you describe the habitat and ask the student guess the name.
- Have the students share their habitat with a classmate, friend or family member.

MATERIALS - Lesson 2

- Four containers - Tupperware, buckets, shoeboxes, or whatever is available.
- Soils - sand, rocks, grass, water, etc. Be creative and use what is available. Even colored paper can be used to represent plants or rocks, or have students create their own “water” by coloring plain paper.
- Plants - pipe cleaners, toilet paper rolls, beads, water, some sticks, leaves or grass from outside, or have students draw their own and help them to cut out their creations.
- Animals- cut-outs from lesson 1, plastic toys, anything you have!

LESSON 2

1. Review the four habitats from the previous lesson by asking questions about specific characteristics. What was the weather like here? How much water is there? How much sunlight? What animals would live here?
2. Choose a habitat you would like to build (or you can assign them if that is easier).
3. Collect materials and supplies that are available at school, home, or in your yard, like sticks and leaves.
4. Begin constructing your habitat in your container. What kind of land would you find in your habitat; mud or sand? What kind of plants would grow there; tall trees or spiky cacti?
5. Construct plants out of the craft materials and collected materials. Allow your student to play with each habitat after it has been constructed. This model should be for sensory exploring. Be sure to encourage them to create a creek, or hills, instead of just a flat surface.
6. Add animals to the habitat. Use the pictures, hand-made pipe cleaner animals, and/or plastic toy animals at home. Ask them where would the animals live? In a tree or underground? Build shelters for the animals, nests, or dig burrows. Is digging a burrow going to change this habitat?

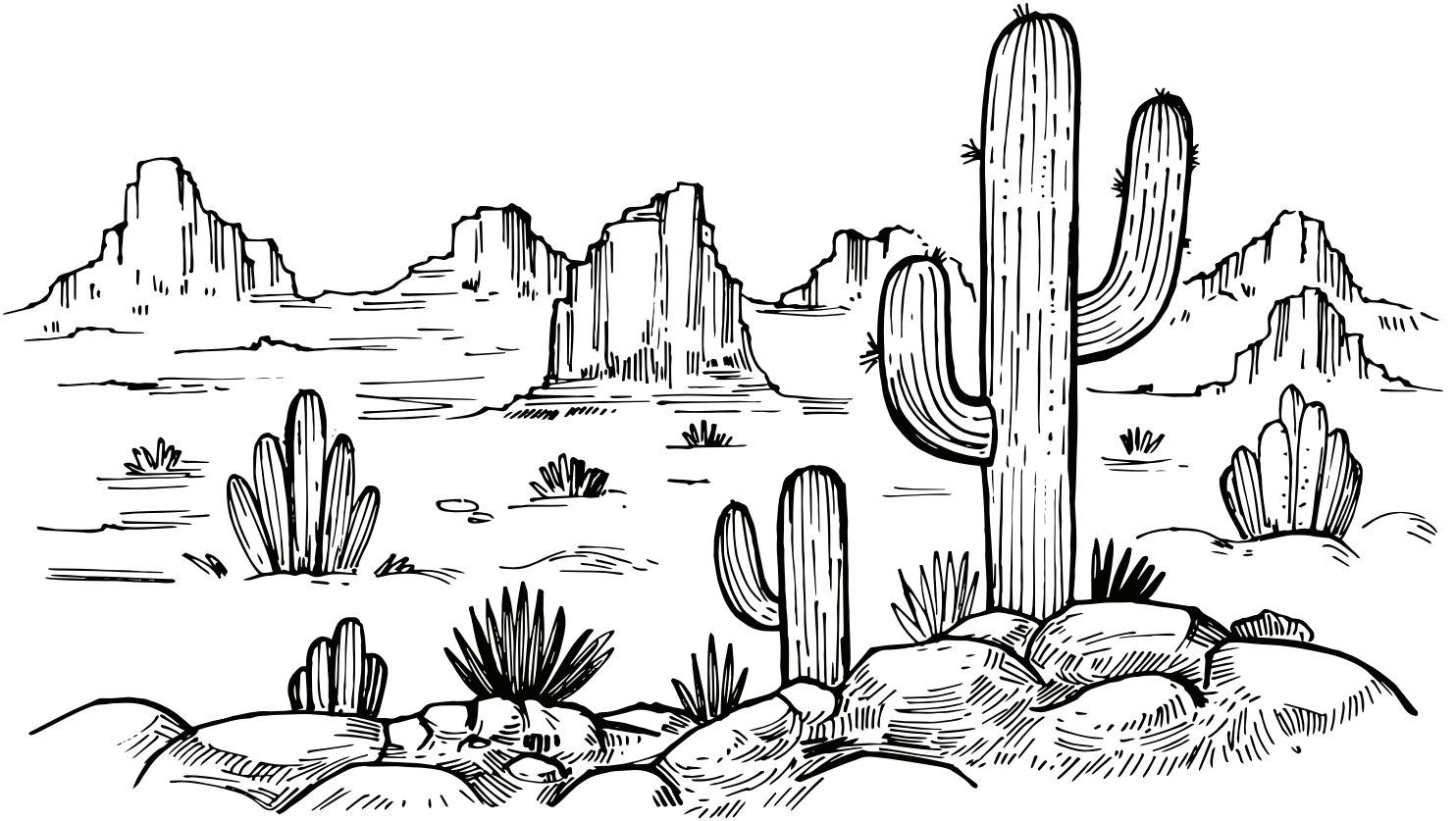
CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING - Lesson 2

- Ask the students to describe their habitat to you and tell you about the animals that live there. What will they eat?
- What plants are in your habitat? Why would you find those plants in your habitat?

EXTENSIONS

- Students can share their habitats with videos for their classmates.

DESERT



HABITAT

- ☀ **Very dry place with almost no water**
- ☀ **Less than 10 inches of rain a year**
- ☀ **Gets lots of sunlight and can get very hot in summer**
- ☀ **The soil is very sandy and rocky**



GRASSLAND



HABITAT



Wide open valley or field where grass and flowers grow



This habitat gets around 24 inches of rain each year



Too wet to be a desert, too dry to be a forest, but just right for wild flowers to bloom



MOUNTAIN



HABITAT



This habitat rises high above its surroundings



Taller than a hill, mountains have a tall peak and steep sloping sides



It can get very cold in mountains and sometimes it will snow



OCEAN



HABITAT



Over half of Earth's surface is covered in salty ocean



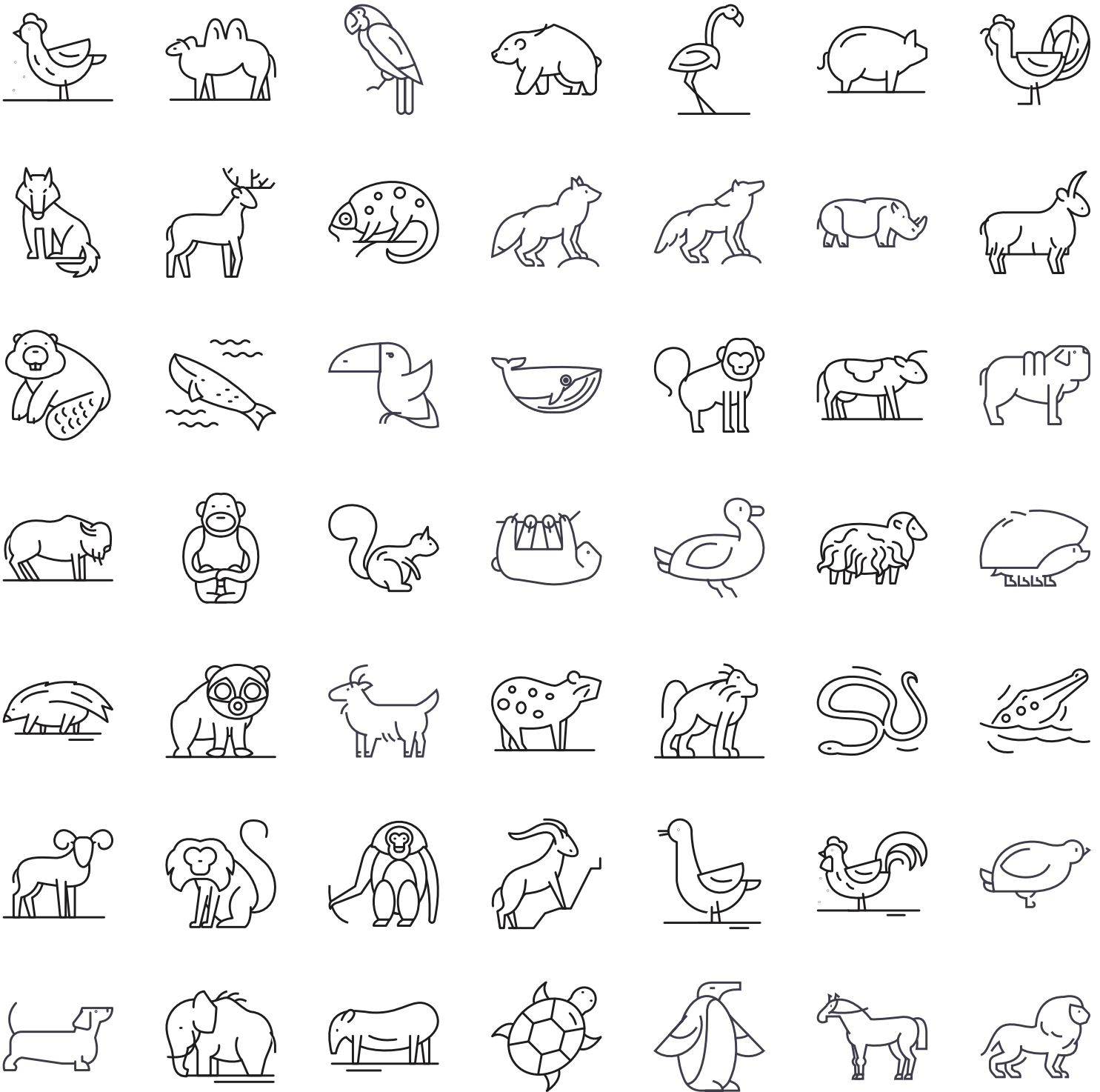
Largest habitat on Earth



The coast of California has many rocky beaches and tidepools for animals to live and hide



ANIMALS



Instructions:

**Color the different animals
Match them to their habitats**

