

HEALTHY HABITATS FOR ALL

Overview:

Students explore the urban habitat in which they live and study the biodiversity in their neighborhood. Students observe and learn about bugs, birds, and mammals to learn the essential components of a habitat: food, water, shelter, and space. Through a combination of scientific observation, songs, community service work, and creative design, students will explore how people influence the urban ecosystem.

Standards:

- This unit is designed to meet Nebraska Content Area Standards in science, social studies, and language arts. Specific standards met for each grade level are indicated on each lesson plan.
- This unit is designed for grades K-5. However, it is geared towards standards met for grades K, 2, 3, and 5. Lessons can be adapted for additional grade levels.

Materials:

- The resource kit contains all the materials necessary for these activities in this unit.
- Internet access is needed for this unit. Several activities include a web-based video for students. Additionally, two activities include a virtual meeting with a Keep Omaha Beautiful educator.

Objectives:

- Participants will recognize that no matter where they live, nature is all around them. They will recognize that there is beauty in the nature they can find near their home.
- Participants will create a fictional creature to help them understand the components any living creature needs in a habitat (food, water, shelter, space).
- Participants will observe and study insects, spiders, birds, and mammals that live in their neighborhood. Participants will understand the diversity of life in their urban ecosystem.
- Participants will observe adaptations that help primary and secondary consumers survive.
- Participants will understand how pollution and litter negatively affect the environment and their own health.
- Participants will recognize that they can influence the nature in their neighborhood by taking care of the environment.

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Guidance Note:

Some of these activities are best suited for younger audiences while others are best suited for older students. Resource kits include the materials for **all** of the activities. When registering for this unit, a teacher will receive personalized assistance from a Keep Omaha Beautiful educator to **select** activities that fit best with their curriculum and match the skills and abilities of their students.

	Estimated Time	Description
Omaha Explorers: Ecosystem Scavenger Hunt	30 - 45 minutes	Students explore the ecosystem around their school or home to discover the producers, consumers, decomposers, and abiotic factors.
KOB Led Discussion: What's a Habitat?	30 - 45 minutes	Students learn how food, water, shelter, and space are the essential elements of a habitat.
Story Time: Glasswings - A Butterfly Story	15 - 20 minutes	Students listen to <i>Glasswings, A Butterfly's Story</i> by Elisa Kleven and explore ideas of what they can do to make a positive impact on their community.
Litter Cleanup Activity	20 - 30 minutes	Help take care of the habitat around you! This activity can be repeated several times during this unit.
Insect Song	5 minutes	Students learn insect body parts through this active song.
Insect and Spider Puzzles	10 minutes	Students use insect and spider body part pieces to learn the basic anatomy of insects and spiders.
Omaha Explorers: Insect and Spider Investigation	30 - 45 minutes	Students take an urban nature walk in their backyard or schoolyard and search for tiny creatures living in the habitat they walk past every day. Students make scientific observations and record them on a data sheet.
Story Time: Ruby's Birds	20 - 30 minutes	Students listen to <i>Ruby's Birds</i> by Mya Thompson and are encouraged to discover the nature that lives in their own city.
What's For Dinner? Bird Beak Adaptations	20 - 30 minutes	Students participate in a hands-on activity to assess how bird beaks are adapted for their specific food sources. Students then examine bird skull replicas to determine what types of food they eat and discuss where birds find food in the city.

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What's for Dinner? Mammal Skull Observation	30 - 45 minutes	Through scientific observation of carnivore, herbivore, and omnivore skulls, students determine what types of foods animals eat to learn more about food chains and energy transfer in the urban ecosystem.
Omaha Explorers: Animal Search	30 - 45 minutes	During this outdoor exploration, students make scientific observations of animals that live in the urban ecosystem and record them on a data sheet.
Build a Critter	10 - 15 minutes	Students use knowledge gained to design their own creature adapted to survive in an urban habitat.
Story Time: The Great Trash Bash	10 - 15 minutes	Students listen to <i>The Great Trash Bash</i> by Laureen Leedy and discover how they can positively impact the environment through their own personal actions.
Litter Pickup Song	5 minutes	Reinforce the importance of picking up litter and sorting out recycling with this active song.
Things Out of Place: Litter Cleanup Challenge	30 - 45 minutes	Students work together to clean up their neighborhood or schoolground environment to make it healthy for everyone who lives there.
Creative Writing: My Critter's Story	30 - 45 minutes	Students use their imaginations and creativity to write their own story about improving the environment.
KOB Led Discussion: Healthy Habitat for Humans and Litter Analysis	30 - 45 minutes	We have explored the urban ecosystem! We know why having a healthy habitat is important for the animals in the city. In this final activity, discover more about the benefits of a healthy habitat for humans and what we can do to continue improving our community.