



How We Survive

Kindergarten

Duration

Pre-Visit: 45 minutes

Visit: 30-40 minutes

Post-Visit: 45 minutes

Location

Nature Gardens

Supplies

- Worksheets
- Pencils
- Paper
- Scissors
- Glue
- Magazines (enough for a class collage project)
- Drawing paper

Standards

[CCSS ELA K.L.1-2](#)

Vocabulary

Need

Want

Organism

Meeting needs

Concepts

- Living things need need air, water, food and shelter to survive.
- There is a difference between *needs* and *wants*.

Objectives

- Students will be able to identify the four things that organisms need to survive.
- Students will realize through exploring the Nature Gardens that organisms' needs for survival are fewer than wants.
- Students will describe what they observed at the Nature Gardens using both general and specific language.

Outline

1. In one classroom session before visiting the NHM, introduce the concept that living things must have four basic needs met (air, water, food and shelter).
2. During a trip to the NHM, explore the Nature Gardens and explore and observe the different living things that inhabit the Nature Gardens and take note of the four basic needs that are being met by living there.
3. Back in the classroom, students will review what they saw and observed at the Nature Gardens. They will draw a picture and write sentences to explain what they observed.

Pre-Visit

In your classroom ask students, “What are some things that all organisms (living things) need to live?” Record answers, and make sure to guide students to say air, water, food and shelter. Explain that other things are *wants* and are not absolutely necessary to survival.

Have students look through magazines and cut out pictures of things that are *needs* and things that are *wants*. Have them sort the pictures on a paper divided in half and headed with two columns: “needs” and “wants.” After students have completed their sorting activity, have them glue the items under the appropriate heading.

Once all the students have completed the activity, have them share their pictures.

Go on a nature walk to explore and observe different things that meet different organisms' needs. Reiterate the four basic needs, and make stops specifically to observe each of the four needs as a class. If students grasp the concepts easily, ask more complicated prompts about unusual organisms (in parentheses) and encourage multiple explanations. If students are struggling, stick to more obvious observations and repeat at each stop.

AIR: How do animals get air? How do plants get air? (What about animals that live underground? Underwater?)

WATER: How do animals get water? How do plants get water? (What about insects with differently shaped mouths like butterflies? What about birds?)

FOOD: How do squirrels get food? Insects? (What about plants—how do they get food?)

SHELTER: Where can organisms go when they need to hide or raise babies? Where do birds go? Coyotes? What about really small organisms? (How can plants get shelter since they can't move?)

Once you return to class, record some different things that different animals eat, different places that animals live, what plants need, etc. Call special attention to the fact that sometimes the same need—food, for example—is met for different organisms in very different ways (i.e., ladybugs eat aphids, but aphids eat plants, and plants get their 'food' from the sun).

Museum Visit

On a trip to the NHM, gather students before entering the Nature Gardens. Ask students to recall the four basic needs of all living things. Tell them that they will be exploring the Nature Gardens to observe how the four basic needs are being met for the animals, insects and plants that are living there.

Ask students if all the animals, insects and plants living in the Nature Gardens will have their four needs met in the same way. Instruct students to look for differences in how the four basic needs of different living things are met.

After exploring the Nature Gardens, gather students together and ask them what they observed. Ask them what specific animals, insects or plants they saw and what they noticed about how their basic needs were being met at the NHM.

Post-Visit

Once you are back in the classroom, review the visit to the NHM's Nature Gardens. Ask the students to recall the four basic needs. Tell them to think back to the magazine sorting activity about things humans "need" and "want." Ask students, "Are the things that we humans need the same as what animals, insects and plants need?" Guide them to realize that we all essentially need the same things in order to survive.

Have them share what they saw and observed at the Nature Gardens. Next, ask them to draw a picture of one organism that they saw at the Nature Gardens. Have them write 2-3 lines describing what that specific organism eats and where it lives.

NEEDS

WANTS

Draw a picture of one organism (living thing) you found in the Nature Gardens!

