
Critter Crawl



Purpose:

This lesson shows that there is a wide variety of animals that rely on wetlands for shelter, food, water, and space.

Time Required: 45 Minutes

Appropriate grades: 1-4th

NGSS and Common Core Standards:

NGSS 2-LS4-1 Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.

Objectives:

1. Students will identify 12 different animals that live in wetlands by investigating animal evidence, such as pelt, scat, and tracks.
2. Students will infer animals' diets based on physical features and evidence found in scat.

Materials:

- 11 critter crawl boxes complete with animal evidence (pelt, scat, track, etc) and fact cards (provided)
- Track ID cards (11) (provided)
- Guess Who (is in the wetland) Cards (36) (provided)
- Clothes Pins (at least 50) (provided)
- Passport master copy (provided)

Activity:

Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Preparation: Set up Critter Crawl Activity<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Place the contents (pelts, scat, track molds, and fact cards) of the 12 Critter Crawl boxes on different surfaces around the room• Have Track ID cards handy2. Opening:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Tell students "We're going to be solving mysteries today"! We're going to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Investigate a really special type of habitat called a wetland
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Look at the evidence, or signs, to guess what animals might live in a wetland ● Make conclusions about how these animals live ● “But first we are going to find out what you all already know” <p>b. Ask students, “What is a habitat?”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. (Answers might be “An animal’s home”, “It’s in nature”, etc.) ii. Explain that a habitat is a place in nature where animals, plants, and other organisms live to get food, water, shelter, and space.
<p>Body</p>	<p>Discussion</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ask students, “What is a wetland?” <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. (Answers might be “A swamp”, “A pond”, “it has plants”.) ii. Tell students that a wetland is an area of land that is saturated with water either all year long or at certain times of the year. Many different animals live in or near wetlands because there is a lot of water to drink, lots of plants to eat, lots of small animals to eat, and many good places to hide. Some animals live in wetlands all year long, but others come only to raise their young or to rest or feed during migration. iii. Explain that you may not always see animals, but if you look closely there is a lot of evidence that can show you what animals are living there. b. Ask students, “What might you look for to show that animals have been there?” <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. (Answers could be tracks, scat/feces, teeth or claw marks on plants, fur, feathers, well-worn trail, or sleeping or nesting place). c. Ask students, “What can these signs, or evidence, tell us about how animals live?” <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. (Answers could be that signs tell you where they sleep, what they eat, and how far they roam). d. Animals <p>Critter Crawl Activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ask students, “Are you ready to find out what mystery we are about to solve today?”



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Introduce the Critter Crawl Activity by giving students a Critter Crawl Passport and pointing out the stations around the room. c. Students move from station to station, reading fact cards, investigating animal evidence and filling out their passport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Students may work in groups of 2-3 if desired, but each should have their own passport.
Closure	<p>Knowledge Check</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. When everyone is finished, students return to their seats. b. Show the class the Track ID cards and have them guess which track belongs to which animal. c. If a student gets a track correct, have them share something interesting they learned about that particular animals.

Modifications:

- **Middle School:** Add the Guess Who (is in the Wetland) Game:
 - Students will get pinned in their back the photo of one of the 12 featured animals. It is very important that the student does not see which animal they got.
 - Students mingle, asking each other specific yes or no questions about their animals' physical features, diets, habitat, etc. until they figure out which animal they are without being told the name of the animal.

