

# LESSON PLAN: UNDERSTANDING ECOSYSTEMS

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Class:</b>	<b>Unit:</b>
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<b>LESSON TOPIC:</b>	Understanding Ecosystems with <i>Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe</i>
<b>AIM:</b>	Cricket, the main character in <i>Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe</i> , moves into a treehouse in the woods to find her mother's "bird room" before her mother returns. The book can be used to teach students about ecosystems as they learn about Cricket's new home in a deciduous forest.
<b>OBJECTIVES:</b>	Students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Define an ecosystem</li><li>2. Describe the biotic and abiotic components of an ecosystem</li><li>3. Identify the components of the temperate deciduous forest ecosystem in <i>Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe</i></li></ol>
<b>GET STARTED/ DO-NOW:</b>	Divide students into groups of two or three. Instruct each group to brainstorm together and make a list of the things they might find in one of the following ecosystems: rainforest, desert, arctic, African plain, ocean, their neighborhood, a large city.
<b>MINI-LESSON:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. An ecosystem is a community of organisms together with their physical environment. Write down this definition of ecosystem for the students.</li><li>2. Have one student from each group read the list they made for their ecosystem. Discuss the components of each of the ecosystems listed on their papers. Most likely, the students thought of different animal species. Prompt them to add plant species and other components of ecosystems. Point out that people are also part of an ecosystem, as are nonliving components such as weather, sun, soil, climate, and atmosphere. As a class, find additional components of each ecosystem that the students may have missed. Groups should add these to their lists.</li><li>3. Define the words abiotic and biotic. Instruct each group to go back through their lists and label each component with an "A" for abiotic or a "B" for biotic.</li></ol>

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<b>MAIN ACTIVITY:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cricket moves from her small town in the Southeast into the woods. Using the book as a reference, have the students list the components of the new ecosystem (temperate deciduous forest) of which Cricket becomes a part.</li> <li>2. Instruct students research temperate deciduous forest ecosystems online. If individual computers are not available, research the ecosystem as a class. Add components to the list that were not mentioned in the book.</li> </ol> <p>Links:</p> <p><a href="https://science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/ncrn/about/eastern_deciduous_forest.cfm">https://science.nature.nps.gov/im/units/ncrn/about/eastern_deciduous_forest.cfm</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.dnr.sc.gov/cwcs/pdf/Deciduousforestbirds.pdf">http://www.dnr.sc.gov/cwcs/pdf/Deciduousforestbirds.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="http://w3.marietta.edu/~biol/biomes/tempded.htm">http://w3.marietta.edu/~biol/biomes/tempded.htm</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.nhptv.org/natureworks/nwep8c.htm">http://www.nhptv.org/natureworks/nwep8c.htm</a></p> <p><a href="http://kids.nceas.ucsb.edu/biomes/temperateforest.html">http://kids.nceas.ucsb.edu/biomes/temperateforest.html</a></p>
<b>CLOSING ACTIVITY:</b>	<p>Discuss the components of a temperate deciduous forest.</p>
<b>EXTENSIONS:</b>	<p>Invite a park ranger to the class to discuss the ecosystem of a temperate deciduous forest.</p> <p>Have students make a model of Cricket's new ecosystem, labelling individual components.</p> <p>Have students identify how resources for living within Cricket's new ecosystem change from winter to spring.</p>
<b>CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:</b>	<p>Students mark the components on their temperate deciduous forest lists as abiotic or biotic.</p>
<b>MATERIALS:</b>	<p><i>Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe</i> by Jo Hackl Computers for student use or computer and projector for group research</p>

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<b>TECHNOLOGY:</b>	Research temperate deciduous forests online.
<b>COMMON CORE STANDARDS:</b>	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.1-8.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.7-8.7 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.2-8.2 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1-8.1 CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.2