

# TITLE: HABITAT NEEDS

Grade Level: K-3

## State Standard: 12B

Students will know and apply concepts that describe how living things interact with each other and with their environment.

## Performance Descriptor: EARLY ELEMENTARY 12.B.1a

Describe and compare characteristics of living things in relationship to their environments.

## Objectives: Students will

- Understand the basic necessities a habitat should provide to sustain life
- Compare and contrast habitat functions between human and wolf environments

## Background Information:

This lesson focuses on the basic needs that a habitat provides for sustaining life. It is designed to involve discussions on environmental affects on biological species. It involves inquiry and observation and allows students to differentiate between different habitats in their own lives and in those observed at the zoo. For the primary and early elementary learners, this lesson provides an educational glimpse at how biological life has common needs and how habitats and environments provide those necessities.

## Vocabulary Preview:

habitat      species      environment  
protection      ecosystem      air      space      food  
water      hydrate      temperature      shelter

## Procedures (Scripted Teacher Dialogue is in Italics)

### Part I- At School

- Preview the lesson *“Did you know that you are in a habitat everyday here at school? Your school is a habitat because it provides you with all the things you need to live. What are some things we have at school that allow us to live?”* Allow time for student responses and discussion.

- Habitat Tour *“Today we are going to prepare for our visit to Phillips Park Zoo by taking a tour of our own habitat here at our school. Let’s begin.”*

You will tour the school facility and look for and find the following:

1. Classrooms – Shelter, Temperature and Protection

*“Our classrooms provide us with protection from the elements. It provides us with shelter by keeping us enclosed and in an area. It keeps us warm when it is cold, dry when it is raining or snowing, and cool on hot days.”*

2. Water Fountain/Cooler- Water

*“ All living things need water to stay hydrated and healthy. We need to drink lots of water to maintain our body systems and functions. Water fountains at school provide us with a cool refreshing drink throughout our day. ”*

3. Cafeteria/ Lunchroom- Food

*“ All animals, including humans, need energy to move, grow, and stay alive. Unlike plants, which get energy from the sun in photosynthesis, animals need to put food into their body for energy. At lunch and snack time, we can get energy by eating our food, which our bodies will use to run, play, learn and think at school. ”*

4. Playground/Gymnasium- Air and Space

*“ Unlike plants, which cannot move from place to place on their own, animals can move around independently. Animals move around for many reasons. What are some reasons animals move around their environments?”* Allow time for student responses and discussion.

*“We also need room to run around and be active. Not only is it healthy for our bodies to be active, it is good for our brains to be able to move, play and interact with others.”*

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- Debrief with inquiries on how good habitats provide these basic necessities for life. Also, brainstorm what would happen if any of these things were eliminated from a school or a habitat.

## Part II- At Zoo

- Preview the trip *“Today on our trip to Phillips Park Zoo we will see many species living in a habitat that the zoo has created for them. The caretakers at the zoo have done their best to create an environment where the animal species are safe and comfortable. What are some things that you know the zoo will provide?”* Allow time for student responses and discussion.
- YOU MAY SHOW THE ATTACHED POWERPOINT BEFORE, DURING AND EVEN AFTER THE TRIP TO PHILLIPS PARK ZOO
- WOLF PREVIEW AND FACTS
- The Wolf is the largest member of the canine family.
- A Wolf’s lifespan is about 12 years in the wild, and up to 16 in captivity.
- Wolves range in color from grizzled gray, to black to all white.
- Wolves live in a variety of habitats ranging from woods, tundra, deserts and mountains.
- Wolves in the wild, prey on large hooved mammals such as Elk, Moose and Deer. They will also feed on smaller mammals such as Beaver and Rabbits.
- In the United States, the ranges of the wolf have been reduced to Alaska, Minnesota, Idaho, Wyoming, Wisconsin, Michigan and Montana.
- Wolves live in packs with the Alpha Male and Alpha Female leading the packs.
- Wolves communicate by howling (vocalizing), scent marking, body expressions, and facial expressions.
- *“One of the most popular animal species that the Phillips*

*Park Zoo houses is the wolf exhibit. The wolves live in an enclosed area of the zoo that has been prepared to be a life habitat.”*

- Habitat Tour *“Today we are going to visit our friends , the wolves, at Phillips Park Zoo. You will be able to see some of the needs that the habitat provides for the wolves. Some needs, however, are not accessible to the public, so we are going to discuss these things by using pictures.”*
- USE THE TEACHER POWERPOINT PRESENTATION WITH PICTURES WITH INFORMATION PROVIDED
- PICTURES CAN ALSO BE PRINTED IF NO DISPLAY IS AVAILABLE

#### Shelter, Temperature and Protection

- *“The wolves have actually added to their habitat by creating and digging new burrows under bushes and tree trunks. Here they can rest, cool off in the shade, huddle together for warmth, protect themselves from the elements, and even take a break from all the visitors they have. In fact, wolves are naturally shy, especially from humans. In the wild, dens such as these provide a place for birthing and protecting wolf cubs and storing food after a successful hunt.”*

#### Water

- *“Wolves receive water from the zookeepers by means of a pump and pool located at the rear of the exhibit. There are also small pools that collect rainwater that the animals may drink from throughout the day and night.”*

#### Food

- *“ Wolves are one of the most well known carnivores in nature. That means that their diet consists of meat. The Phillips Park zoo has meat that is specially prepared for the wolves. Also, they sometimes get a very special treat when they receive dead animal meat from around*

*the area. In this way, the wolves at the zoo continue to help nature and the food cycle by using their carnivorous appetites to dispose of carcasses.”*

### Air and Space

- *“Wolves are a very playful species and use activities to help train younger members of the pack to interact. By playing, the wolves are learning how to hunt, live together and survive. Here at Phillips Park Zoo, the wolves have plenty of room to run, climb and play. This keeps them very active. Depending on the weather and the mood of these animals, you may see the wolves playing and running. Some of these activities are done at night or after zoo hours because wolves are very nocturnal.”*
- *Remember that besides the habitat needs, the wolves live in a pack and they need each other to survive just like you need your family and friends.*
  
- Debrief with inquiries on how good habitats provide these basic necessities for life. Also, brainstorm what would happen if any of these things were eliminated from a school or a habitat. You can also discuss how mankind, hunting, and a huge loss of their natural territory have deteriorated these habitats.
- Teachers can also develop Venn Diagrams and compare and contrast questions on the differences between wolf and human habitats.

### Part III- EXTENSION

#### At Home Activity Worksheet

Included is a worksheet that can be completed at home. This will provide further understanding of the life necessities that habitats provide and will illustrate to the families at home what the student has learned at school and at the zoo.

## HABITAT NEEDS

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



Directions- Fill in the four main things that all habitats provide for living things. Afterwards, write down some things in your own home that are examples of these life necessities.

EX. Food- I eat cereal and fruits in my kitchen.

Today, I went to the zoo and saw many amazing animals. Some of the most awesome animals I saw were the wolves. We learned about their habitats at the zoo and in the wild. I found out that their habitats provide them with many things to live and survive. Here are four of the most important things I remember:

Habitat Needs

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

These are things that we humans need to live as well. I saw these things at my school. Here is where I see them at home:

