



What is an Ecosystem?

K—2nd Grades

Lesson 1 - Who's Who on Garden Earth?

Essential Questions:

What work is the Earth doing at my school?

What is an ecosystem?

Is my school site an ecosystem?

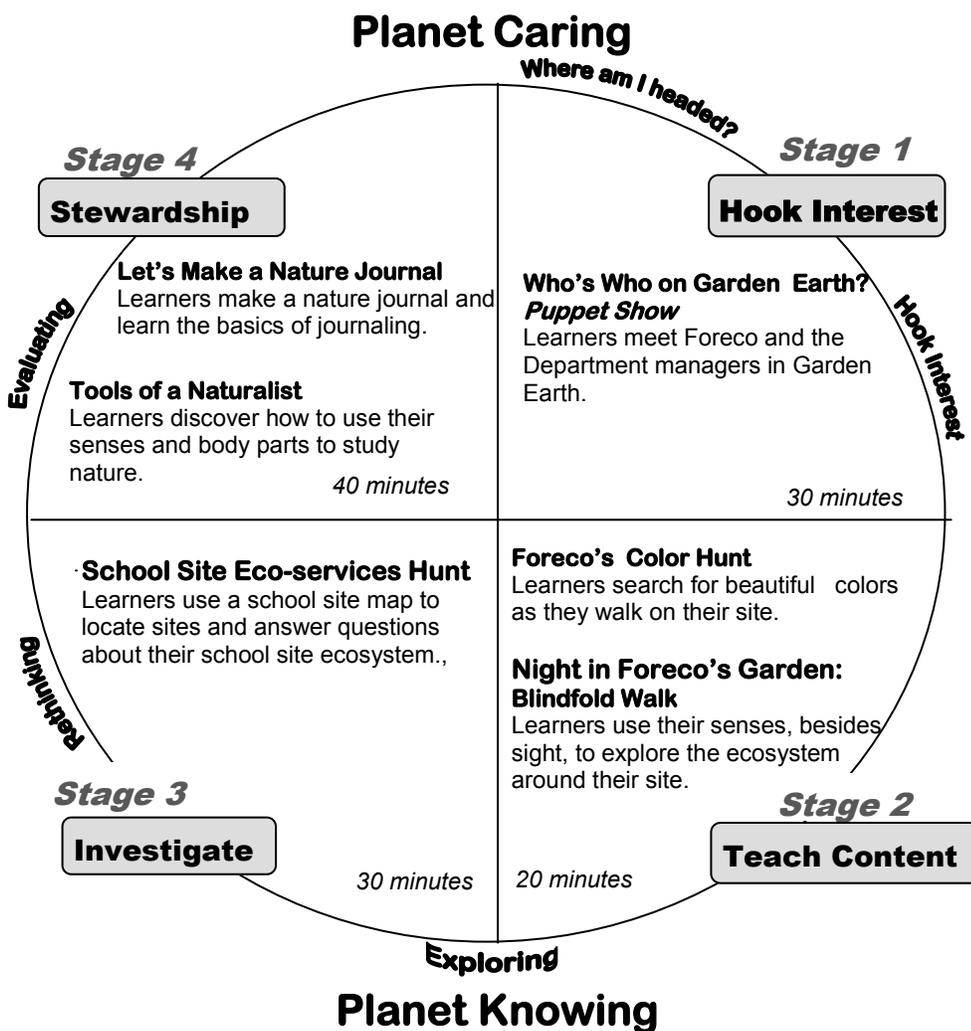
What plants and animals work to keep my school site healthy?

At a Glance:

An interactive puppet show teaches young learners about the different eco-services provided by Garden Earth and introduces the Department Managers. A blindfold walk allows senses, other than sight, to be used to discover learners' surrounding ecosystem. In stage 3 they search for components of their ecosystem in a discovery hunt. Lastly, learners make a nature journal and use their senses to study nature.

Concepts:

- The earth provides me with many things that I need to live.
- I am part of the Earth.
- Water, air, soil, plants and animals are also parts of the Earth.
- The Earth does work to stay healthy.
- When the Earth is healthy, plants and animals stay healthy too.
- People can help the Earth stay healthy.



Objectives

Learners ...

- 1) describe the Garden Earth Departments.
- 2) display curiosity about the major eco-services concepts related to Garden Earth.
- 3) describe how different animals and plants are interconnected on the club site or other natural area.
- 4) show respect for the creatures that live on their school site or natural area.
- 5) communicate facts and feeling by writing in a journal.
- 6) discover how to use their senses to study nature.

PROCEDURES IN BRIEF: Lesson 1—Who's Who on Garden Earth?

Stage 1. Who's Who on Garden Earth?

Puppet Show

Procedure:

1. Assemble the learners in front of the puppet stage. Tell the learners that Foreco (Forest Ecosystem) would like to introduce them to some of the department managers in Garden Earth.
2. Perform the puppet show.
3. Review the different departments and the eco-services they represent. Discuss the departments not mentioned in the puppet show (Pest & Disease Control, Water Purification)

Supplies

Script: *Who's Who Puppets:*

- Oli Earthworm
- Suga Magnolia
- Bertha Bee
- Brody beetle
- Madame Squirrel
- Old Man Spruce
- Foreco
- Child puppet (optional)

Discussion/Assessment:

What does Foreco name stand for? (Forest Ecosystem)
Who are some of the Department Managers introduced in the puppet show?
What are their roles in the ecosystem?

Stage 2. Foreco's Color Walk

Procedure:

1. Orient children with the following statement:
Foreco is proud of the beautiful colors on Earth. What are some colors we may see on our site?
2. If available, reinforce learners understanding of colors in nature by reading, *Planting a Rainbow*.
3. Have children work with a partner. Distribute a color card to each team. Instruct children that they will look for a plant or other thing on their site that is the color of their card. Children switch cards if time permits and look for additional plants.
4. Gather children so all can hear and discuss the experience.

Supplies

- Book, *Planting a Rainbow*, Lois Ehlert,
- Color cards : Pieces of colored construction paper about 3" x 3".
- Blindfolds
- Rope
- Carrots or nuts
- Fragrant flower

Night in Foreco's Garden: Blindfold Walk

Procedure:

1. Have learners line up along a rope, put on blindfolds, and then explain the activity to them.
2. Lead the children through the sensory activities:
 - Air: Ask the children to take a deep breath. Stop and have the learners feel a tree.
 - Food: Pass out nuts or carrots for the children to taste.
 - Each time they hear a different sound have them raise one finger, until they have heard a sound for each of their fingers.
 - Soil: Come to a rotting log or fallen tree branches. Have children use their right hand to touch the log.
 - Pollination: Pass a fragrant flower (or scent container)

Stage 3. At Your Service! Discovery Hunt

1. Divide children into teams with 3-4 learners.
2. Pass out the maps and answer sheets.
3. Provide the orientation and reinforce map skills with the following questions and instructions:
 - Orient learners to the map
 - Tell learners locate the section on your map titled "Proofs of Discovery". When you locate each site there will be a card tied to a tree or other feature or stake at the site. On this card will be a question for you to answer. Enter the answer on your Eco-services Discovery Hunt! work sheet.
 - Remember, this is a team activity; stay with your group at all times.
 - Everyone will return in (? # of minutes) by ____ (state return time).
4. Have learners return when finished and discuss as a group.

Supplies

- Site map
- 'Discovery Hunt' Sheet
- task cards
- String and stakes

Stage 4. Let's Make a Nature Journal

Procedure:

1. Cut 2 pieces of cardstock to desired size.
2. Have learners decorate the front and back covers of their journal using colored pencils, crayons, markers, pressed leaves and flowers, nature quotes, magazine collage, etc.
3. If possible, laminate covers to reduce wear when using outside.
4. Insert blank journal pages or other GEN journal activities.
5. Punch holes using a 3-hole punch and fasten using metal clasp rings or yarn.

Supplies

- 2 sheets of Cardstock
- paper (typing)
- hole punch
- 3 metal clasp rings or yarn
- colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- optional: dried plants, magazines, glue, nature quotes
- pencil

Naturalists use many tools in studying nature, such as binoculars, cameras, tape recorders, rulers, tweezers, and most important, journals. You don't necessarily need all these physical tools to go out and study nature because you already have them in or on your body. For example, your eyes are your binoculars and camera, your ears can listen for sound, and your fingers are great tweezers.

How else can you use your senses or body parts to study nature? Make a list of your senses and body parts that may be useful in studying nature. Then write how they are used to explore your outside world. After you have discovered the great tools you have, go outside and use them. Use all of your tools to write about the day and what you see around you. I think I just felt something blow in my "Wind Detector" (my hair)!