

School Site Ecosystem Standards of Quality Rubric

Essential Questions:

How does the quality of my school site ecosystem score?

What can we do to improve the quality of our school site?

At a Glance: Learners inventory their school site for areas of good quality according to the Garden Earth Naturalist standards and areas in need of improvement.

Background Information

A rubric is a scoring guide used in subjective assessments. It is a guideline for rating performance or quality. The key elements of a rubric are the descriptions for what quality is like at various levels (e.g., very good, okay, poor), and thus



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a rubric can be used to provide an idea of what to aim for when planning a project for the first time or for improving an existing plan.

Getting Ready

Decide if learners will work individually or in small

groups. Print and cut rubric cards (there are a total of 30 cards and two rubric cards per sheet). Draw or use tape to mark the outline of the rubric on the wall, chalkboard or floor. Place the department name cards vertically along the left side of the rubric outline and the quality cards horizontally along the top of the outline.

Procedure:

1. Evenly distribute the remaining 30 cards to each learner or group of learners.
2. One at a time, ask each learner or group to read the description on their card and place it under the correct column heading and in the correct row in the rubric. Tape the cards when needed.
3. After all the cards are in place, review their placement.
4. Using the rubric on the next pages as a guide, discuss with learners the quality of their own school site.

Discussion/Assessment:

How does your school site compare with the descriptions of the rubric cards?

What can we do to improve our school site?

How will we go about implementing these changes?

Location: Indoors

Objectives: Learners will:

- 1) use a rubric to better understand their school site ecosystem.
- 2) classify/score their school site eco-services as “very good”, “okay” or “poor”.
- 3) determine what they can do to improve the wellbeing of their school site.

Skills: organization, cooperation, communication

Supplies:

- rubric cards
- space on wall, chalkboard or floor to arrange cards
- tape to hold cards in place (on wall)
- masking tape or chalk to mark the outline of the rubric

Subjects: science

Time: 15 minutes

What are some service learning projects we can plan and complete?

GEN Ecosystem Quality Rubric

STANDARDS FOR DEPARTMENT QUALITY	VERY GOOD 😊	OKAY	POOR ☹️
POLLINATION	Healthy flowering plants throughout the year; no pesticide use; hummingbird feeders; butterfly garden; bog garden; students educated about and active in their school site (GEN club)	Some flowering plants; low use of pesticide	No flowering plants; high use of pesticide; nothing to attract pollinators
SOIL	Rich, amended soil in garden areas; defined pathways to keep foot traffic from compacting soil; roof, parking lot and sidewalk water runoff channeled by grading to collection areas or drain fields; mulch to keep water in soil around plantings and in playgrounds; students educated about and active in their school site (GEN club)	Some garden areas with amended soil; mulch in garden areas	No garden areas; no mulch; no pathways (compaction); poor drainage in areas near downspouts and concrete; parking on ground under trees
FOOD	Trees and shrubs with berries, fruits and flowers throughout the year; bird/hummingbird feeders; flower gardens; vegetable/herb garden; no use of herbicide/pesticide; students educated about and active in their school site (GEN club)	Flower garden; bird feeder; low use of herbicide and pesticide	No gardens; few plantings; high use of herbicide and pesticide
AIR	Lots of trees and shrubs; no idling zones near school; community emission regulations of nearby industries; classroom logs of student/family car use; students educated about and active in their school site (GEN club)	Some trees; no idling zone	No trees; no regulations
WATER	Porous pavement in parking areas; rain gardens near downspouts; cisterns for rain collections and use on planted areas; buffer zones of wild plantings if close to body of water and storm drains; storm drains that go directly to rivers clearly marked; classroom surveys of water use; students educated about and active in	Storm drains clearly marked and students aware of direct impact of polluted runoff on bodies of water; students aware of water cycle; water treatment processes and methods of water conservation	No awareness of water issues

	their school site (GEN club)		
BIODIVERSITY	Large amount of biodiversity in and around school site; gardens (butterfly, rock outcrop, bog); no use of herbicide and pesticide; students educated about and active in their school site (GEN club)	Some variety of plant material providing food, shelter and nesting sites for wildlife; low use of herbicide and pesticide	Very little to no variety of plant material and therefore animals; monoculture; high use of herbicide and pesticide
CLIMATE CONTROL	Designated walk/ride bikes to school days; trials of alternative sources/uses of energy; understanding of the effects our actions have on climate; interest in global climate issues; students educated about and active in their school site (GEN club)	Talk of alternative sources/uses of energy; awareness/study of climate	No awareness of climate and connection to human actions
PEST AND DISEASE CONTROL	Understanding of natural controls of pests with use of beneficial insects and by promoting the health of plants; plants providing food for beneficial insects; no use of pesticides (allowing beneficial insects to survive and take care of pests naturally); mulch for established plants; no idling zones around older trees; redirecting of standing water; students educated about and active in their school site (GEN club)	Teaching about beneficial insects and plant health; low to no use of pesticide; some gardens attracting pollinators (promoting an education of insects)	High pesticide use; “no bugs” attitude
ECOSYSTEM	Understanding that all departments contribute to the whole ecosystem (An ecosystem is greater than the sum of its parts); participation in activities that demonstrate the connection of departments; gardens; clubs; events promoting awareness and action in school site environment; students educated about and active in their school site (GEN club)	Education of some of different parts (departments) of ecosystem	No awareness of aspects of nature and where people fit into it
SERVICE LEARNING	Groups; programs and events involving students and their parents in projects around school and in the community (school wide involvement); students educated about and active in their school site (GEN club)	One group or one project to clean up and beautify school grounds; a project that is not continued	No interest in school site; environment or community