



LHS GEMS Aquatic Habitats

Exploring Desktop Ponds

Provided by:
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Information	Program Description
Ages 8-12	Aquatic Habitats provides students with opportunities to investigate an aquatic habitat. Students set up and add organisms to their own desktop model pond to learn, observe, record, predict, and draw inferences about aquatic habitats. The desktop ponds develop and change over time, allowing students to discover firsthand some of the complex interactions within a typical pond ecosystem. Students learn about adaptations and interactions of organisms as well as gain understanding in life science.
Curriculum Format	Each lesson can be presented in 45-60 minutes. Teaching Guide with complete instructions is provided. Teaching Kit with materials needed to present lessons is provided. User may need to provide standard classroom supplies (pencils, scissors, glue). If a lesson requires perishable items (e.g. milk), user is responsible for these purchases.

Lesson	Overview
One: Creating an Aquatic Habitat	Students explore an underwater world through the windows of a model pond. They identify the necessary components of a habitat and work together to arrange their habitats to receive animals in later activities.
Two: Tubifex Worms and Snails	Students add Tubifex worms and snails to their pond habitat and observe their behavior.
Three: Fish Enter the Habitat	Students observe the structure and behavior of fish in cups before adding them to their pond habitat and after adding them to their pond.
Four: Mosquitoes	Students compare the mosquito life stages and structures as well as observe the behavior of the Gambusia Fish as they eat the mosquito larvae.
Five: Further Explorations	Part I (in the classroom) - Students design and conduct experiments with their aquatic habitats, make closer studies of the mosquito life cycle and observe changes as the habitats evolve. Part II (on a field trip) – Students make observations on a field trip and connect these observations to their classroom aquatic habitat.

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