
10. GOOD BUDDIES

Sonoran Desert Adaptation

Overview: Students match cards to classify pairs of plants and animals according to three major forms of dependency Relationships.

Objective: To define symbiosis, commensalism, mutualism and parasitism and identify animals that live in each type of relationship.

Time needed: Approximately 1 hour

Group Size: Large group

Age appropriateness: 4th grade and up.

Site: any location

Background: Elements of any ecological system live in an intricate web of interdependence. When two species of organisms live in close physical contact with each other, their relationship is called "symbiotic". In a symbiotic relationship at least one of the organisms directly benefits from its close association with the other organism. There are three major forms of symbiotic relationships:

Commensalism is a relationship in which one species derives food or shelter from another species without seriously harming that organism or providing any benefits in return.

Mutualism is a reciprocal relationship in which two different species live in a symbiotic way where both species benefit and are dependent upon the relationship.

Parasitism is a relationship between two species in which one species (the parasite) nourishes itself to the detriment of the other species (the host).

Materials:

Provided at the Garden

1 set of animal pictures and information cards

Provided by the classroom teacher

Nothing needed

Preparation: None required

Pre Activity: Videos, posters, and class discussions of symbiotic relationships will prepare students for this activity.

Procedure:

1. Pass out a picture card to each student or pair of students.
2. By using the information sheets, participants need to find their "buddy".
3. The pairs then need to discuss the following questions: Why do we live together? What advantages and disadvantages do we provide one another? What would happen if one of us weren't here?
4. Pairs of buddies then give short reports to the large group, telling about their relationship. They should give examples in the Garden when possible.

Modifications: Key words, symbols or concepts could be put on the backs of the cards to assist with matching

Extensions: Have students identify symbiotic relationships in other habitats.

Make a set of cards for each group of 5 or 6 students with a "no buddy" card added. Deal out the cards and play like "Old Maid". One player is left holding the "no buddy" card at the end of the game and the one with the most pairs is the winner.

Reference List:

Nature Scope, Discovering Deserts
OBIS

Time of Year: any time

**This activity was adopted from Project WILD, Good Buddies