

Activity #13: *The Tale of Chipilo* Making Connections–Food Web

Purpose:

This activity will help students understand the interconnectedness of all aspects of an ecosystem, as well as review key concepts related to the ecosystem surrounding a Golden-cheeked Warbler.

Materials:

1. Ball of yarn
2. Title cards:
 - producer
 - primary consumer
 - secondary consumer
 - tertiary consumer
 - decomposer
 - brood parasite

Cardboard box with these items placed inside: *(Note: All these items can be improvised in many ways. Only one or two suggestions are given)*

1. Yellow ball or a flashlight–the sun–provides energy for plant to grow
2. Spray bottle of water–water–water needed for all things to grow
3. Strip of bark from an Ashe juniper tree or a strand of twine if no juniper available
4. Golden-cheeked Warbler puppets or masks–male and female
5. Brown-headed Cowbird puppet or mask–lays eggs in GCWA nest
6. Plastic eggs–represent cowbird egg
7. Smaller plastic eggs–represent GCWA eggs
8. Plastic caterpillars or green pipe cleaners twisted in half–food for GCWA
9. Rubber snake–predator
10. Hawk or owl picture or stuffed animal–predator
11. Turkey Vulture or Black Vulture puppet or mask
12. Other plastic bug–food
13. Other plastic bug–food
14. Branch of green leaves or flowers–producers
15. Spiders’ web from party store–glue that holds the GCWA nest together
16. Mushroom – represent fungi – decomposers when things die

(Adjust the number of items depending on class size)

Preparation:

1. Gather materials and put them in a small box.
2. Print out titles; laminate if possible. Hole-punch each side of the top and make a necklace with a piece of yarn.

Class Time:

45 minutes

Activity:

1) CONNECTING

Call students together to make a circle. Walk around and ask them to take one item out of the box until everyone has something. Then ask for a volunteer to first explain what their object represents and then while holding on to the end of a ball of yarn, they say to whom they are planning to throw the ball. They throw it and say, “I think I’m connected to _____.” Then they explain why they think there is a connection. Make sure it is a valid connection before going forward. This could be done by asking the other students if they agree that the items could be connected that way.

Alternative version:

Have the student say, “I think I’m connected to _____ because _____.” “If there is agreement, everyone collectively says, “Connect!” and the student throws the ball of yarn to that other person.

The person who has received the ball of yarn, then grabs hold of the strand of yarn and repeats the activity. Care must be taken that everyone holds on to their section of yarn. This continues until everyone has received a turn.

Once all the connections are made, then take out one person to see what happens to the connections.

Examples:

Take out water to exemplify a drought—what and who will be affected?

Take out Ashe juniper—what and who will be affected?

Take out caterpillars—what and who will be affected?

2) CLASSIFYING

After this first activity, put the yarn away, but have them keep their props.

Have them clump together accordingly when you call out:

- living things, non-living things
- plant, animal
- predators, prey

- producers, consumers, decomposers
- vertebrate, invertebrate

As a group decide who gets the name cards and why they would get them.

Alignment:

Grade 3 (red)

Grade 4 (blue)

Grade 5 (green)

Grade 6 (purple)

English Language Arts & Reading student expectations: 26(A)

Mathematics student expectations: N/A

Science student expectations: 9(A); 7(C), 9(A,B); 9(A-D); 12(E,F)

Social studies student expectations: 4(A,D), 17(B), 18(A); 9(C), 21(B), 22(A,C); 24(B), 25(A,C); 3(A-C), 6(A,B), 21(B), 22(A,C)

Producer

Primary
Consumer

Decomposer

Brood
Parasite

Secondary
Consumer

Tertiary
Consumer