



This activity is made possible through a partnership between ASU-Mountain Home's Teacher Education program and Friends of the North Fork & White Rivers.

## **How Plants and Animals Change Their Environment Outdoors**

**Grade Level:** K-2

**Subject:** Earth Science

**Standards:**

- K-ESS2-2: Construct an argument supported by evidence for how plants and animals (including humans) can change the environment to meet their needs.
- K-ESS3-1: Use a model to represent the relationship between the needs of different plants or animals and their environment.

**Objectives:** Students will identify and describe how plants, animals, and humans change their environment to meet their needs using evidence from real-world examples and a hands-on modeling activity.

**Materials:**

- Picture cards or printed images of animals changing their environment (e.g., beavers building dams, birds making nests, tree roots breaking sidewalks)
- Small plastic animals and trees (or playdough)
- Construction paper, glue, scissors
- Chart paper and markers
- Storybook: *Over and Under the Pond* by Kate Messner (or similar book about animals and their environments)

**Time:** 30-45 minutes

**Introduce and demonstrate skill/strategy/content: Engage (10 min): Whole Group Discussion**

## 1. Picture Walk & Brainstorm

- Show students images of animals modifying their environments (e.g., a beaver dam, a squirrel burying a nut, or a bird's nest).
- Ask: *What do you notice in these pictures? How do these animals change the world around them?*
- Record their observations on chart paper.

## 2. Read aloud (*Over and Under the Pond* or a similar book)

- Pause to ask: *How do the animals in the book change their environment?*
- Encourage students to make connections with what they've observed outside.

**Describe guided practice:** Show students images of different environments (forest, ocean, desert, meadow). Ask questions like "What did you notice about these places? What animals and plants live there and why?" You will record the students' answers. You will then divide into small groups, and assign each group a habitat (forest, meadow, desert, ocean). You will now provide their materials. You will walk around asking questions: "Why does this animal or plant live there? What does it need to survive? What would happen if we move this plant or animal to a different habitat?"

### Review/independent practice:

- Each group will go and present their model.
- Use sentence frames to help students explain- animals that live here need \_\_\_\_\_ to survive.
- Draw a "class needs a habitat chart".  
(animal/plants/plants/needs)

### OPTIONAL: Formative Assessment/Summative Assessment:

- **Exit ticket:** students draw and label an animal or plant in its habitat.
- **Observation** during discussions and hands-on activity.
- **Student models** demonstrate an understanding of how animals/plants modify their environment.
- **Exit ticket drawings and sentences** to check comprehension.

### Modification/Accommodations:

- **Outdoor Exploration:** Take a nature walk to look for signs of animals or plants changing the environment.
- **Science Journal:** Have students keep a picture journal of ways they see changes in their environment.
- **STEAM Connection:** Let students build their own animal homes using natural materials.