



My Log Home

Introduction

In *Around One Log: Chipmunks, Spiders and Creepy Insiders*, author Anthony Fredericks introduces children to a rotting log habitat. Some logs are large and some are small, but they are all part of a very important ecosystem. In this activity, students will observe a rotting log and then write a short story from the perspective of an animal residing in or around the log.

Materials Needed

- ◆ Magnifying glass
- ◆ Pen or pencil
- ◆ Notepaper

Key Concepts

- ◆ All organisms have different needs.
- ◆ The environment must supply the needs of the organisms.
- ◆ Behavior is influenced by internal cues (hunger) and external cues (change in environment).

For standards correlation please see our website.

Procedure

1. Invite students to take a field trip around the school grounds, or find a rotting log or branch in a park or yard and make observations.
2. Encourage students to first look at the log with their eyes, then to look closely with a magnifying glass.
3. Ask students to write down their observations. Here are some questions to direct observations:
 - ◆ What condition is the bark in? Is it missing?
 - ◆ What does the log smell like?
 - ◆ Is there plant growth on the log? Fungi (mushrooms), mosses, or algae?
 - ◆ Is there any evidence of animal activity? Insect holes, sawdust, webs, animal dens?
 - ◆ Is the log hollow or solid? Wet or dry?
4. Ask students to pretend that they are a "log" animal who lives in or around the log. Have them describe their home based on the observations and what the student knows about the animal chosen.

Nature Connections

- ◆ This book lends itself to a delightful readers theatre adaptation. Invite students to create a readers theatre script using the creatures in this book along with a narrator. They may wish to use words or phrases from the book or create their own original dialogue for the critters.
- ◆ Invite students to pretend that they are moving to a forested region somewhere in the world. Encourage students to write a postcard about their life in the forest to a family member who stayed behind.

Additional Resources

Learn more about forests from these web sites:

- ◆ <http://lsb.syr.edu/projects/cyberzoo/coniferous.html>
- ◆ <http://www.gp.com/EducationalinNature>
- ◆ <http://www.sierraclub.org/ecoregions/boreal.asp>
- ◆ <http://www.fw.vt.edu/dendro/Forsite/contents.htm>
- ◆ <http://lsb.syr.edu/projects/cyberzoo/deciduous.html>

