May I Take Your Order?

Overview

Pests, like all animals, have specific needs for survival. In this activity, students create a restaurant and menu for pests. Fun and creative, this activity challenges students to use their knowledge of needs such as food, water, shelter, air, space, etc., to create the perfect dining experience for pests.

Objectives

Students will:
- describe the things living things need to survive.
- read and learn the needs of several common household pests.
- apply their knowledge by creating a restaurant that meets the needs of one or several types of pests.

Doing the Activity

Step 1: Discussion. Ask the students what animals need to survive. Generate a list on the board or overhead. Review what a habitat is. Ask the students: What is needed in a habitat? Food, water, shelter, air, space, protection. Do all living things live in the same habitat? Describe different habitats.

Step 2: The Task. Split students up into groups (pairs or 3-4 people). Say: Today you are restaurant owners starting a new business. Your job is to create a restaurant to serve (one or several types of) pests.

Assign or decide how many different pests each student or group needs to address. Hand out need cards. Using the need cards ask students to write down ways they can meet all of the needs of their different customers. The more pests, the more complicated the restaurant will need to be.

Step 3: Craft Activity. Ask the students to create a restaurant with the shoe box and art supplies. Remind them that they need to accommodate the needs of all of the customers.

Step 4: Write Menus. Have students write menus. Before they begin, ask the students if the menus would be the same or would they need to have different menus for different customers.

Closure: Ask: What was the hardest part about making a restaurant for pests? How can so many different pests live in a house? There are many small habitats within a house. Many different pests can live in the same place if they are not taking away each other’s food, water or space.

Materials

needs cards (for each group), shoe boxes, thick paper (card stock or tag board), scissors, colored paper, glue, tape, markers, other art supplies (feathers, cotton, toothpicks, pipe cleaners)

Subjects

science, art

Duration

1 hour
Needs Card
Name: House Mouse
Food: grains, nuts, cereal, fruits or vegetables
Water: alone or in the food
Shelter: warm and next to walls
Light: active in the dark
Other: nibbles (small portions)

Needs Card
Name: Mosquito
Food: females drink blood from living animal, males drink nectar and plant juices
Water: need still water for larvae
Light: feed at dusk
Shelter: near water and food

Needs Card
Name: Dandelion
Food: makes its own, needs nutrients from the soil
Water: through roots from soil
Shelter: anchored in soil outside
Light: sunlight
Other: needs to be in soil

Needs Card
Name: German Cockroach
Food: any food, soap, pet food, wallpaper paste
Water: moisture, high humidity
Shelter: enclosed areas
Light: dark
Other: prefer pressure on body

Needs Card
Name: Fruit Fly
Food: very ripe or rotting fruit, spilled food or drink that is not cleaned up
Water: from the fruit, damp areas
Shelter: near food
Other: reproduce very quickly

Needs Card
Name: Cat Flea
Food: blood of cats (also people, dogs or other mammals)
Water: moisture, high humidity
Shelter: carpet, hair, bedding, furniture, damp soil