QER Science Lesson – Year 1
Caring for the Environment

NOTES

Caring for our local environment is important, whether it is a mine site, a school ground or a neighbourhood park. In this lesson, students will explore the circle of life and ways in which they can help to care for their natural environment.

In this lesson, students will:

- conduct a nature walk to observe the natural environment and then draw or paint what they have discovered

LESSON-LEVEL CONTENT DESCRIPTIONS

The Australian Curriculum: Year 1

Science Understanding

Biological Sciences: Living things live in different places where their needs are met (ACSSU211).

Elaborations

- exploring what happens when habitats change and some living things can no longer have their needs met

Use and influence of science

People use science in their daily lives, including when caring for their environment and living things (ACSHE022).

Elaborations

- identifying ways that science knowledge is used in the care of the local environment such as animal habitats, and suggesting changes to parks and gardens to better meet the needs of native animals

Year 1 achievement standard

By the end of Year 1 students describe objects and events that they encounter in their everyday lives, and the effects of interacting with materials and objects. They describe changes to things in their local environment. They share their observations with others.

LESSON OUTCOMES

The assessment focus of this lesson is formative: The classroom activities provide an opportunity for students to generate evidence with which the teacher can establish the student's progress towards understanding the concepts that are being developed in this lesson.

Science Outcomes	Literacy Outcomes	Numeracy Outcomes
Students may/should be able to:		
• draw or paint ways in which their local environment could better meet the needs of native animals.	• listen • view • speak • create visual materials	• measure practically • measure using informal units • collect qualitative data

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A basic understanding of local flora and fauna will help you to informatively guide students on a nature walk.

PREPARATION LIST

- drawing or painting supplies
- seeds and equipment to plant natives

ACTIVITY SEQUENCE

1. Take the students outdoors to explore the school ground or a local park. Have them note what covers the ground, plants, trees, insects, birds, animals and all living things.
2. Find a place where the cycle of growth, life, death and decomposition is apparent. Perhaps a rotting log, a pile of last year's leaves or even the school compost. Discuss the circle of life, for instance seed, sapling, mature tree, dead tree, fallen tree, decaying log, soil. Mention that animals go through a similar process.
3. Discuss what happens when habitats change and some living things can no longer have their needs met.
4. Ask the children to suggesting changes to the school grounds, parks or gardens to better meet the needs of native plants and animals.
5. Discuss the need for humans to use the resources of the earth responsibly.
6. Back in the classroom, ask the children to paint or draw a picture to show ways in which the local environment could better meet the needs of native animals.
7. If time permits, plant native seeds and rehabilitate a little corner of your environment.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONDUCTING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

- Evaluation of discussions
- Representations depicted in student artwork

LINKS TO OTHER LEARNING AREAS

The following suggested activities may be used to provide a link between the content of this unit and that of other learning areas, in particular those related to Mathematics, English and ICT.

- mathematical skills in measuring and recording native plant growth in your rehabilitation

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- www.qervisitorcentre.com.au – extensive overview of QER New Fuels Development Centre, including video snippets, animations, graphs, maps and explanations relating to:
  - Australia's fuel challenge
  - QER and sustainability
  - benefits for Australians
  - turning oil shale into fuel

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