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Integrated learning solutions

UNIT: ECO-EXPRESSIONS
ECOSYSTEM TABLEAUX
Grade Band: 4-5
Content Focus: Theatre & Science



LEARNING DESCRIPTION

Students will analyze the ecosystem by using tableaux to dramatize roles of various plants and animals in the food chain/web. Students will then write in-role as their plant/animal, arguing why they are important to the ecosystem. The class will use these writings in a role drama, where students will debate which plant or animal is most important to the ecosystem. Finally, the class will discuss the interdependence of each plant and animal in the ecosystem.

LEARNING TARGETS

Essential Questions	"I Can" Statements
How can I demonstrate my understanding of the interworking of an ecosystem through theatre techniques?	I can identify consumers, producers, decomposers and their energy sources. I can analyze the relationships of the different roles in the ecosystem.

How can tableau and role drama be used to explore the food chain/web and its effect on the ecosystem? What are the roles of consumers, producers, and decomposers in an ecosystem?	I can dramatize the roles of consumers, producers, and decomposers. I can interpret the various roles in the ecosystem by making body movement and voice choices.

GEORGIA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
Grade 4: S4L1. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about the roles of organisms and the flow of energy within an ecosystem. a. Develop a model to describe the roles of producers, consumers, and decomposers in a community. b. Develop simple models to illustrate the flow of energy through a food web/food chain/web beginning with sunlight and including producers, consumers, and decomposers. c. Design a scenario to demonstrate the effect of a change on an ecosystem. d. Use printed and digital data to develop a model illustrating and describing changes to the flow of energy in an ecosystem when plants or animals become scarce, extinct or overabundant.	**Grade 4:** TA5.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments.

SOUTH CAROLINA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
Grade 5: 5-LS2-1. Develop a model to describe the movement of matter among plants, animals, decomposers, and the environment.	**Anchor Standard 3:** I can act in improvised scenes and written scripts.

KEY VOCABULARY

Content Vocabulary	Arts Vocabulary
• Bacteria - Microorganisms that can make you sick, but also can help you digest food; found everywhere in nature	• Concentration - Actors must concentrate in order to keep their mind on the stage and in the imagined circumstances. Actors must also concentrate on what the other actors are doing and how their

- Carnivore - An animal that eats only other animals
- Camouflage - Process of animals changing their colors, patterns, and shapes to disguise themselves from predators or prey
- Community - All the organisms in an ecosystem
- Consumer - An animal that gets its energy by eating plants or other animals
- Decay - To break down into simpler materials
- Decomposers - A living thing that breaks down the remains of dead organisms
- Ecology - The study of how living and nonliving factors interact
- Ecosystem - A system made up of an ecological community of living things interacting with their environment especially under natural conditions
- Energy source - A source from which useful energy can be extracted or recovered either directly or by means of a conversion or transformation process (e.g. solid fuels, liquid fuels, solar energy, biomass, etc.)
- Extinct - A species that is gone forever because all of its kind have died
- Food chain/web - The path of energy in an ecosystem from plants to animals (from producers to consumers)
- Habitat - The place where an animal or plant lives
- Herbivore - An animal that eats plants

character would react to them.

- Gesture - An expressive movement of the body or limbs
- Projection - Using a “big” actor voice so that you can be heard in the very back row of a space (classroom, auditorium, theatre)
- Tableau - A frozen picture representing a scene or moment in a story that occurs during a theatrical performance. When creating a tableau in theatre, the following principles should be applied:
    - Create body levels (low, mid, high);
    - Use facial expressions to communicate thoughts and feelings;
    - Show relationships between the various characters in the setting; and
    - Make sure the audience can all see your face.
- Narration - The act of telling a story
- Storytelling - Conveying events in words and images, often by improvisation or embellishment
- Statue - A still, frozen pose or posture assumed by an actor to convey a particular character, emotion, or situation without movement or speech; this technique is often used to create tableaux
- Facial expression - Using your face to show emotion

• Hibernate - When animals go into a deep sleep • Interdependence - When living things in an ecosystem need each other to meet their needs • Microorganisms - Very small living things • Omnivore - An animal that eats both plants and animals • Organism - A living thing • Photosynthesis - Process through which plants make food • Plankton - Small organisms in water that are producers and give off oxygen • Producer - A living thing (such as a green plant) that makes its food from simple inorganic substances (such as carbon dioxide and nitrogen) and many of which are food sources for other organisms	

MATERIALS

- Anchor chart paper
- Markers
- Index cards with different animals/plants that are in a food chain/web (one set per group)
- Paper and pencils
- Student devices with Internet
- Example image of tableau
- Suggested sites for student research:
    - http://kids.britannica.com/
    - http://kids.nationalgeorgraphic.com/
    - http://www.pebblego.com/login/
    - http://www.brainpop.com
- *Optional: Showme app and VoiceThread app*

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Opening/Activating Strategy

- Show students an example image of a tableau. Explain that "tableau" means "frozen picture".
    - Ask students to make observations about the facial expressions and body positions of the actors.
- Tell students that they will begin by creating statues with their bodies. Tell students that statues are still, frozen poses or postures.
    - Have students stand up and create the following statues:
        - 102 year old elderly person crossing the street
        - Baseball player focusing on hitting the ball
        - A chef that dropped a pizza
- Next, tell students that they will now combine statues to create a tableau, a frozen picture representing a scene or moment in a story.
    - Discuss how creating a strong tableau requires:
        - A clear body level (low, mid, high)
        - Facial expressions
        - Clear relationships between the various characters in a story/scene
        - Making sure the audience can see our faces when we perform
    - Show students the example image of a tableau again. Ask them where they see these elements.
    - Tell students that in tableaux, the actors sometimes represent things from the setting–they are not always people or animals. Sometimes two or more actors will combine their bodies to create one thing, like a tree or a tent.
    - Put students in groups of three to five students. Have students create tableaux of the following.
        - A family portrait
        - A teacher and students in class
        - A castle (using just their bodies)

Work Session

Creating tableaux:

- Review key terminology and concepts that are critical to understanding the food chain/web (producers, consumers, herbivores, carnivores, etc.).
- Place students in small groups (these can be the same groups from the activator).
- Give each group four index cards with different animals/plants that are in a food chain/web. Direct the groups to create a tableau that dramatizes the food chain/web with each student taking on the role of the animal/plant listed on the index card.
    - Remind students that a strong tableau requires:
        - A clear body level (low, mid, high)
        - Facial expressions
        - Clear relationships between the various characters in a story/scene
        - Making sure the audience can see faces
- Each small group will share their tableau with the class.
- The teacher will take a picture of each tableau.
- The teacher will choose one of the following:
    - Teacher will demonstrate how to use the Showme app on the iPad, an excellent tool to teach what the tableau illustrates and can document the presentation.

- Using Showme, the teacher will demonstrate how to circle, highlight and label tableau parts in a photo.
- Students will participate by labeling their own tableau photos, concentrating on answering the following questions: Which animal or plant was a Producer? Consumer? Decomposer? How did you know this?

OR,

- The teacher will print the photos for the students to annotate the following day.
- Students will participate by labeling their own tableau photos, concentrating on answering the following questions: Which animal or plant was a Producer? Consumer? Decomposer? How did you know this?

Writing in role:

- Students will then write in first person as their character in their food chain/web. They will make an argument for why they are most important to the ecosystem.
- *Optional: Students can use VoiceThread to record their writing in the character role they have taken on. They can upload pictures and/or drawings to illustrate their written work.*

Character Panel:

- Students are asked to become "experts" on their ecosystems before participating in the Character Panel.
- The teacher will instruct students on how to conduct research on their devices and create a presentation. Using a presentation platform like Prezi or PowerPoint, students can create an engaging presentation on their ecosystem (habitat research, what animals fall into the categories of producers, consumers and decomposers, etc.).
- Suggested sites for research include:
  - http://kids.britannica.com/
  - http://kids.nationalgeorgraphic.com/
  - http://www.brainpop.com
- Students in each group are then placed on a Character Panel in role as their characters and the remaining students role-play as reporters who ask the panel questions. Together students step into roles and create a Role Drama that analyzes why each animal is critical to the food chain/web and the ecosystem at large.
- Students will debate why their plant/animal is important and defend it with facts from their research.
- The reporters are charged with the responsibility to determine which character is most important. The objective is to spark a class discussion that deeply analyzes the food chain/web's interdependence on one another.

Optional: Teacher can demonstrate on iPad how to use VoiceThread app, which allows students to upload, share and discuss documents, presentations, images, audio files and video. In this app, students have the opportunity to comment on other students' voice threads.

Closing/Reflection

- Discuss the following questions with students:
  - How did engaging in the arts using tableau support and build upon your understanding of ecosystems?
  - Why is the energy source for producers, consumers, and decomposers an important part of an ecosystem?

- Students will complete the following 3-2-1 ticket out the door:
  - What are three things you learned about the topic today?
  - What are two arts vocabulary words you used to show what you know?
  - What is one question you still have?

ASSESSMENTS

Formative

- Class discussion, group discussions, and reflection questions
- Anecdotal notes when observing students working in small groups
- 3-2-1 Ticket out the door

Summative

- Student writing written in-role
- Students can accurately identify producers, consumers, and decomposers.
- Students can properly order producers, consumers, and decomposers in the food chain/web.
- Students can demonstrate their understanding of food chains/webs through tableaux and role drama.

DIFFERENTIATION

Accelerated:

- Have students write a scene with dialogue between the different parts of the ecosystem. If time permits, students can then perform their scenes.

Remedial:

- Provide a graphic organizer to support students with writing in role.
- Provide an example of writing in role to support students.
- Provide visuals of vocabulary words.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CREDITS

U.S. Department of Education- STEM + the Art of Integrated Learning

**This integrated lesson provides differentiated ideas and activities for educators that are aligned to a sampling of standards. Standards referenced at the time of publishing may differ based on each state's adoption of new standards.*

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