

Lesson 6: Exploring Animal Habitats

Getting Started

✿ Questions to Explore

- Why do living things need a healthy and safe environment?
- What do habitats provide for the plants, animals, and humans that live in them?

📖 Facts and Definitions

- A scientist spends time observing things.
- A **zoologist** is a scientist who studies animals.
- A **botanist** is a scientist who studies plants.

🕒 Skills

- Recognize and describe a variety of habitats (S and SS)
- Observe the behavior of animals (S)
- Observe how animals interact with their surroundings (S)
- Demonstrate a sense of story (beginning, middle, and end) (LA)
- Make connections through the use of oral language (LA)
- Use words that name, describe, and tell action (LA)
- Recognize equivalent sets (M)

✂ Materials

- books about an animal found in the habitat your child chooses to explore* (Activity 2 - optional)
- camera* (Activity 1 - Optional)
- clipboard* (Activity 1 - Optional)
- crayons or colored pencils
- glue
- scissors

Introduction

For this lesson, your child will explore an animal habitat. Select a habitat that is convenient for you and your child. For example, if you live in or near the woods, a forest habitat would be an obvious choice. If you live near a lake, river, or ocean, an aquatic habitat might be a good choice. You may also visit an aquarium or zoo if that is more convenient.

Ask your child if he can name the habitats that he discovered in the previous lesson. Review the three things people and animals need to live: water, food, and shelter. Practice the hand motions with your child (water — hand forms a cup and brings to mouth, food — touches tummy, and shelter — makes a roof with hands to cover head).

Explain to your child that one of a scientist's jobs is to observe the world, and many scientists spend their time closely observing animals and plants in their habitats. Introduce your child to the terms **zoologist** (a scientist who studies animals) and **botanist** (a scientist who studies plants).

Tell your child that for today's lesson, he is going to become a scientist. His job is going to be to observe a real animal habitat. Explain to your child where you will be going to observe the habitat and ask him to

predict what he will find. Record his ideas.

Activities

Activity 1: An Animal Habitat Observation

Give your child the sheet called "The _____: An Animal Habitat." Fill in the blank with the animal habitat your child will explore. On this sheet, your child will draw the habitat that he observes including items such as plants, animals, insects, water, and rocks. Your child will want to use a clipboard or book as a writing surface.

Give your child enough time to record and discuss what he observes. If you visit a zoo or aquarium, be sure that he focuses on one habitat for this activity. He can use crayons or colored pencils to help him document his observations. Your child can also take pictures of the habitat with a camera and create a collage of what he found in the habitat.

It will be helpful to label the objects as your child draws them so that he doesn't forget what each drawing represents. While he is observing the habitat, ask your child the following questions:

1. Where are the plants?
2. What animals do you see? What are they doing?
3. How do the animals move?
4. What do you think the animals eat/drink in the habitat?
5. Do you see any insects? What are they doing?
6. What is interesting about the habitat?

When you return home, compare your child's illustration/collage to the predictions he made about what he would see before you left for the observation.

Activity 2: A Habitat Story

Ask your child to choose an animal or insect in a specific habitat that he would like to observe in the future. Use the page, "A Day in the _____: A _____'s Life." Fill in the blank with the name of the habitat your child selected and the name of the animal/insect he wants to observe (for example, "A Day in the Ocean: A Seahorse's Life").

Next, ask your child to draw a picture or find a picture in a magazine or online of the animal/insect found in the habitat. Your child will put this drawing/picture in the box at the top of the page.

Locate more information about the animal in a book or online and share it with your child. Ask him what he thinks it would be like to be that animal. Ask him what he would enjoy about being the animal and what would be hard about being the animal.

Encourage your child to tell you a story about what the animal might do in its habitat. Record your child's dictated story for him. If he needs help, ask him to think about what the animal eats, where it gets water, other animals it might encounter, and what it spends its time doing.

When he is finished, read the story with him and encourage him to sound out the words in the story or to read it back to you. Share what you enjoyed about the story.

NOTE: The following site from National Geographic may be useful in this activity.



National Geographic — Animals

www.beyondthepage.com/link/11077/

Activity 3: Handwriting

Ask your child to use the handwriting page provided to practice the letter *Zz* and the words *zoo* and *zebra*. Your child can write or copy sentences that have words that begin with *z*.

Activity 4: Number Writing

Practice writing numbers (7-13) on the "Number Writing" activity sheet. If your child has already mastered writing these numbers, let him practice writing the names of the numbers instead.

Wrapping Up

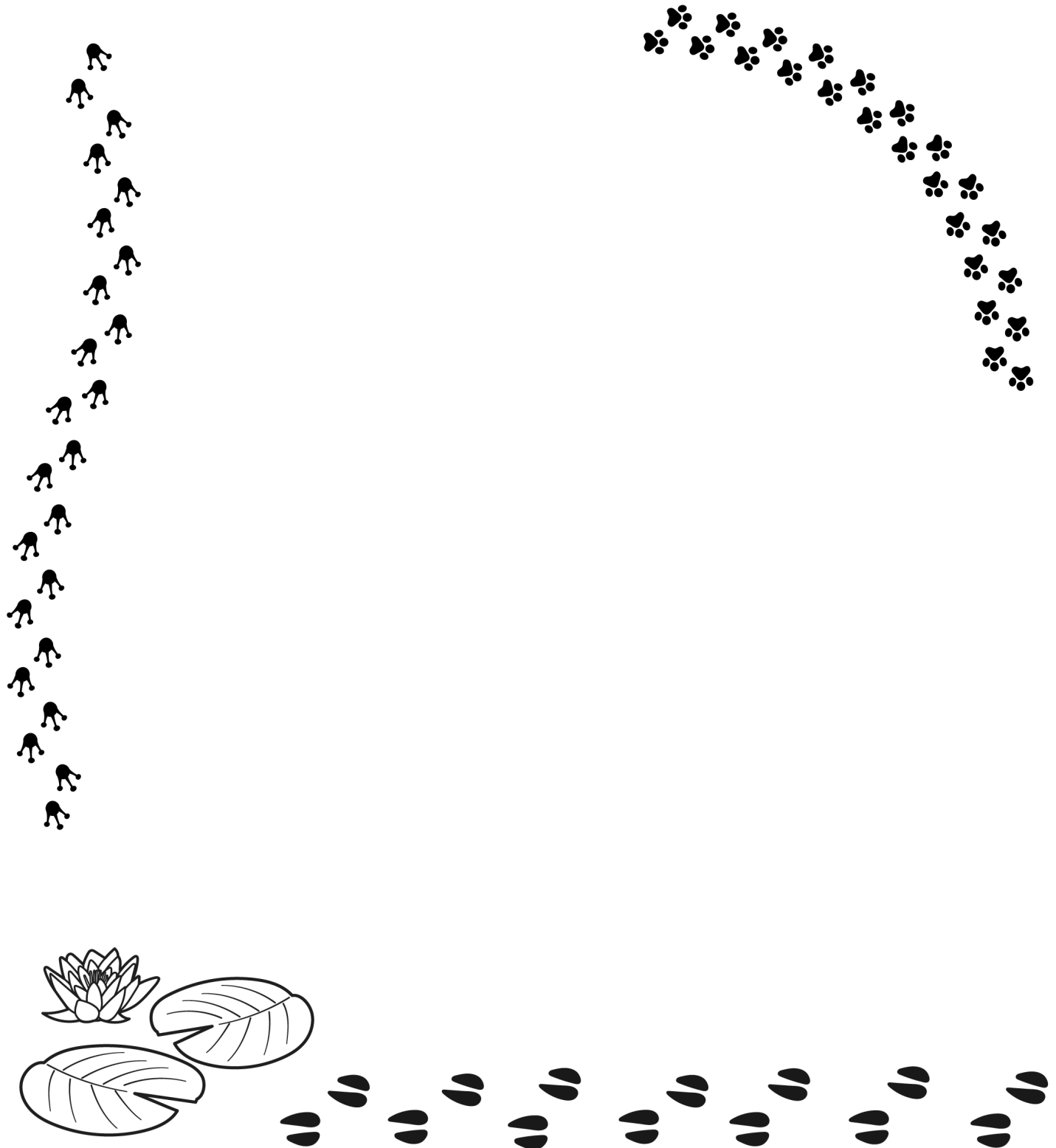
Ask your child what he learned from observing the habitat. Ask him how animals, plants, and insects all live together and make the habitat a healthy place.

Optional Extension: Ask your child to role play some things the animal might do in its habitat. Then try to guess what he is doing (for example, drinking water from a pond, flying through the sky). You can practice ideas with your child, and he can perform them for other family members as well. They can try to guess what animal he is and what the animal is doing.

The _____ :

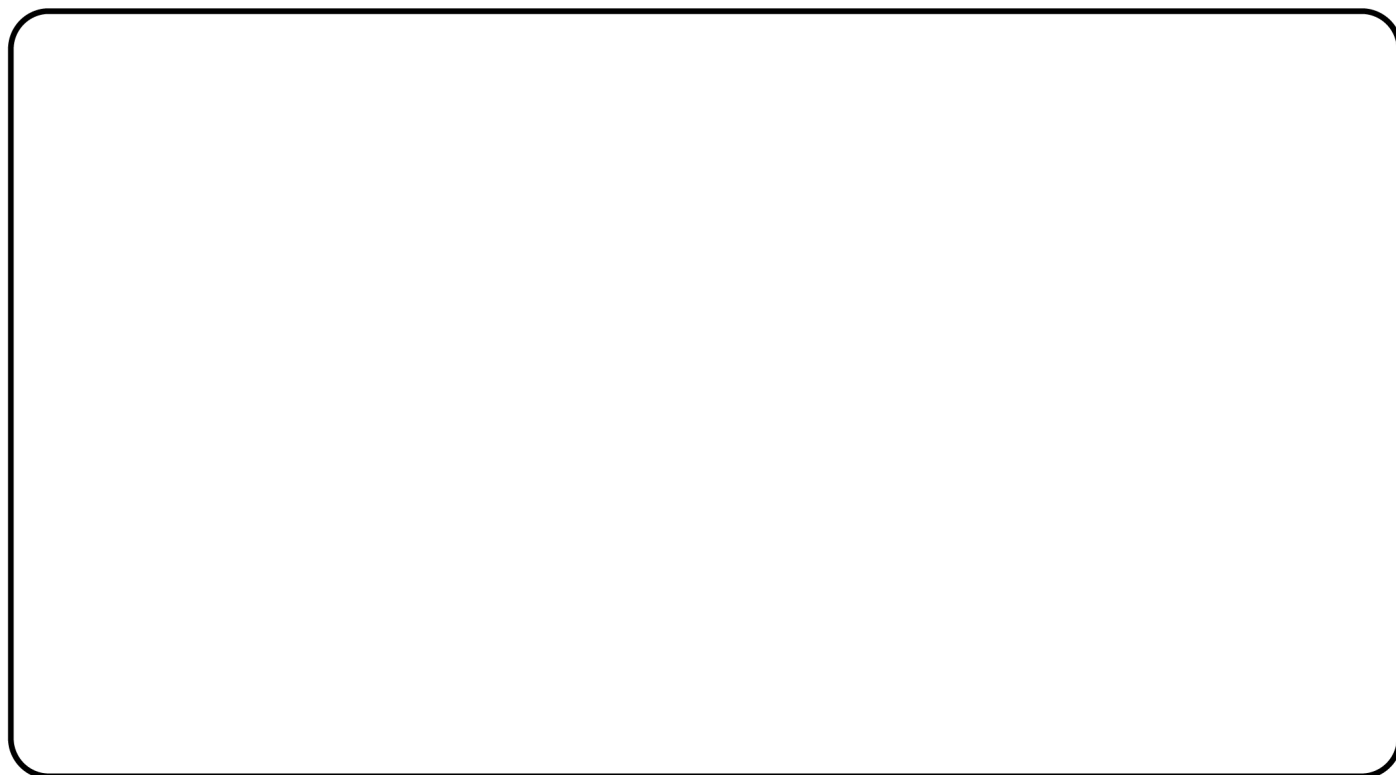
An Animal Habitat

Directions: Look for plants, insects, animals, water, and land in a habitat. Draw what you see.



A Day in the _____ :
Habitat

A _____ 's Life
Animal



I am a _____. I live in the _____.

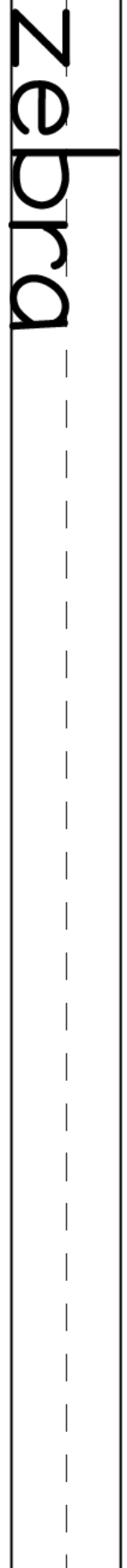
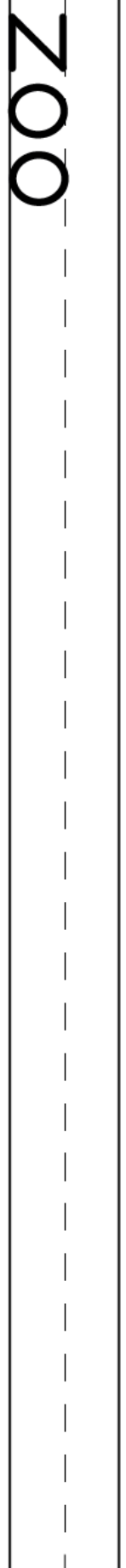
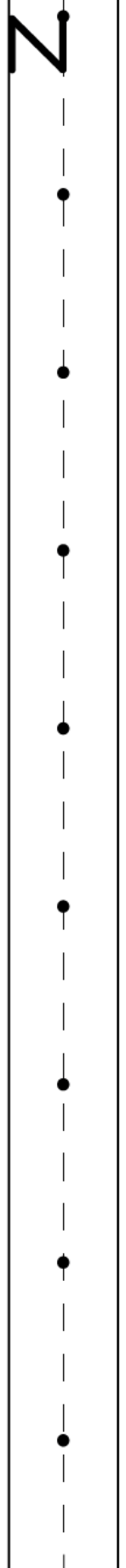
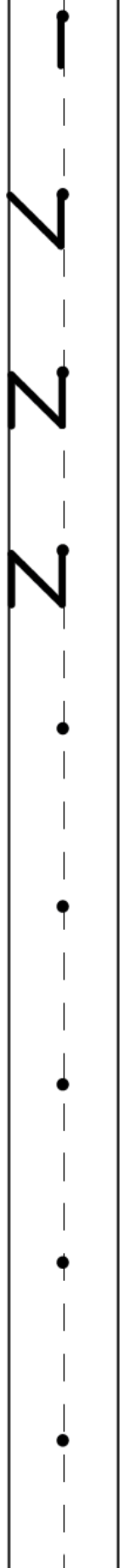
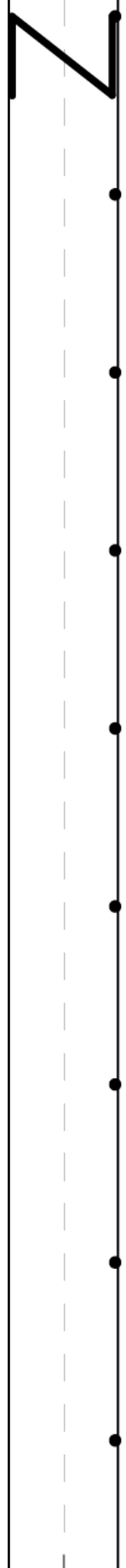
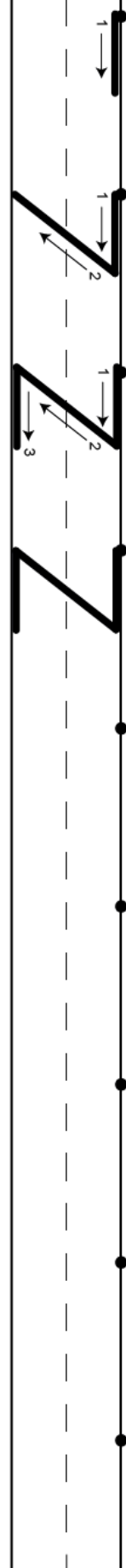
One day I _____



_____ The End



Z Z



Number Writing

