

HABITAT LOSS ACTIVITY

Objective: Students will describe the possible negative consequences for people and wildlife under conditions of crowding.

Illinois State Goals: 12.A., 12.B., 13.B., 21.A.

Top Book Hits:

The Usborne World of Animals by Susanna Davidson & Mike Unwin; **ISBN-13:** 978-0439798068

The Abcs of Habitats (Abcs of the Natural World) by Bobbie Kalman; **ISBN-13:** 978-0778734314

Kids' Easy-to-Create Wildlife Habitats: For Small Spaces in City-Suburbs-Country... (Quick Starts for Kids!) by Emily Stetson; **ISBN-13:** 978-0824986650



Materials Needed:

- An open space for students to be during the activity

Procedure:

1. Tell the students that they will be able to spread out and walk around in a large area, always listening to your directions. Be sure to show the students the area that they can be moving within. Allow the students to move around the large area, only stipulation is they have to keep walking at all times.
2. After about 2 minutes, have the students move in closer to you, making their area about 2 feet smaller in circumference.
3. Repeat the reduction of their area until it is very small and they are unable to move.
4. Ask the students to tell you how they felt as the area got smaller and smaller.
5. Discuss with the students how habitats shrink as new housing or shopping developments come into the area. The activity showed how the animals and people feel when pushed closer and closer together.
6. Discuss why animals come into populated areas, due to their loss of habitat. (Raccoons, deer, skunks, opossums, and other wild animals have been seen in residential areas.)

Alternate Hits: Begin reading a short book to your students as they are seated at their desks. After a few minutes, have the students come sit on the floor as you read. Then ask your students to sit very close together in a group on the floor. They should be fairly tightly packed together. Continue read the book. Once finished with the reading, ask the students to describe what happened during the reading. Did they act or feel differently as they moved closer together? Did any of them become uncomfortable when they moved closer together? Do they think that people act differently in a large city than in a rural area? What about animals, do they think they would act differently when crowded together?

Give credit where credit is due...this activity adapted from lessons in Project WILD.