



Ecosystem Invasion!

Lifecycles, Traits, and Survival

*3rd Grade Life Science Storyline to
support the Structures of Life kit*

*With critters no longer a part of ESD 112 STEM Kits, here are some
modifications and additional fun activities to get our students
learning outdoors about senses and survival!*



LESSON 4: Survival

Day 1

Does not include critters and can be implemented in full.

Days 2-3

Field STEM opportunity: Search for native critters!

Depending on the time of year, access to native critters may be easy or difficult. Scope out a green space on or near the school campus. Are there any critters that students can find? Worms, pill bugs, sow bugs, aphids, slugs, snails, worms, caterpillars, beetles, and ladybugs are some examples of animals that students can observe.

Warm-up

Tell students that today, we are on a hunt to find a critter! Give each team a small clear cup or plastic bag in which to temporarily place their critter for observation. Give teams some hints about where critters can be found if you feel that they are struggling.

Hints for finding critters:

- Look in the soil in moist areas
- Look under rocks
- On branches
- Under moss
- On vegetable plants or fresh new green plants
- On or under stumps of wood

Main activity

Take students outside to find critters. Students can choose to collect their critter in a container or to make observations of the critter in its natural habitat. This critter observation guide can be used to give students a space to write their thoughts. If you have hand lenses, or small tablets available to students, you can have them use these tools to take a closer look at the critter that they find. Using a tablet, students can take a clear image of the critter and then zoom in to look at details.

Wrap-up

Work with students to create a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting the structures that their native critter had with the invasive crayfish that they have been studying. Which critter is better adapted to survive in this environment? Ask teams to share their thoughts.

Materials Needed

Small clear cup or plastic bag for each team

Hand lenses (optional)

Tablets (optional)

