

**URBANA PARK DISTRICT  
ANITA PURVES NATURE CENTER**

SCHOOL TOUR: **A LOOK AT HABITATS** (*Meadowbrook Program*)

**TEACHER GUIDE**

Grades: 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>

Program Length: 1.5 Hours

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE** that this program takes place at MEADOWBROOK PARK. Program leaders will meet the school bus at the Race Street parking lot near the organic gardens.

**Focus Concept:** *All animals have the same basic habitat requirements and have adaptations to help them survive. The beaver is an example of an animal that is adapted to its environment, and is capable of changing its environment.*

**OBJECTIVES:** Students will:

1. Investigate the stream corridor habitat at Meadowbrook Park
2. List food, water, shelter, and space as animal survival requirements in a habitat
3. Name at least 3 adaptations of the beaver
4. Verbalize ways that living organisms interact with their environment
5. Verbalize how some organisms can actively change their environment

**BACKGROUND**

An animal's habitat includes the food, water, shelter, and space it needs to survive. These habitat requirements must be arranged in a manner that meets the animal's needs. Humans and animals, both wild and domesticated, share this need for food, water, shelter, and space. During this program, students will explore habitats at Meadowbrook, using evidence left by the resident beavers as examples of how animals are adapted to, but can also change, their environments.

**COMMON CORE STANDARDS:** 1.SL.1, 1.SL.3, 1.L.1, 2.SL.1, 2.SL.3. 2.L.1

**NEXT GENERATION SCIENCE STANDARDS CORRELATED**

Physical Science	Life Science	Earth & Space Science
	1-LS1-1, 1-LS1-2, 2-LS4-1	2-ESS2-1

**ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS:** 12B1a, 12B2a, 12B1b, 12B2b

**WORD BANK:** Educators will use the following words during the program.

Adaptation	Evidence	Pond
Arrangement	Food	Prairie
Beaver	Forest	Requirement
Behavior/behavioral	Habitat	Shelter
Camouflage	Herbivore	Sign
Clues	Insulation	Space
Competition	Interaction	Stream
Ecosystem	Mammal	Survive/Survival
Environment	Physical	Water

## SUPPLEMENTAL ACTIVITIES

The activities listed below are intended to provide ideas to be used before or after the field trip. Feel free to adapt activities to match your students' ability level. Italicized & bolded words are **key words** that will be used by program leaders.

1. Review **habitat** components with the students – **food, water, shelter, and space**, in a suitable **arrangement**.
2. Have the students draw a picture of where they live – their “habitat” – including all of the things they need to live where they do. Have them label the components of their habitat: for example, the kitchen would supply food, the roof would be shelter, etc. Have them think about the arrangement – would the habitat be suitable if the kitchen were a few miles away in one direction and water were a few miles away in another direction? Then have them close their eyes and imagine different animal homes, e.g. a bird’s home, a bear’s home, etc., or show them pictures of different animal homes. Discuss how the homes are different, but also point out that in spite of the different homes, all the animals (and people) need the same things in order to survive.
3. Although known for its recreated tallgrass prairie, Meadowbrook has other habitats. This program focuses on the **stream** corridor. Ask students what kinds of animals they think live in streams or rivers. (Besides fish and insects, there are waterfowl and aquatic mammals.) What kinds of homes might these different animals have? What about animals that live near but not in the stream – how do they use the stream? Can the students think of ways these animals interact with animals that live in the stream. (For example, raccoons come down to water to find food, eating things that live in the water.)
4. Wildlife is adapted to survive in its environment. Review the concept of **adaptations** with students. An adaptation is something an organism **has** (physical adaptation), or something it **does** (behavioral adaptation), that helps it survive. Help students think of some common adaptations and how they help an animal survive. For example, camouflage can hide a prey animal from predators, and also hides predators as they hunt for prey; fish have gills for breathing underwater, etc. Remind them that plants also have adaptations – prairie plants have deep roots to survive fire, cacti have thorns for protection, etc.
5. During the program, students will be asked to look for **evidence** that certain things happen in habitats. Ask them if they know what the word evidence means. (Signs, proof, observable facts) As an example, ask them to look around the room and tell you evidence that it’s a classroom (as opposed to a kitchen, or a bedroom, etc.). Answers could include that it has desks, it has a black (or white) board, there are lots of books, there are maps, there is a teacher, there are lots of pencils, and so on. To reinforce this, you might repeat this activity with another room that children would be familiar with – what is the evidence that a room is a kitchen, or child’s bedroom, etc.?
6. The *Project Wild Activity Guide* and the *Project Learning Tree Activity Guide* each has many activities that relate to habitat study. The school library or a fellow teacher may have a copy, or they may be obtained by attending the appropriate workshop.
7. Additional resource: Arrange to borrow the “*Habitats*” *Educational Loan Kit* from the Nature Center. Revised and updated, the box contains an activity guide, additional supplies for studying habitats, and an extensive bibliography. Call 384-4062 to reserve the box or for further information.