

Wetland Pictionary

The following words are used throughout this unit in the discussion of a wetland ecosystem. Draw a definition provides a fun learning experience to help students remember how to use these important terms.

1. Photocopy and cut out the sections on the accompanying page (cut along the crop lines that are provided). Glue these rectangles onto cardboard or poster board to create flash cards. Use these cards to introduce the new words and concepts to the students. Three types of information is found on the cards: word(s); definition; and a sample illustrative phrase:

invertebrates

Animals without backbones. All insects are invertebrates.

Beetles are examples of invertebrates; although they have no backbone, they have a hard shiny case that supports their body.

2. These same cards can then be used as game cards that will help students learn these words as they play “Wetland Pictionary” together. Divide your class into two teams. To begin, one student picks a card from a pile of cards, shows it to other team (who have to remain silent), and then tries to draw the word(s) so that their fellow team members can guess what the word is. Give each students no more than a minute to accomplish this. If a team guesses the word before the end of the minute, they receive one point. The team with the most points wins!
3. The cards included here are just a beginning; ask students for their help in adding other cards to the pile as students' wetlands vocabulary begins to grow! Each new card should also measure 4.25 x 2.75" so that it cannot be distinguished from the originals.

ecosystem

A group of organisms that interact with each other and with their non-living environment.

There are probably dozens of organisms that live in a pond ecosystem.

non-living things

Important non-living components of an ecosystem include such things as air, water, and soil.

Pond organisms rely on many important non-living things to survive; for example, air, water, and soil.

invertebrates

Animals without backbones. All insects are invertebrates.

Beetles are examples of invertebrates; although they have no backbone, they have a hard shiny case that supports their body.

life cycle

The changes to an organism between its birth and its death.

The dragonfly spends part of its life cycle as a larva, swimming around in pond water looking for prey.

predator

A type of consumer that preys on other animals for food.

Frogs eat bugs and pike eat other types of fish: both of these animals are predators.

consumer

Animals that eat other animals or plants for food.

Both dragonflies and moose are consumers, because they eat other things to survive.

producer

A green plant that makes its own food using sunlight.

Common producers found growing in pond water include cattails, rushes, and duckweed.

organism

An organism is any living plant or animal.

Pond water contains organisms ranging in size from microscopic algae to huge fish!

decomposer

Organism that reuses and recycles materials that were once alive.

Molds, fungi, and worms are all decomposers that help break down material that was once alive.

adaptation

Any change in the way an organism appears or behaves that makes it better suited to its environment.

One adaptation of the mosquito larva is the breathing tube at the top of its head that works like a snorkel to help it breathe.

food chain

The way in which nutrients and energy flow through ecosystems.

If a fish eats an insect, and is in turn eaten by an osprey, we say they are all part of the same food chain.

aquatic

Relating to water.

Fish, mosquito larvae, and water boatmen are all aquatic organisms.

food web

An interconnected network of food chains that show all of the feeding relationships in an ecosystem.

It's hard to predict the effect of losing all of the mosquitoes from a pond because the pond food web is so complex.

pollution

Pollution is anything added by humans that upsets the way the ecosystem works.

The gasoline from the boat motor leaked in the water and polluted the pond.

marsh

A marsh is a wetland where there are abundant producers (plants) that can be seen growing above the surface of the water.

Red-winged blackbirds make their home in reeds and cattails growing in the marsh.

fish

A fish is a cold-blooded invertebrate mammal (i.e. with a backbone) that is often a predator in a pond.

If you see fish in a pond you know it must have lots of other plants and animals living in it.