

ALL ABOARD PROGRAM

THE WONDERS OF WILDLIFE

LEVEL

The Early Years, Level A-D (towards foundation),
Foundation – Level 2

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

By becoming a detective, students learn about the concept of Biodiversity. They discover who lives in their school and collect evidence of plant and animal materials around the school grounds. Students identify and describe their evidence and think of ways to increase biodiversity at their school. Students design and draw plants and animals found on their school grounds and contribute to a whole class mural.

THEME

- Biodiversity
- Habitats
- Ecosystems

MATERIALS REQUIRED

- Blue and green paper for the mural
- Coloured paper
- White paper
- Textas and pencils
- Glue or staple gun
- Plastic containers or paper bags to collect evidence
- Scissors
- A page of different animals and plants the students can cut out
- Magnifying glasses if available

INSTRUCTIONS

Find a large area of wall in the classroom and cover in paper. Cover the top half in blue and the bottom half in green paper. Add a large heading at the top of the mural “Our Schools Biodiversity”.

Introduce the topic of biodiversity discussing the plants and animals that the students learnt about in The Dandenong Ranges on their excursion to Puffing Billy Railway. Discuss, what is biodiversity? Discuss the types of animals and plants they find in the school ground. Discuss the concept of living, non-living and once living with students. Eg, Bone, rock and plant.

In small groups, hand out a paper bag to fill with evidence of biodiversity. Take students outside in the school yard. Encourage students to look for evidence (scats, tracks, traces). Encourage them to collect fallen leaves, feathers, fallen bark, gum nuts etc. Anything that provides evidence of biodiversity.

Once students have collected their evidence, head back into the classroom. Students share the items they have found. Which animal or plant would that belong too? Make a class list of the animals and plants the evidence belongs too.

Students then choose a plant or animal on the evidence list that they would like to draw, trace or copy.

Example of an evidence list

EVIDENCE I FOUND	WHO DOES IT BELONG TOO?	
	PLANTS	ANIMALS
Long green leaf	Eucalyptus Tree	
Web		Spider
Feather		Magpie
Soil		Worms
Flower	Wattle Tree	
Scat		Possum
Bark	Teatree	
Bird Poo		Galah
Needle like leaf	She oak tree	

Once the drawings are complete, they add them to the mural. Each day they keep adding different elements to the class mural. Students can also add a sun, creek, pond until it is complete.

Example of a mural.



✓ **SUGGESTIONS FOR ASSESSMENT**

Ability to work cooperatively with others and successful completion of animal/plant to contribute to the whole class mural.

🔍 **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY?

Biodiversity comes from two words, bio meaning life and diversity meaning variability.

Biodiversity is the variety of all living things; the different plants, animals and micro- organisms, the genetic information they contain and the ecosystems they form.

Biodiversity is usually explored at three levels - genetic diversity, species diversity and ecosystem diversity. These three levels work together to create the complexity of life on earth.

WHAT IS LIVING?

Refers to things that are now alive. In order for something to be classified as living, it must grow and develop, use energy, reproduce, be made of cells, respond to its environment, and adapt.

WHAT IS NON-LIVING?

Anything that was never alive.

WHAT IS ONCE LIVING?

An object that was part of a living organism or is now dead.

WHAT IS AN ECOSYSTEM?

An ecosystem includes all the living things (plants, animals, and organisms) in a given area, interacting with each other, and with their non-living environments (weather, earth, sun, soil, climate, atmosphere). In an ecosystem, each organism has its own niche or role to play.

CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY

The best way to conserve biodiversity is to save habitats and ecosystems rather than trying to save a single species.

Many conservation campaigns focus on rescuing a single endangered species from extinction, such as the Blue Whale, Bilby, Koala etc. No organism, however, exists in isolation. If a species is at risk, then the habitat in which it lives is probably under threat too.

▶ **CURRICULUM LINKS**

VISUAL ARTS

Create and display artworks to express ideas to an audience ([VCAVAP023](#))

GEOGRAPHY

Collect and record geographical data and information from the field and other sources ([VCGGC060](#))