

Make a Model of a Habitat: Study how animals and plants adapt

A habitat is the natural environment in which plants, animals and humans live in. This is where they get their food, water and shelter. They also breed in their natural habitat. The climate of a habitat, the food available in the habitat, competition from other species- these are some of the factors that determine whether a species will survive or not.

Added to this is the human factor- buildings, roads, traffic noise, pollution from waste and industries, cutting down of trees. Many species have a mechanism of survival. Their body might make some modifications, or they may start having a different kind of food if their natural food is not available, or they may move to other places in search of food. We call these changes adaptation. You can also take a walk and find all the sources of pollution in your neighborhood or school.

Why study a habitat?

- Studying a habitat gives us information about the different life forms that live in it
- It helps us identify what are the factors that can lead to changes in the habitat and differentiate between man-made and natural factors
- It helps understand the impact of human actions on other life forms
- It helps us understand how different animals and plants adapt to changes in their habitat
- If we can see what is creating the pollution, we'll be able to find the answers in reducing it!

Make a model of the habitat in your neighborhood or school

Take an area in your neighborhood and identify the habitat of that area- what kind of trees, shrubs and water bodies are there. Make a model of the habitat. Identify which elements of the habitat is natural and which is introduced by man, for example, new trees not originally found in that area, or an artificial lake, or animals introduced into the area.

Note the following

What are the most common animals in your neighborhood? Do you see them every day? Distinguish between basic and nonessential needs of the animals. Where do they live? How have they adapted to the environment? Do they come in contact with humans? What is their natural food and habitat?

Where do they find their food in your neighborhood? Do you think they are exposed to harmful gases or chemicals by coming in contact with humans? How does the climate affect their lives? Is their population multiplying, growing at a low rate or diminishing? What kind of changes do you notice in their behavior or eating habits?