



LESSON SUMMARY

Students will explore their own sense of community and demonstrate an awareness that animals and plants depend on their environment to meet their basic needs.

Activity Information

Grade Level	Primary
Estimated Duration:	Two class periods (one for introduction and a neighbourhood walk; one for a forest walk)
Materials:	<i>Super Spotter Activity Sheet</i> , pencils, clipboards, art materials
Setting:	Outdoors and indoors
Key Vocabulary:	Chlorophyll, pigment, forest litter, decay, recycle, bacteria, fungus, humus, decompose

Teacher Background

Forest communities can be compared to human communities. A forest, like a city, town or village, is made up of interdependent relationships between living (biotic) and non-living (abiotic) things. Human communities are made up of people, buildings, parks, services and much more – all depending upon each other for continued survival. Interactions between activities of neighbours, store owners, doctors, police officers, parents and teachers are all vital to community life and existence – just like the relationships between plants and animals of forest ecosystems.

Teacher Preparation

Photocopy the *Super Spotter Activity Sheet* (page 5) – one copy per student. If necessary, prepare permission forms for taking students for a hike and request parent volunteers.

ACTIVITY

Step 1 Begin a class discussion about communities. Ask questions such as:

- What is a community?
- What are the differences between a rural community and an urban community?
- What are the similarities? How do they depend on each other?
- Do you live in a community?

Some other interesting questions to ask might be:

- What do *you* need to survive?
- What do plants or animals need to survive?
- Do you see similarities between the needs of plants and animals and those of humans?

Step 2 Take your class on a walk around the local community. Use the *Super Spotter Activity Sheet* to write down all the different things that the students think make up the community: people, pets, houses, stores, gardens, office buildings, schools, vehicles, doctors, parks, forests, etc. You may wish to modify the *Super Spotter Activity Sheet* for your particular community and/or the season for which it will be used.

NOTE: For Grades 1 and 2, the teacher or parent volunteer can record student observations. For Grade 3, students can record their own observations.

Step 3 Take your students on a walk through a nearby forested area, ravine, woodlot, park or nursery. If none is available, ask students to think about a forest in a movie or show them a picture of a forest community. Repeat Step 2, using the ***Super Spotter Activity Sheet*** to categorize their observations.

Step 4 Challenge your students to compare and contrast the features of the neighbourhood with those of the forest. Grade 1 and 2 students can draw pictures of the living and non-living species, while the Grade 3 students can make a list of the things they saw.

Their list could look something like this:

My Human Community		The Forest Community	
Living	Non-Living	Living	Non-Living
adults/students	house	trees	gravel
dogs/cats	school	birds	fence post
birds	cars	moss	bird house
trees	road	worm	sign

Step 5 Ask your students how one community depends on the other. For example, our community depends on the forest for wood to build our houses, construct furniture and make paper. Can your students think of other ways in which these communities depend on each other?

Evaluation

In a class discussion, ask your students to explain the differences between an animal's habitat and our habitat. For example, what is the difference between a ***trail*** through a forest (an animal habitat) and a ***road*** through the forest (a human habitat)?

Extensions

Grades 1 and 2 Have students take pictures from magazines and/or newspapers and have them make collages of a Human Community and a Forest Community.

Grade 3 Have your students work together in small groups to construct a mural, cutting pictures from magazines or doing their own drawings. The mural will include things they have learned about both types of communities. They will show the similarities between their local community and the forest community (e.g. show an animal's house and a person's house).

SUPER SPOTTER ACTIVITY SHEET

Name:

Date:

Class:

My Community / Forest Community (circle one)

Animals

Some of the animals that I saw:

Some of the signs of animals that I saw:

People (how many did I see?)

Adults:

Teenagers and children:

Plants (trees and other vegetation)

Some of the plants that I saw:

Houses, apartments and other buildings

How many houses and apartments?

How many other buildings?