OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson, the students shall be able to do the following:

1. Tell or write the importance of the wetlands;
2. Identify, orally or in writing, the different types of wetlands;
3. Identify, orally or in writing, foods of the wetlands;
4. Identify, orally or in writing, animals found in the different wetlands; and
5. Give an oral or written definition of wetlands.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Wetlands are known as the “kidneys of the landscape.” They function as removers of wastes from both natural and human sources. Wetlands are the homes to a variety of plants and animals. Wetlands are nurseries for many species of coastal fish. Wetlands are areas that periodically have waterlogged soils or are covered with a shallow layer of water resulting in reduced soil conditions. The characteristics of the wetlands and how they function is determined by what is happening in the area surrounding the wetlands. Wetlands are found in all parts of the world and are classified into types. There are fresh water and salt water wetlands. Some examples of fresh water wetlands are swamps, marshes, bogs, pasture ponds, and prairie holes. Salt water wetlands are mangroves and salt water marshes. Wetland areas typically support plant life that is adapted to life in wet environments.

We now know that from an economic and ecological standpoint, wetlands are extremely valuable, fertile areas. The misguided notion that wetlands were a wasteland led to its destruction. Many events over the last two decades has brought many rural peasants into San Cristobal de Las Casas, more than doubling the population of the urban center. The current population estimation puts the urban center at 138,000 people. San Cristobal will continue to grow at a rapid rate and is expected to double again by 2030. The major loss resulted from drainage for agricultural development as well as construction of housing, the Preferico, and commercial buildings.

ADVANCE PREPARATION

A. Gather pictures of wetlands.
B. Gather materials to make student books.

PROCEDURE

I. Setting the stage
A. Discuss with the students the term wetlands and share some information using pictures or books.
B. Explain that they will be writing their own ABC book on the topic: WETLANDS. Begin brainstorming words that begin with the letter a, then the letter b, and so on that have to do with wetlands. Their student books will show pictures they have drawn of these images for each letter of the alphabet. Show the students books on the wetlands that can be sources for them.

II. Activities

A. List the alphabet together.
B. Have the students find words pertaining to the wetlands for each letter.
C. Have the students create definitions or use the word in a sentence.
D. Put the “ABC’s” of the wetlands in book form.

III. Follow-Up

A. Have students share their books.
B. Have the students take them home and share them with their families.

IV. Extension

A. Reproduce the teacher’s copy of the story “In the Wetlands” as a group on a board or on construction paper and color the illustrations. Bind one end with staples, tape, or metal rings to complete the book.
B. Reread the story “In The Wetlands.” Have the students find words they recognize and make a list of these.
In The Wetlands
In The Wetlands We See
Water.
On the water we see lily pads.
On the lily pads we see frogs
By the frogs we see dragonflies
In the wetlands we see flowers
By the flowers we see birds
By the birds we see small fish
In the wetlands we see many plants and animals
Wetlands are their home.