

## **CORN SNAKE LESSON**

**GRADE LEVEL:** This lesson is designed for first grade. Students in the first grade learn that different plants and animals live in different, but specific environments and habitats.

**SCIENCE CONCEPT:** This lesson is aimed at helping students identify features that make up a habitat where a corn snake would live.

**RELATIONSHIP TO CALIFORNIA SCIENCE CONTENT STANDARDS:**

2. Plants and animals meet their needs in different ways. As a basis for understanding this concept:
  - a. Students know different plants and animals inhabit different kinds of environments and have external features that help them thrive in different kinds of places.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVE:** Students will construct a diorama which contains environmental features found in the habitat of a corn snake.

**EVALUATION IDEAS:**

1. Formative: Individuals will be asked to show and discuss the progress of their diorama.
2. Summative: Students will be asked to show and discuss their completed diorama in a small group setting.

**CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND:**

Even young children understand the idea of a home, and they can extend this concept to understand how animals have homes as well. This lesson is geared to introduce students to the importance of animal habitats. To introduce this animal habitat lesson, discuss the importance of a home as a class. Talk about the different benefits of living in a home – it keeps you warm in the winter, provides shade in the summer, holds food and other belongings, provides a place to sleep, etc. Ask students what it would be like if they lived in a desert instead of in their homes. Then explain that animals have homes as well. Tell students that animals’ homes are called “habitats.” Let students know that you will be learning about the habitat of the corn snake.

**LESSON IMPLEMENTATION PLAN:** This lesson is designed to be an individual inquiry.

**ENGAGE:** I will show the students various images of a corn snake in its natural habit and some showing it in captivity. I will then say the following, “Where would this snake rather be, in nature or in this cage. Where do you think the snake would have a better life?”

**EXPLORE:** Each student will be allowed to spend time watching the corn snake within its cage. During this time, they will observe and take note of how different the cage is from the photos they saw of the snake in the wild. During this time I will ask guiding questions as a formative assessment and also to guide their understanding and inquiry regarding the difference between the cage and the corn snakes natural habitat.

**EXPLAIN:** Once all the students have had a chance to think about and write down differences between the corn snakes cage and its natural habitat, the students will then be asked to share their thoughts within a small group. At this point I will present an example of a completed diorama that depicts that habitat of an animal.

**ELABORATE:** This can be accomplished by showing the students other animals that have been captured and forced to live in habitats which are very different from their natural environments. I would point out that although these animals are alive, they are not living were they were meant to live.

**EVALUATE:**

Summative:

- a. Students will construct a diorama that depicts the appropriate habitat for a corn snake.

Formative:

- a. Taken throughout the lesson by means of guided questions and class discussions.

**DIFFERENTIATION PLANS:**

Behavioral Student(s):

Know before hand what triggers the disruptive behavior. Reinforce good behavior with positive reinforcement (reward).

Cognitive A,B,C:

Strategies to enhance instruction would be:

- Activities
- Intensive scaffolding (one on one instruction)
- Explicit instruction
- Visual representations, multimedia
- Graphic organizers (to illustrate how the cage habitat is different from the corn snakes natural habitat)

Affective D:

Have these students work closely with a general education peer to help them learn science effectively.

Language Demands for Students E, F, and G:

- Speak clearly and slowly.
- Employ pauses, short sentences, simple syntax, few pronouns, and idioms.

- Use redundancy and discourse markers, keywords, and outlines.
- Provide examples and descriptions, not definitions.
- Use verbal, hands-on resources, gestures, and graphic organizers.

**LIST OF MATERIALS PER GROUP:**

1. Scheduled time to view the snake in its cage.
2. Notebook to write down observations and thoughts.
3. Tissue Box or Shoe Box (for use in building the diorama)
4. Construction Paper
5. Glue
6. Markers
7. Example of a diorama: A three-dimensional miniature or life-size scene in which figures, stuffed wildlife, or other objects are arranged in a naturalistic setting against a painted background.
8. Photos of the corn snake in captivity and its natural habitat.



**Suggested Reading:**

Mattison, C. (2000). Snake: The Essential Visual Guide to the World of Snakes .  
New York, NY: DK Publishing.

Corn Snake in captivity.



Corn Snake in its natural habitat.

