Lesson 1.2
My Nature Notebook
Lesson Overview

Students read to gather more information about how to study a habitat. They are introduced to *My Nature Notebook*, a book about a girl who observes many changes in a forest habitat behind her home. The teacher introduces the strategy of setting a purpose for reading and identifies the purpose for reading *My Nature Notebook*: to find out different ways to study a habitat. Students are introduced to the Investigation Notebooks they will use throughout the unit. Partners read the text together and use the Investigation Notebooks to record the different ways the girl in the book studies the forest habitat. The class reflects on what they have learned about how to study a habitat and compares plants in the forest habitat in the book to plants they have seen in their own lives. The purpose of this lesson is for students to identify different ways to study a habitat and to begin to think about the different kinds of plants in different habitats.

**Investigative phenomenon:** Habitats.

**Students learn:**

- Scientists study habitats in multiple ways.
- Setting a purpose before reading can help readers focus their attention.
Partner Reading

Students read *My Nature Notebook* with partners.

**Instructional Guide**

1. **Introduce Partner Reading.** Let students know that they will work with partners to read the book and identify different ways to study a habitat. Point to the Partner Reading Guidelines. Explain that these guidelines will help them make sense of the book as they read with their partners.

2. **Distribute books.** Distribute one copy of *My Nature Notebook* to each pair of students.

3. **Read pages 3–4 aloud.** Remind students that their purpose for reading is to learn different ways that scientists study a habitat.

4. **Return to the purpose for reading.**

   Our purpose for reading is to find different ways to study a habitat. What did you find out from the first couple of pages of the book?

   Have pairs discuss.

5. **On-the-Fly Assessment: Students read with a purpose.** As students discuss, circulate and listen for whether they are thinking about the purpose for reading.

6. **Partners read the rest of the book.** Remind students that they should continue to read with the purpose of finding out different ways to study a habitat.

7. **Discuss observe.** Tell students that you want to look back at an important science word from the book: *observe*.

   - **Put the word in context.** Have students turn to page 3. Read the second paragraph on the page: “I’m going to start observing the forest carefully. I will record my observations in this notebook to find out what changes over time.” Point out that *observe* and *observation* are different forms of the same word.

   - **Think about the meaning of the word.** Ask questions to help students think more deeply about the word.
Can you observe plants in this forest habitat?  
[Yes.]

What do you observe about the plants?  
[They are different heights, brown, red, and green.]

Can you write down an observation?  
[Yes.]

How do you know?  
[The child in the book wrote her observations in a notebook.]

- **Find the word in the text.** Have students turn to page 4 and find and read the sentence that includes the word *observe*.

- **Discuss other examples.** Have students give other examples of an observation, either from the book or from their own experiences observing.

- **Give the science meaning of the word.** Explain that *observe* means to use any of the five senses to gather information about something. Point out that the child in the book used not only her sense of sight but also hearing and smell to observe the habitat.

- **Post the observe vocabulary card to the classroom wall.**

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**Embedded Formative Assessment**

**On-the-Fly Assessment 1: Reading with a Purpose**

**Look for:** Throughout the unit, the strategy of setting a purpose will be taught and applied as students read and as they engage in firsthand investigations. Beginning with this lesson, students will have many opportunities to learn about and use the strategy of setting a purpose to support their reading comprehension. Listen to students’ discussions and make note of whether or not students seem to be able to identify information in the book that relates to the purpose. Are they talking with their partners about ways to study a habitat?

**Now what?** If students have trouble identifying information that relates to the purpose for reading, return to page 4 of *My Nature Notebook*. Read the page aloud, pausing after the first two sentences. Model using the purpose to find relevant information. Think aloud as you remind yourself what the purpose is, and whether or not you have learned anything from the first two sentences about how scientists study a habitat. Continue reading, and ask students to give you a “thumbs up” when they hear some information that relates to the purpose. Pause and discuss as a class. Students will return to their purpose for reading in the next activity. Listen as they work with their partners to record ideas about ways to study a habitat to see if they are finding examples in the text. Next time they are asked to read with a purpose, help students reflect on whether or not they’ve met the purpose and model what it would look like to read with that purpose.
Teacher Support

Rationale

Science Practices: About the Role of Investigation Notebooks
Recording ideas, observations, research, and data is a big part of what scientists do. This is not only to document findings for their own purposes, such as modifying an experiment or stimulating new trains of thought, but also to share findings with other scientists and more general audiences. As students take on the role of plant scientists in this unit, they will use their Investigation Notebooks for similar purposes. The notebook provides a place for students to engage in a variety of types of writing (e.g., reflection, observation, and data collection) in order to share findings with others. In addition, the notebook contains scaffolds to support students’ thinking and writing.

Rationale

Literacy Note: Partner Reading
Throughout this unit, we suggest that students read the books with a partner. This allows students time to apply and practice the reading strategies they’re learning, keeps them focused on the task at hand, and provides opportunities for them to assist each other with reading. Of course, you can use any effective reading procedures you’ve already established with your class. Before reading this first book in the unit, you may need to provide instruction on how to read with a partner by using the Partner Reading Guidelines provided or your own guidelines. Establishing procedures takes time at first, but will pay off in terms of student learning and management of the lessons. Over time, students gain practice working together and will need fewer reminders about reading together effectively.
Reflecting on Ways to Study a Habitat

Students return to the text to record ways to study a habitat and compare plants across habitats.

Instructional Guide

1. Revisit the Investigation Question and the purpose for reading. Point to the Investigation Question on the board.

   - Remember, we are investigating the question, How do scientists study habitats?

   - You and your partner just read My Nature Notebook with the purpose of finding out different ways to study a habitat. Let’s record some of the things you found out.

2. Introduce the Investigation Notebook. Hold up a copy of the Plant and Animal Relationships Investigation Notebook.

   - Scientists use notebooks like this one in many ways. They use notebooks to draw and write what they observe and learn, and to keep track of their ideas about what they have learned.

3. Distribute Investigation Notebooks. Distribute one notebook to each student. Give students a minute to look through their notebooks. Then, have students turn to page 1, Safety Guidelines for Science Investigations, and read along as you read aloud each guideline.

4. Project notebook page 4. Have students turn to page 4, Ways to Study a Habitat, in their notebooks. Read the directions aloud.

   - Today we will use our notebooks to record different ways to study a habitat that we read about in My Nature Notebook.

5. Model recording on the notebook page.

   - Read page 3 of My Nature Notebook aloud.
The child is going to make observations about the forest habitat behind her house so she can learn more about what is changing in this habitat. As I read, I am going to pay close attention to the different things she does to study and learn more about this habitat.

• Read page 4 aloud.

On this page, the child does two different things to study the habitat. First, she marks the spot she is going to observe by using sticks and string. I will record this in my notebook.

• Write “She marked the spot to observe.” in the first box on your projected notebook page.

The child plans to observe this spot once every month. That is another way she is studying this habitat. I will also record this in my notebook.

• Write “She observed the spot once every month.” in the next box of the notebook projection.

We read about more things the child does to study the habitat, too. Look back through the book with your partner and find more ways the child studies the forest habitat. Choose which ideas you would like to record in your notebook. You will write one idea in each box, like I did.

6. Have students complete the notebook page. Circulate to support students’ rereading and make note of what they discuss and record about the different ways to study a habitat.

7. Invite partners to share their responses. Have volunteers share different ways to study a habitat. Encourage students to refer to their Investigation Notebooks and My Nature Notebook. Record students’ ideas on the projection of the notebook page.

8. Have students name and compare plants across habitats.

My Nature Notebook was about one type of habitat: a forest habitat. What are the different kinds of plants that live in the forest habitat in this book?
[Oak trees and grass.]

We live in a habitat. What kinds of plants have you observed in our habitat?

How are the plants in our habitat similar to the plants in the forest habitat in the book?

How are the plants in our habitat different from the plants in the forest habitat in the book?

Accept all responses.

9. Describe different kinds of plants.

You have named several different kinds of plants. Plants can be bushes, shrubs, grass, weeds, or trees.
10. **Conclude the lesson.** Collect Investigation Notebooks and copies of *My Nature Notebook*. Let students know that in the next lesson they will continue their work as plant scientists and begin to make observations of plants in the habitat around their school.

**Teacher Support**

**Background**

*Science Note: About Plants*

Plants are a type of living organism characterized by the ability to use sunlight to make their own food from carbon dioxide and water. There are many different kinds of plants on Earth, including mosses (small flowerless plants that grow in large clumps), flowering plants (including fruit-bearing plants), and seed-producing plants (which produce seeds that are not enclosed in a fruit; these include many types of trees, such as conifers). Flowering plants and seed-producing plants form seeds that grow into new plants. Students are likely familiar with plants; they have seen them in parks, gardens, and elsewhere. However, students may have a narrow conception of what plants are. For instance, they may only think of flowers or grasses as plants, and not trees, vegetables, or weeds. This activity supports broadening students’ conceptions of plants.

**Instructional Suggestion**

**Providing More Experience: Making Comparisons**

Comparing and contrasting are important skills that students should have opportunities to develop. In this activity, students compare the plants in multiple habitats to identify whether they are similar or different. If students have not had much experience making comparisons, you may wish to provide them with additional low-stakes opportunities to do so. For instance, you could ask them to identify two objects in the classroom, such as a stapler and a paper clip, and to think about the ways that these objects are different. Encourage them to identify differences in the way they look and the way they are used. Then, ask students to think about the ways these objects are similar.

**Instructional Suggestion**

**Providing More Experience: Recording Page Numbers**

In addition to having students record ways of studying habitats, you may also have students record the page numbers from *My Nature Notebook* where they found each way to study a habitat. Students can reference the page numbers during the debrief. Then, other students can go to those pages to read about ways of studying a habitat that they missed.

**Instructional Suggestion**

**Going Further: Mathematical Thinking**

To give students practice making bar graphs and analyzing data, have them use the data table on page 15 of *My Nature Notebook*. Working in pairs, invite students to each make one bar graph. One student should make a bar graph to represent the growth of the young oak tree while the other makes a bar graph that represents the growth of grass. Partners can then describe their graphs to each other. Ask them how the height of the young oak tree and grass have changed over time. To further challenge students, they can use the bar graphs to compare how much the young oak tree and grass grew each month. Invite students to make evidence-based statements to describe the plant growth. The purpose of this activity is to give students practice analyzing and interpreting data using bar graphs.
Possible Responses

Investigation Notebook
Ways to Study a Habitat (page 4)

She marked the spot to observe.
She observed the spot once every month.
She recorded observations in a notebook.
She used a book to learn more about plants.
She counted the number of leaves on plants.
She used a ruler to measure the height of a plant.
Ways to Study a Habitat

Directions:
1. After reading *My Nature Notebook*, think about the ways the child studied the forest habitat.
2. In each box below, write one way she studied the forest habitat.
Partner Reading

Students read *My Nature Notebook* with partners.

**Instructional Guide**

1. **Introduce Partner Reading.** Let students know that they will work with partners to read the book and identify different ways to study a habitat. Point to the Partner Reading Guidelines. Explain that these guidelines will help them make sense of the book as they read with their partners.

2. **Distribute books.** Distribute one copy of *My Nature Notebook* to each pair of students.

3. **Read pages 3–4 aloud.** Remind students that their purpose for reading is to learn different ways that scientists study a habitat.

4. **Return to the purpose for reading.**

      Nuestro propósito para leer es encontrar diferentes maneras de estudiar un hábitat. ¿Qué averiguaron de las primeras páginas del libro?

Have pairs discuss.

5. **On-the-Fly Assessment: Students read with a purpose.** As students discuss, circulate and listen for whether they are thinking about the purpose for reading.

6. **Partners read the rest of the book.** Remind students that they should continue to read with the purpose of finding out different ways to study a habitat.

7. **Discuss observe.** Tell students that you want to look back at an important science word from the book: *observe.*

      • **Put the word in context.** Have students turn to page 3. Read the second paragraph on the page: “I’m going to start observing the forest carefully. I will record my observations in this notebook to find out what changes over time.” Point out that *observe* and *observation* are different forms of the same word.

      • **Think about the meaning of the word.** Ask questions to help students think more deeply about the word.
¿Pueden observar plantas en este hábitat del bosque? [Sí].

¿Qué observan sobre las plantas? [Son de diferentes alturas y de color café, rojo y verde].

¿Pueden escribir una observación? [Sí].

¿Cómo lo saben? [La niña en el libro escribía sus observaciones en un cuaderno].

- **Find the word in the text.** Have students turn to page 4 and find and read the sentence that includes the word **observe**.
- **Discuss other examples.** Have students give other examples of an observation, either from the book or from their own experiences observing.
- **Give the science meaning of the word.** Explain that **observe** means to use any of the five senses to gather information about something. Point out that the child in the book used not only her sense of sight but also hearing and smell to observe the habitat.
- **Post the observe vocabulary card to the classroom wall.**

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**Embedded Formative Assessment**

**On-the-Fly Assessment 1: Reading with a Purpose**

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Reflecting on Ways to Study a Habitat

Students return to the text to record ways to study a habitat and compare plants across habitats.

Instructional Guide

1. **Revisit the Investigation Question and the purpose for reading.** Point to the Investigation Question on the board.

   🎓 Recuerden, estamos investigando la pregunta, ¿Cómo estudian los hábitats los científicos?

   🎓 Acaban de leer *Mi cuaderno de la naturaleza* con el propósito de averiguar diferentes maneras de estudiar un hábitat. Apuntemos algunas de las cosas que averiguaron.

2. **Introduce the Investigation Notebook.** Hold up a copy of the *Plant and Animal Relationships* Investigation Notebook.

   🎓 Los científicos usan cuadernos como este de muchas maneras. Usan cuadernos para dibujar y escribir lo que observan y aprenden, y para llevar un registro de sus ideas acerca de lo que han aprendido.

3. **Distribute Investigation Notebooks.** Distribute one notebook to each student. Give students a minute to look through their notebooks. Then, have students turn to page 1, Safety Guidelines for Science Investigations, and read along as you read aloud each guideline.

4. **Project notebook page 4.** Have students turn to page 4, Ways to Study a Habitat, in their notebooks. Read the directions aloud.

   🎓 Hoy usaremos nuestros cuadernos para apuntar diferentes maneras de estudiar un hábitat sobre el que leímos en *Mi cuaderno de la naturaleza*.

5. **Model recording on the notebook page.**

   - Read page 3 of *My Nature Notebook* aloud.
Read page 4 aloud.

Write “She marked the spot to observe.” in the first box on your projected notebook page.

Write “She observed the spot once every month.” in the next box of the notebook projection.

6. Have students complete the notebook page. Circulate to support students’ rereading and make note of what they discuss and record about the different ways to study a habitat.

7. Invite partners to share their responses. Have volunteers share different ways to study a habitat. Encourage students to refer to their Investigation Notebooks and My Nature Notebook. Record students’ ideas on the projection of the notebook page.

8. Have students name and compare plants across habitats.

Mi cuaderno de la naturaleza trataba acerca de un tipo de hábitat: un hábitat del bosque. ¿Cuáles son los diferentes tipos de plantas que viven en el hábitat del bosque en este libro? [Robles y pasto].

Vivimos en un hábitat. ¿Qué tipos de plantas han observado en nuestro hábitat?

¿De qué manera las plantas en nuestro hábitat son similares a las plantas en el hábitat del bosque en el libro?

¿De qué manera las plantas en nuestro hábitat son diferentes a las plantas en el hábitat del bosque en el libro?

Accept all responses.

9. Describe different kinds of plants.
10. **Conclude the lesson.** Collect Investigation Notebooks and copies of *My Nature Notebook*. Let students know that in the next lesson they will continue their work as plant scientists and begin to make observations of plants in the habitat around their school.

**Teacher Support**

**Background**

**Science Note: About Plants**

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changed over time. To further challenge students, they can use the bar graphs to compare how much the young oak tree and grass grew each month. Invite students to make evidence-based statements to describe the plant growth. The purpose of this activity is to give students practice analyzing and interpreting data using bar graphs.

Possible Responses

Investigation Notebook
Ways to Study a Habitat (page 4)

- She marked the spot to observe.
- She observed the spot once every month.
- She recorded observations in a notebook.
- She used a book to learn more about plants.
- She counted the number of leaves on plants.
- She used a ruler to measure the height of a plant.
Maneras de estudiar un hábitat

Instrucciones:
1. Después de leer *Mi cuaderno de la naturaleza*, piensa en las maneras en las que la niña estudió el hábitat del bosque.
2. En cada cuadro debajo, escribe una manera en la que ella estudió el hábitat del bosque.

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