On the Farm Habitat: Classification

Standards of Learning
Various adaptations of the lesson available for the following standards-
Science: K.6, 1.5, 3.5
Social Studies: 2.7

Objective
Students will:
- Sort and classify plants and animals found on the farm and surrounding land

Materials
- Shower curtain with farm scene drawn on it, including natural forests around the farm
- Pictures of plants and animals found on a farm and surrounding area, mounted on construction paper/cardstock and laminated

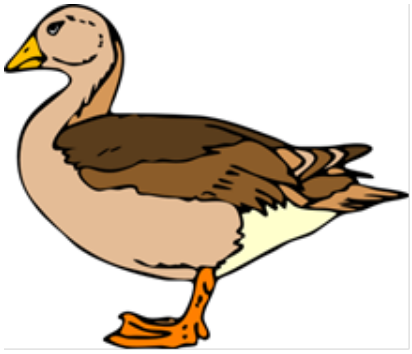
Background Knowledge
It is very common to find natural areas of forests as well as strips of trees and shrubs around farms. Called riparian buffer strips, this conservation technique use trees, shrubs (bushes), and grasses to separate the land from streams. Farmers plant riparian buffers to reduce soil erosion, provide wildlife habitats and to improve water quality by filtering out chemicals and nutrients from the surface run-off water. In this lesson students will utilize the farm and surrounding forest habitats to practice classification..

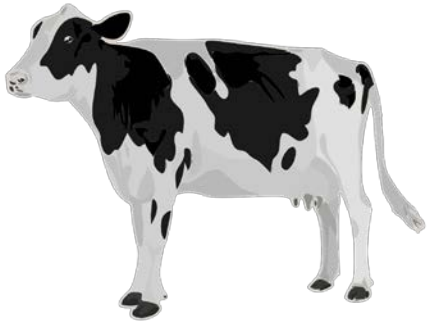
Use the farm and its surrounding environment to help students practice sorting and classifying objects. Possible pictures and classifications are:
PK/Kindergarten: living vs. nonliving; plant vs. animal
First Grade: body coverings, animal movement; wild vs. domesticated
Second Grade: natural, human, and capital resources
Third Grade: producers, consumers, and decomposers; predator vs. prey; herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores

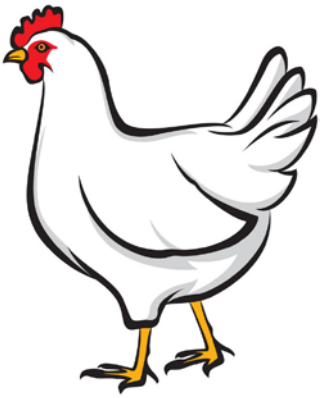
Procedure
1. Prior to beginning the lesson place the farm scene shower curtain on the floor and add all of the plants/animals that you will be using. Refer to the "Background Knowledge" above for guidance on various pictures and classifications to use.
2. Working in teams or pairs have students observe all of the pictures on the shower curtain then have each team collect a picture until the shower curtain is empty.
3. Tell them that you will now sort and classify the pictures that they have. You may choose to have the class brainstorm their own classifications or give them predefined ones.
4. Draw columns and headings on the board for the classification groups. Next have students take turns taping their pictures into the correct column.
5. You may then have students determine other ways to sort the pictures or create a large Venn diagram on the board.

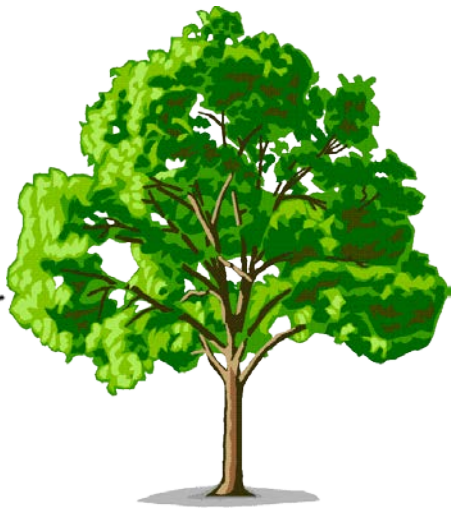
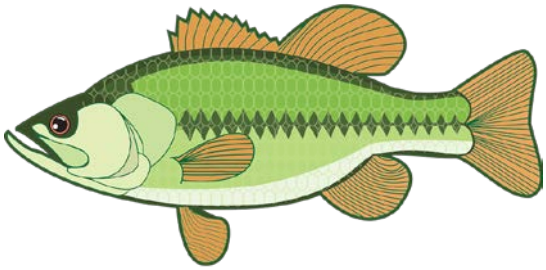
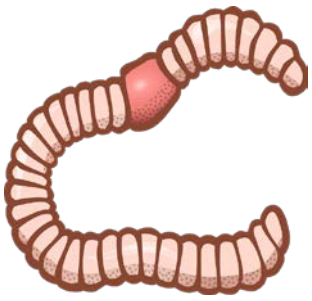
Extension
In addition to sorting pictures, you may also use them to create a food/energy web.

Sample Sorting Pictures





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