

Title: Costa Rican Food Chain

Subject: Biology

Grade Level: 4th-7th

Time: 2 50-minute periods

Objective: Students will understand the natural predator-prey relationships that exist inside of the rainforest. Students will also be able to place the animals and relationships into natural, sequential order.

Illinois State Goals and Standards:

12.A.2a Describe simple life cycles of plants and animals and the similarities and differences in their offspring.

12.B.2a Describe relationships among various organisms in their environments. (e.g. predator/prey, parasite/host, food chains, and food webs.

12.B.2b Identify physical features of plants and animals that help them live in different environments.

12.B.3b Compare and assess features of organisms for their adaptive, competitive, and survival potential.

Method:

Begin a discussion on predator-prey relationships by talking about what animals eat. Pick a top predator (wolf, jaguar, lion, etc), and discuss its habitats, what it relies on for food, classify this animal as carnivore, herbivore, or omnivore. Next discuss one of the animals that the top predator consumes and answer the same questions (habitat, food, classification, etc).

Put the animals into a food chain or web.

As a class, pick one of the top predators found in Costa Rica. Research the animal, and research the animals that create the prey models of the chain.

Connect the animals to their predators, making sure to use arrows to show what consumes each animal.

Use the Food Chain worksheet to fill in your new found information.

Lesson Extensions:

Have students create food chains/webs for the other ecosystems found in Costa Rica (marine, mountains, arid highlands)

Have students individually complete a series of food chains/webs for the ecosystem that they live in.

Costa Rican Predator-Prey Diagram

Fill the boxes with the name of an animal which lives in the Costa Rican forest. Use arrows to connect the boxes to show what each animal eats. You may have to use more than one arrow from each animal. Make sure that you put the top predator at the top of the web.

