

Lesson 1: Populations and Communities

Objective:

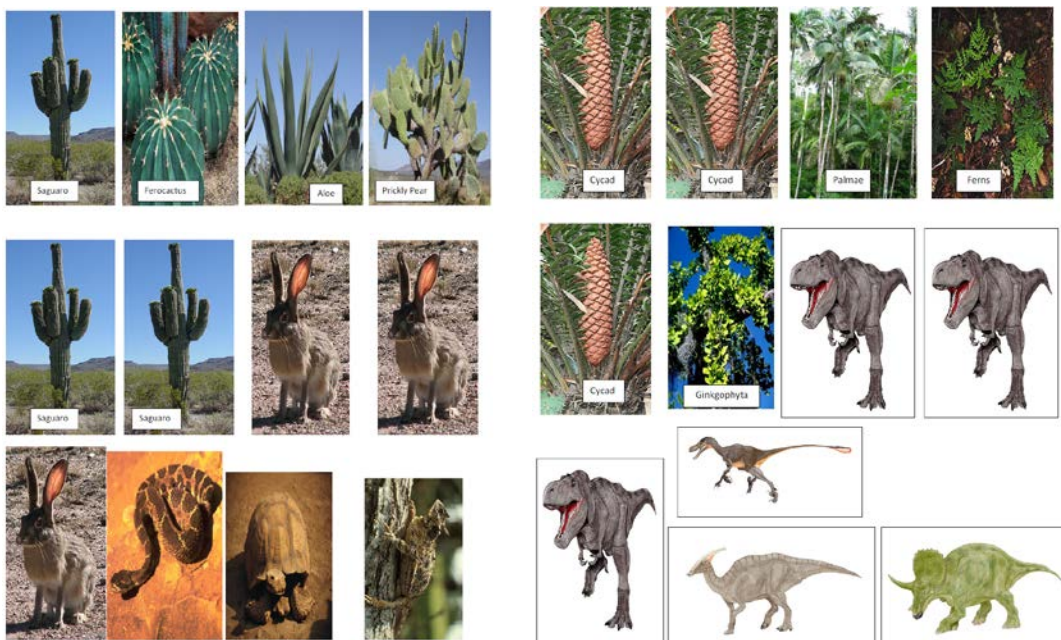
1. Observe and describe the physical characteristics of environments.
2. Describe how the environments support populations and communities with an ecosystem.

Materials:

- 5 sets of the **Document: Wildlife Pictures**
- **Vocabulary Cards** (population, community)

Procedure: (Students will work in groups of 4.)

1. Ask your students to describe their community. Scribe their responses on the board. Students may say that a community has a school, police station, grocery store, fire station, people, and so forth. Ask the students to describe the population. Students may share that the population refers to people. Explain to the students that the words "community" and "population" have multiple meanings and that in science they mean something else. Place the vocabulary cards on the board.
2. Distribute **Document: Wildlife Pictures** to the groups and ask your students to classify them into two groups (allow the students five minutes).
3. Ask the students to share how they classified their pictures. Guide students to classify them as plants & animals from the desert and plants and animals from the Cretaceous Period. Explain that they have classified their pictures into two communities, a desert community and a community of the Cretaceous Period.



4. Ask your students to explain what a community is. Guide them to understand that a community is a place where different plants & animals of the same species live together and depend on each other.
5. Ask your students to place pictures in groups of the same species, (put all Saguaro pictures together, all snake pictures together, etc.). Tell students that they have grouped these plants and animals by populations.
6. Ask students to explain what a population is. Guide them to understand that a population is a group of plants or animals of the same species that live in the same area.
7. In their notebooks, have students write the meaning of population and community and illustrate the words. Remind students to write the “science” meaning of the words.

Extension Ideas:

1. KLRN PBS LearningMedia:
<http://klrn.pbslearningmedia.org>
On PBS LearningMedia, search for: Amargasaurus Acres. It is an animated clip explaining how populations of Amargasaurus stayed together as a herd; this protected them from predators.