



P.A.W.S.

Pet And Wildlife Stewardship

An ecosystem is a system, or a group of interconnected elements, formed by the interaction of a community of organisms within their environment. Removing one plant or one species of animal can have lasting effects on, and even destroy, an ecosystem.

Objective

Students will explore the impact and influence that humans have on ecosystems including identifying human behaviors that can be disruptive to the natural flow of an ecosystem. Students will develop a strong understanding of cause and effect relationships: the effects of resource availability on organisms and populations of organisms.

Required Materials

- Paper
- Colored Pencils
- Markers
- Ruler

Overview

- 1. Group discussion and activity.** Ask students to create a graph with the following labels at the top: invasive species, water, humans, lack of predators. Below each label ask students to identify three areas of an ecosystem that can be interrupted or changed by each.
- 2. Student activity.** Based on their chart, ask students to select one area or factor that they can control or have a positive impact on. Ask students to identify a plan of action for implementing a solution to that problem. Students can work independently, or in a group, to come up with a project that directly addresses the behaviors that they have identified, their project should do the following:
 - 1. Identify a problem and a solution to that problem.**
 - 2. Design an outreach/education plan.** Ask students to come up with a plan for educating other members of their community regarding the issue they selected. Ideas may include asking the school to make a public service announcement, calling into various media outlets, putting social media to good use or hanging fliers throughout their community.
 - 3. Project documentation.** Students will create a video or photo collage to present their project. The final presentation should include the following: WHO is benefiting? WHAT is the overall goal? WHERE will the project take place? WHY is the project important?

STUDENT CONTEST

Students can mail their projects to

Newspapers in Education | 100 W Main St. Ste 100 | Oklahoma City, OK 73102 with an official entry form or submit them digitally by visiting <https://nie.newsok.com/educators/curriculum/cause-for-paws/>.

The winner in each age group will receive a recognition award and one project will be chosen as the Grand Prize Winner! The Grand Prize winner will be highlighted through The Oklahoman and NewsOK.com and will receive a \$500 cash prize to be shared by all group participants.