



Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center of Goshen College

Nature's Recyclers: 1st -5th

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Quick Facts

Season: Spring (April-May)
& Fall (Sept.-Nov.)

Grades: 1st – 5th

Program length: 4 hours

Max # of students: 50

Standards Connections:

1st Grade

1.ESS.4 Develop solutions that could be implemented to reduce the impact of humans on the land, water, air, and/or other living things in the local environment.

1.LS.1 Develop representations to describe that organisms have unique and diverse life cycles but all have in common birth, growth, reproduction, and death.

1.LS.3 Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.

2nd Grade

2.PS.1 Plan and conduct an investigation to describe and classify different kinds of materials by their observable properties.

3rd Grade

3.LS.2 Plan and conduct an investigation to determine the basic needs of plants to grow, develop, and reproduce.

4th Grade

4.ESS.4 Develop solutions that could be implemented to reduce the impact of humans on the natural environment and the natural environment on humans.

4.LS.2 Use evidence to support the explanation that a change in the environment may result in how a plant or animal will survive and reproduce, move to a new location, or die.

5th Grade

5.LS.2 Observe and classify common Indiana organisms as producers, consumers, decomposers, or predator and prey based on their relationships and interactions with other organisms in their ecosystem.

Program Description

This program will help students explore the concept of recycling happening in nature. They will learn how and why recycling of material happens and it's importance.

Program Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Discover how everything in nature is recycled and broken down
- Learn how all living things are made of elements that are eventually returned to the soil

Program Outline

1. Hike
Students will head out on our trails to get a close up view of the recycling process happening in nature. They will participate in age-appropriate scavenger hunts, games, and other hands-on activities.
2. Vernal Pond Exploration: While on the hike students will stop at one of our vernal ponds to search for macroinvertebrates and amphibians living in the water
3. The afternoon will be filled with a variety of age-appropriate activities. Options include:
 - a. Worm Castings: Students will see our active worm composting bin and discuss how humans can use worms to compost food scraps.
 - b. Games

Vocabulary

- Recycling
- Conservation
- Decomposer
- Bacteria
- Fungi