



Coastal Ecosystems of Florida and Litter

CINDY CRUTCHFIELD

Grade: 8

Time: 5 Class Periods

Theme

Physical Systems

Standards

1. How to use maps
2. The physical and human characteristics of places
3. People create regions to interpret Earth's complexity
4. The characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems

This unit fits into Connections, Challenges, and Choices in grade 8, Florida Studies, Environment.

Purpose

Our coastal ecosystems are fragile. We live in a coastal ecosystem. Students should become acquainted with these systems, similarities and differences, characteristics, and their responsibilities in maintaining these systems that we live and play in.

Objectives

- Identify and locate topographic areas of Florida
- Read and explain coastal ecosystems
- Analyze similarities and differences

- Give examples
- Design and illustrate assigned coastal ecosystem

Materials

- Outline map of Florida
- Elevation map of Florida
- Satellite map of Florida
- Worksheets:
 - "Scavenger Hunt"
 - "Coastal Ecosystems"
 - "Litter and Our Ecosystem"
- Posterboard
- Markers
- Colored pencils
- Display Pictures of Coastal Ecosystems
- Display Topographic and Satellite Maps

Procedures

1. **Scavenger Hunt.** Divide students into groups. Give each group a scavenger hunt list. Send groups to different parts of your campus to find items on list. Teacher may have to make sure litter items are in the campus area that groups are assigned. Give group 15 to 20 minutes. When they return, give each student the handout, Litter and Our Ecosystem. Have the group follow the directions on the handout. Discuss handout and the litter each group found. Be sure and discuss the term "ecosystem."
2. **Topographic Map of Florida.** Do "Contour the Amazing Knuckle Range" to introduce students to topography. See worksheet included for directions. Give each student a map of Florida. Using color pencils, color elevations of Florida as a topographic map (this is simplified- see map included in materials).

3. **Ecosystem.** Divide the class into 6 small groups. Push desks together to create a work space. Students will be working in groups for the rest of this unit. Give out worksheet "Coastal Ecosystems of Florida." Assign each group one of the coastal ecosystems. The group is to read and discuss the information. Each group is to prepare a presentation using posterboard to show this data: 1. Name of ecosystem. 2. Characteristics. 3. Impact of litter on the ecosystem. Attach topographic maps to poster. Group will present this information to the class.
4. **Project.** Each group will make a visual project showing their ecosystem. This visual must be:
 - A. About the size of a shoe box.
 - B. Titled.
 - C. Show location of the ecosystem.
 - D. Show the topography and what the ecosystem looks like.

Each group will be responsible for bringing materials to make their own ecosystem. At the end of the fifth class period each group will display their poster and ecosystem.

Evaluation

Grade project based on effort and completion of criteria.

Scavenger Hunt List

- Soda can
- Bottle cap
- Pieces of glass
- Six pack ring
- String or wire
- Plastic bag
- Pieces of Styrofoam
- Cigarette butt
- Paper
- Plastic bottle



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