

MISSION: EXPLORE TO RESTORE

Assessment philosophy and overview

Assessment in the Mission: Explore to Restore unit focuses on inquiry, systems thinking and environmental action. Students demonstrate their learning through investigation, discussion,

analysis and communication activities. The shared rubric framework allows teachers to observe and assess key skills across multiple lessons while maintaining flexibility for different classroom contexts. This approach supports deeper understanding of ecosystems and encourages students to see themselves as active participants in environmental stewardship.

Lesson	Understanding environmental ideas	Investigating and finding information	Thinking about ecosystem connections	Sharing ideas clearly	Sharing ideas clearly
1 - Website exploration	✓				
2 - Scientists at work	✓				
3 - Wildlife investigation / species stories		✓			
4 - Food web game	✓		✓		
5 - Mapping species stories	✓		✓		
6 - Wildlife / ecosystem monitoring		✓			✓
7 - Action pledge				✓	✓
8 - Letter writing	✓			✓	✓

The lessons in this unit use a shared rubric framework. Teachers may choose to assess only the criteria that are most relevant to each activity. Not every criterion needs to be assessed in every lesson. The overview above highlights where each skill is most strongly emphasized.

Name: _____

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Inquiry learning rubric for students

Your teacher may focus on the criteria that best match the activity.

Criteria	Level 1 – Beginning	Level 2 – Developing	Level 3 – Proficient	Level 4 – Extending
Understanding environmental ideas <i>Website exploration, scientist Q&A</i>	I show a limited understanding of the environmental ideas we are learning about.	I show some understanding, but my ideas may be incomplete.	I clearly explain the environmental ideas from the lesson.	I show a deep understanding and make connections to other ideas or examples.
Investigating and finding information <i>Wildlife investigation activity</i>	I need a lot of help to explore resources or find information.	I can find some information with guidance.	I can independently explore resources and find useful information.	I investigate deeply and use information in thoughtful or creative ways.
Thinking about ecosystem connections <i>Food web game, ecosystem mapping</i>	I have difficulty explaining how parts of an ecosystem are connected.	I can identify some connections in an ecosystem.	I clearly explain how different parts of an ecosystem work together.	I explain complex ecosystem connections and relationships.
Sharing my ideas clearly <i>Letter writing</i>	My ideas are unclear or not well explained.	I share my ideas but they may need more detail.	I clearly explain my ideas using examples or vocabulary from the lesson.	I explain my ideas clearly and persuasively with strong reasoning.
Taking action to help wildlife <i>Wildlife / ecosystem monitoring, action pledge</i>	I show limited awareness of how people can help wildlife.	I show some understanding of how actions can help wildlife.	I describe responsible actions that help protect wildlife.	I suggest thoughtful actions and show strong commitment to helping wildlife.



Name: _____

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Quick assessment rubric

Circle the level that best matches the student's work. Teachers may assess only the criteria relevant to the lesson.

Student: _____

Lesson: _____

Criteria	Level 1 Beginning	Level 2 Developing	Level 3 Proficient	Level 4 Extending
Understanding environmental ideas <i>Website exploration, scientist Q&A</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investigating and finding information <i>Wildlife investigation activity</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Thinking about ecosystem connections <i>Food web game, ecosystem mapping</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sharing my ideas clearly <i>Letter writing</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking action to help wildlife <i>Wildlife / ecosystem monitoring, action pledge</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments / evidence of learning:

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Name: _____

Inquiry learning rubric for teachers

Teachers may choose to assess only the criteria most relevant to each lesson (listed in the criteria column).

Criteria	Level 1 – Beginning	Level 2 – Developing	Level 3 – Proficient	Level 4 – Extending
Understanding of environmental concepts <i>Used in: website exploration, scientist Q&A lesson</i>	Demonstrates limited understanding of environmental concepts explored in the lesson.	Demonstrates some understanding, but ideas may be incomplete or unclear.	Demonstrates clear understanding of key environmental concepts.	Demonstrates thorough understanding and makes thoughtful connections beyond the lesson.
Investigation and use of information <i>Used in: wildlife investigation activity</i>	Requires significant support to explore resources or gather information.	Uses resources with some guidance; gathers basic information.	Independently explores resources and gathers relevant information.	Investigates deeply and uses information in thoughtful or creative ways.
Systems thinking and analysis <i>Used in: food web game, ecosystem mapping</i>	Shows limited ability to identify relationships within ecosystems.	Identifies some relationships, but explanations may be simple.	Clearly explains relationships within ecosystems, e.g., food webs, habitats.	Demonstrates strong systems thinking and explains complex ecological relationships.
Communication of ideas <i>Used in: advocacy letter</i>	Shares ideas with limited clarity or detail.	Communicates ideas with some clarity.	Clearly communicates ideas using appropriate vocabulary and examples.	Communicates ideas clearly and persuasively with strong reasoning and evidence.
Environmental action and responsibility <i>Used in: wildlife/ecosystem monitoring activity, action pledge</i>	Shows limited awareness of how actions affect ecosystems.	Shows some awareness of environmental responsibility.	Demonstrates responsible thinking about protecting ecosystems.	Demonstrates strong commitment to environmental stewardship and suggests meaningful actions.