

At-Home Lesson Plan: Crafting Communities

Explore habitats, natural resources, survival basics, and interactive bartering in this real-world, community building game. This lesson can be done individually but works best if students work together using video chat.

SUGGESTED GRADE RANGE:

Grades 3-8

LESSON OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Develop communities by researching habitats and identifying their unique natural resources
- Utilize their habitat's resources to meet their survival needs
- Use hands-on building activities to create communities and satisfy their needs
- Understand that resources have value by bartering with other habitat communities

COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS:

Social Studies EALR 2: Economics—The student applies understanding of economic concepts and systems to analyze decision-making and the interactions between individuals, households, businesses, governments, and societies.

- Component 2.1: Understands that people have to make choices between wants and needs and evaluate the outcomes of those choices.
- Component 2.2: Understands how economic systems function.



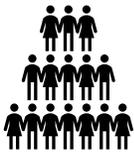
SUPPLIES:

- Building materials (recycled boxes, LEGOs, blocks, construction paper, etc.—anything you have on hand!)
- Access to a computer or books with information on natural habitats
- Paper and pencil
- Access to video chat if you're able to do a teamwork option
- Barter Bin (a basket, box, etc. where you can set aside resources you've agreed to barter)

TEAMWORK OPTIONS:

Invite friends to participate! This lesson works best with multiple participants. Each participant will follow the lesson on their own. When it's time to connect, use video chat to share creations and barter for new resources.

If your student is doing this lesson on their own, choose two habitats to research and develop in Activity 2. They will use these two habitats and their communities for the rest of the activities.



Teamwork Tips:

- This lesson works best with no more than 5 habitats.
- Students in the same household may work collaboratively on a single habitat or individually on different habitats.
- Students in different households will work individually on Activities 1-3 and begin collaborating in Activity 4.



Technology Tips:

For the teamwork option, students will need to both **speak to each other** and **see** the communities they've created. There are numerous free video chat systems available that allow you to place and receive audio and video calls over a WIFI connection. Here are a few of our recommendations, but feel free to use whichever system works best for you!

- Zoom (<https://zoom.us/>)
- Google Duo (<https://duo.google.com/about/>)
- Facetime (for Apple users, <https://support.apple.com/en-us/HT204380>)

LESSON GLOSSARY:

Term	Definition
Survival	The state or fact of continuing to live or exist, typically in spite of an accident, ordeal, or difficult circumstances
Needs	An individual's basic requirements that must be fulfilled in order to survive
Wants	Things an individual desires that are not critical to survival
Habitat	The natural home or environment of an animal, plant or other organism
Natural Resource	Materials or substances such as minerals, forests, water, and fertile land that occur in nature
Community	A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common; a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals
Barter	To exchange goods or services for other goods or services without using money

LESSON INTRO:

Simulation games like Minecraft help us explore real-world situations. They often have a few things in common:

- They are based in real-world scenarios.
- They have rules (although some of those rules can be bent).
- They have a creative goal rather than a Big Boss or enemy to battle.
- They are unique—each time you play them, they will be different!

We'll be using these elements in our lesson today. We are going to explore how communities develop and grow from meeting their basic survival needs to using their resources to meet their wants and eventually to bartering with other communities.

There are 5 activities in this lesson. Look for summary information about each lesson as well as what students will LEARN and DO.

Each lesson includes an estimated time to complete, but this may be adjusted as needed based on the student's interest.

ACTIVITY 1: SURVIVAL BASICS

In this lesson, you'll explore the meaning of the term "survival" and learn the difference between our **needs** and our **wants**.



Estimated Time to Complete:

15 minutes



Vocabulary Terms:

- Survival
- Needs
- Wants



DO:

Choose a real-world habitat (a desert, a tropical island, etc.). Pick one at random for this example! You can use this same habitat in the next activity or choose a different one.

- Imagine that you have been dropped into this habitat with only the clothes on your back. **What do you need in order to survive?**
- What could you find in your habitat that could help you meet those **needs**?



LEARN:

Survival experts say there are four basic things you must have to **survive**. No matter where we are or who we are, we all need:

- Food
- Water
- Fire
- Shelter

These are our **needs**. **Needs** are things that we cannot survive without. You may need additional or unique things to meet your specific needs. Think about people who need medication or who use mobility devices—we **all** need food, shelter, water, and fire, but individuals in our communities may have additional needs.

Things that are not essential to survival are considered our **wants**. As your community grows, you can start meeting your wants.



- Think about your list of what you need to survive in your habitat. Are any of those things actually **wants** instead of **needs**?

ACTIVITY 2: RESEARCH A HABITAT

In this lesson, you will select a **habitat**, research the **natural resources** available in that habitat, and strategize about how you can use those resources to meet their survival **needs**. *Students participating in the teamwork option should each choose one habitat. Students completing this lesson on their own should choose two habitats.*



Estimated Time to Complete:
60 minutes



Vocabulary Terms:

- Habitat
- Natural Resource



LEARN:

A **habitat** is the natural home or environment of an animal, plant or other organism. Habitats can be anything from tropical islands to snowy mountains or from deserts to jungles.

Habitats have unique **natural resources**. A natural resource is any material or substance that occurs in nature, and it may include plants, animals, water, or other naturally-occurring element. Cotton, for example could be a natural resource but a t-shirt made from cotton would not.



DO:

Choose a **habitat** you would like to use. You will use this habitat for the rest of the activities. Remember to choose a habitat rather than a specific place (so think about a mountain rather than downtown Seattle).

- **Take notes!** Use the worksheet at the end of this lesson plan or create your own.
- **Research your habitat.**
- Identify **natural resources** available in your habitat.
- Brainstorm how you can use those natural resources to meet your four basic **survival needs**.
- *NOTE: If you are doing the teamwork option, each participant should choose a different habitat.*



- 1. Choose a habitat.**
- 2. You can only use the natural resources in your habitat.**
- 3. You must meet your survival needs first.**
- 4. You must live in your habitat**—you are the founder of your community.
- 5. If you are doing the teamwork option, you will not interact with other habitats or communities at this stage.*

ACTIVITY 3: BUILD YOUR HABITAT

In this lesson, you will apply your research to create a miniature version of your habitat using building materials or crafting supplies. You can use LEGOs, Lincoln Logs, scrap wood, empty boxes, tissue paper--whatever you have available!



Estimated Time to Complete:
45 minutes



Vocabulary Terms:

APPLY the terms you've learned!

- What **habitat** are you building?
- What are your **natural resources**?
- How will you use your natural resources to meet your **survival** needs?
- What do you eventually **want** to expand your community and make your life more comfortable?



DO:

Put your research to use and build a 3-D, miniature model of your habitat.

- Find pictures of your habitat for inspiration.
- Use building blocks, LEGOs, paper, or recycled materials to create your habitat.
- Take notes about how you use your resources to meet your survival needs.



Things to Think About:

- Where is your community's water source?
- What will you use for food?
- What materials will you use to build your shelter?
- Where will your shelter be?
- How will you make fire?
- What tools would help you, and how could you make them using only your natural resources?
- What are things you don't have in your habitat that would help you?



ACTIVITY 4: E-MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

It's time to explore other habitats and e-meet your neighbors (all with safe social distancing!)? Start a video chat with your team members to share your work. Take a video tour through their habitats and think about how you can support each other to grow and expand your communities.

If you are doing this lesson on your own, think about the two habitats you chose and how their resources could support each other.



Estimated Time to Complete:

30 minutes



Vocabulary Terms:

- Barter



DO:

Learn about your neighbor's community, their habitat, and their natural resources by **asking questions**.

- Which habitat did they choose? Ask them to describe it as they show it to you on video.
- What are their natural resources?
- How did they use their natural resources to meet their survival needs?
- What has been hard or challenging for them?
- What do they wish they had?



LEARN:

Neighboring communities can help each other! Now that you've e-met your neighbors and know about other habitats, you have access to **other natural resources**. Since your communities don't have money, you'll use **bartering**. Bartering means exchanging goods or services for other goods or services without using money. **Use the Bartering Worksheet at the end of this lesson to track your barters.**

You have to decide what your goods and services are worth. For example, if someone offers you a feather in exchange for all of your fish, that might not be a fair barter. **Think about what your resources are worth.**



- You decide what your goods and services are worth
- You can barter anything in your habitat
- If you don't think a barter is fair, you can reject it or make a counteroffer
- Barters can help you meet your needs or your wants



ACTIVITY 5: WRAP UP

In this lesson, you have learned:

- What four things count as survival basics
- The difference between needs and wants
- Common features of habitats
- How to use natural resources to build a community
- How to determine how much your resources are worth
- How to negotiate with other communities



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What did you enjoy the most?
- What was challenging?
- Talk about your barters—did you renegotiate or reject any of them? Why, and what did you do?
- How can you use what you've learned today?
- PARENTS/TEACHERS—what did you observe about the activity?



SUGGESTED EXTENSIONS

- Use this activity to develop the setting for a story.
- Add challenges—think about how weather events would impact your community
- Imagine that your community is now facing a pandemic like COVID-19. How could you adapt to manage social distancing in your community?
- Expand your community to include more people and more habitats.
- Write a collaborative story about your communities and the people who live there.
- Build your community in Minecraft and explore other biomes.

HABITAT RESEARCH WORKSHEET

*It's time to research the habitat you'll use for the rest of the activities!
Choose a real-world natural habitat (for example, a desert, a tropical island, a snowy mountain, a jungle, etc.). You can find information online or in books and magazines at your house. Look for images and videos of your habitat, too!*

<u>HABITAT NOTES</u>	
<i>Take notes about what you learn as you research your habitat! Write down information, draw pictures, or sketch your ideas.</i>	
Where is your habitat?	
Describe your habitat. <i>Is it a desert? An island? A snowy mountain? Is it flat or hilly?</i>	
Based on your habitat, which survival needs should you meet first? <i>For example, if your habitat is really cold, you might need fire and shelter before you need food and water.</i>	
What are your habitat's natural resources?	

<p>Where will you find water in your habitat?</p>	
<p>How can you use your natural resources to make fire?</p>	
<p>What will you use for shelter, and what will your shelter look like?</p>	
<p>What are your habitat's natural food sources?</p>	
<p>What tools will you need to use those food sources?</p>	
<p>How can you use your natural resources to craft the tools you need?</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Other Observations or Ideas:</p>	

BARTERING WORKSHEET

Bartering, the exchange of goods or services for other goods or services without money, is an important step in building communities! Communities use bartering to get resources they don't have access to (or have very limited access to) in their own habitats.

If you are doing this activity **on your own**, you'll use your imagination to think through this activity. Where might you look for resources you need?

If you are doing this activity **with another team member**, you'll barter with teammates in your house or online.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

- What does your community need?
- What habitat might have the resources you need?
- What could you offer them in exchange?

Once you have agreed to a barter, place the resource in your Barter Bin to show that you have given that item to another community. If you don't have a physical item (toy fish, picture of a cow, etc.), you can write the resource (or draw a picture of it!) on a piece of paper and put that in your Barter Bin.

My community offers: <i>What resource are you offering to barter?</i>	In exchange for: <i>What resource do you want in exchange?</i>	From: <i>Who are you bartering with?</i>	Accepted? <i>Did you accept this barter?</i>
<i>For example: 2 sheep</i>	<i>4 copper pots</i>	<i>Desert habitat</i>	<i>Yes</i>