

Pumpkin Habitats



Enjoy the ooey gooey fun of pumpkin carving while creating a magical little world! Making a Pumpkin Habitat is a great way for children to exercise their imaginations and learn about the value of habitat while celebrating the Halloween season!

MATERIALS

- Pumpkin
- Knife/Carver
- Spoon/Scoop

Collect whatever little accents you like to create the habitat of your imagination! Suggestions include:

- Nature Materials:
 - Sticks
 - Rocks/Pebbles
 - Clay
 - Moss or grass
 - Acorns
 - Pinecones
 - Seed Pods
 - Dry Flowers
 - Feathers
 - Autumn Leaves
- Miniature Figurines
 - Animals
 - Fairies
 - Dolls



STEPS

- 1) Go for a nature walk. As you wander, look around and pay attention to the habitats in your environment. What do they look like? What natural materials do they include?
- 2) Gather your natural materials and miniature accents! While on your walk, see what interesting habitat accents you can find out in nature. Next, see what you have in your home- Do you have small animal figurines? Little dolls or fairies? You can even make critters and characters out of clay! Or: Don't use critters at all! Just create an environment.
- 3) Cut an opening out of the face of the pumpkin to create a door, then proceed to scoop out the seeds and pumpkin guts until the inside walls are scraped clean. (Note: You can also cut the top off the pumpkin and scoop it out the traditional way, then place the top securely back on before carving out your door.)
- 4) Begin to create and decorate your habitat! If desired, carve windows, doors, and even little mouse holes into the shell of the pumpkin. Let your imagination go wild! Sticks can be used to make windows, doors, and bridges. Clay can be used to create furniture and animals.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPANDED LEARNING

What Is Habitat?

A habitat is a place where an organism makes its home. It must meet all the environmental conditions an organism needs to survive- For an animal, this means everything it needs to find and gather food, select a mate, and successfully reproduce and raise their young. For a plant, a good habitat must provide the right combination of water, soil, air, and light. The main components of a habitat are shelter, food, water, and space. A habitat is said to have suitable conditions when it has the correct amount of all of these.

- ❖ Have children look around their daily environments – their homes, their neighborhoods, their school campuses – and identify different types of habitats (human, plant, animal) or evidence of habitats (nests, eggshells, cobwebs). Children can keep a nature journal and document the activity they see in that habitat each week, noting seasonal changes such as nesting, mating, and more. Take children on a hike or to a park to expose them to different habitat environments and challenge them to take a closer look! Even the most urban environments provide habitat. Do you see a bird nest in a rain gutter? Do you see a spider web in a bush? Do you see squirrels in a tree? Do you see ants heading into a hole? If we take a closer look at nature, we will notice that habitat is all around us.

Educational Resource Links

- “What is a habitat?” from Discovery Education UK
- “Tundra, Desert, Grasslands, Forests, and More!” from Harmony Square
- “Home Sweet Habitat” from Crash Course Kids
- “Habitat” from Britannica Kids
- “Habitats” from National Geographic Kids

