

## Fish Habitat Lesson Plan

Duration: 90 minutes

Objectives:

- Students will be introduced to different fish species found in the Ottawa area
- Students will identify the basic needs of living things, including the need for air, water, food, heat, shelter, and space
- Students will learn the characteristics of healthy fish habitats as well as understand how people can help to protect and restore them

Background: Fish play an important role in Ottawa's freshwater ecosystems. With the steady increase in development along Canada's lakes and rivers, critical fish habitat is being compromised and degraded. This lesson will help students understand what fish need to survive and how we can help to protect their habitat in the Ottawa area.

Materials:

- Teacher information sheet
- Legal size paper
- Pencil crayons
- Silicone replica fish: Largemouth Bass, Yellow Perch, Brook Trout, Sunfish
- Paint rollers
- Tempera paint
- Paper plates
- YouTube links for fish habitat restoration videos
  - Brush bundle restoration #1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbBmxkvZtUM>
  - Brush bundle restoration #2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Lti8LprUFU>
- clothespins and drying line

Procedure:

1. Ask students where fish live. What does their home look like? What things do they need to have to be able to live? Discuss the basic elements that fish need to survive (air, water, food, heat, shelter, and space). Explain how a habitat is a place where a fish makes its home and how habitats have all of the basic elements that a fish needs to survive.
2. Use the silicone fish replicas to remind students about the types of fish that can be found in the Ottawa area. Discuss what types of habitat these fish species live in (lakes and rivers).
3. Show students the brush bundle videos. Ask students how people can help fish (protecting and restoring their habitat).

4. Set up 4 tables and place 3 silicone fish replicas at each table (one table for each species). Also, lay out plates of paint, paintbrushes, pencil crayons, and one legal size piece of paper per student.
5. Divide students into 4 groups and send them to their table. Give students 2 minutes to discuss what type of fish is at their table and what type of habitat it lives in. Confirm that students have identified what type of fish they have and know what can be found in its habitat (water, aquatic vegetation, sticks, rocks, food).
6. Have students write their name on their paper.
7. Do a demonstration of how to use the paint rollers and silicone replicas for the class. Show them how to place paint on the roller, roll the paint over one side of the fish, and stamp it on their piece of paper.
8. Have students take turns rolling the paint onto the silicone replica and stamping one fish on their paper.
9. Place the artwork in a safe place to dry using the clothespins and drying line.
10. Once the paint is dry, have students draw a home (habitat) for their fish using pencil crayons on their piece of paper. Students should include the elements that their fish needs to survive (air, water, food, heat, shelter, and space). Students can also add fish habitat restoration features such as a brush bundle or aquatic vegetation.
11. Assign students into different groups of four that have at least one of each fish species. Have them share with their group which type of fish they have and what its home looks like.