

# Table of Contents

## Setting the Scene

The Environment ..... 5

## Introducing the Characters

The Animals ..... 25

## Pictures of the Future

Doing Our Part ..... 53

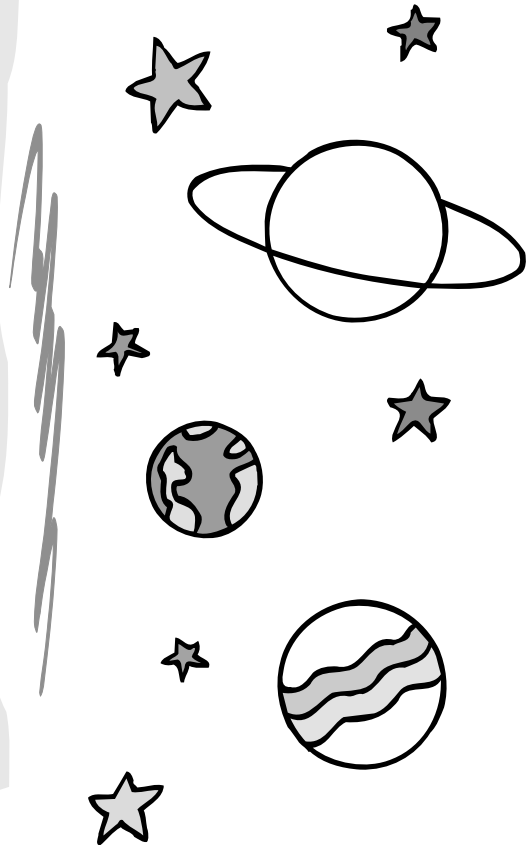


# Setting the Scene

## The Environment

### Discussion

Tell the children that when you look up at the night sky you see planets, stars and empty space. We are looking at all these things from our planet—the Earth. The Earth is our home in space. It provides us with all we need to live and grow. Discuss some of the essential things that we do need to live and grow, such as heat and light from the sun, water, air, etc. More than likely the children will mention cities, cars, toys, houses and other man-made places and objects. Acknowledge that man has made many changes on the Earth. (Section 3, "Pictures of the Future," deals with this issue in depth.) However, before man, the Earth itself was changing very slowly over time and it continues to do so. Discuss what the Earth was like long ago compared to today. Talk about prehistoric animals, habitats, climate, etc. Use the key words below to guide the discussion.



### Key Words

- **environment:** The world around us including the sun, water, air, habitats, etc.
- **habitats:** Places where plants and animals have all they need to live. A habitat can be as small as a twig or as large as:
  - 1) A *rain forest* which is a thick forest often found in hot, damp places around the middle of the Earth (the equator).
  - 2) A *desert* which is usually hot, dry and sandy with few plants and little water.
  - 3) An *ocean* which is a huge body of water.
  - 4) A *prairie* which is mostly covered by grasses and has good soil for growing crops.
  - 5) A *swamp* which is a wetland or marsh where the ground is wet and spongy.
  - 6) A *mountain* which is a part of the Earth that reaches hundreds of feet into the air, often capped with snow.
- **climate:** The usual pattern of weather over many years (i.e., cold climate at the poles; hot, wet climate at the equator and milder conditions in between).

# Setting the Scene

## The Environment

### Crafts

- Mountain Habitat, page 8.
- Tropical Rain Forest Habitat, pages 9-17.

### Enrichment/Language Activities

#### Science Lab/Study Center

- This center should be set up, built upon and maintained throughout all studies and activities in this book.

#### Suggested Materials

2 small, leafy plants in pots  
small paper bag  
1 stalk celery  
food coloring  
glass jar  
candle  
jar with cover  
large jar with cover  
ice  
1 plastic sandwich bag for each child  
sphagnum moss (air plant)  
magnifying glass  
box of sand  
small cactus  
small rocks or pebbles

#### Resource Materials

- Magazines such as *National Geographic*, *Ranger Rick* and *Smithsonian*. Books from the library on habitats.

### Suggested Activities & Experiments for Children

1. Children make habitat collages. (See "Mail," page 21.)
2. To demonstrate that plants absorb water, fill a glass with water, add food coloring and place a celery stalk in the glass. Watch the celery drink water.
3. To demonstrate the importance of water to life, make a hydroponic garden. (See "Mail," page 23.)
4. To demonstrate the water cycle on Earth, fill a large jar half full with ice cubes and cover it. Children will observe drops of water forming on the outside of the jar. Explain that, as the ice melts and the water becomes warmer, it changes to a vapor or gas. As the vapor cools, it changes back to a liquid.
5. To demonstrate the importance of the sun to life, cover one plant completely with the paper bag or place plant in a dark closet and allow second plant to be exposed to the sunlight. Observe the differences in the plants in one or two weeks.

# Setting the Scene

## The Environment

6. To demonstrate the existence of air, light a candle in a jar and then cover. Observe what happens to the flame as oxygen is used up.
7. Children collect seeds in plastic bags (apple, orange, bean, popcorn, etc.). Seeds may be planted and studied.
8. Children examine sphagnum moss, other plants, leaves and collected seeds with a magnifying glass.
9. Children make and care for a "desert habitat." Place a small cacti in a box of sand along with some small rocks or pebbles.
10. Study pictures of various habitats using resource books.

### Booklet

- Worksheets are presented in each of the three sections of this book. Make a cover to keep them in using wallpaper that is either textured or printed with flowers, ferns, etc. See pages 18-20 for specific "Setting the Scene" worksheets.

### Mail Call

#### Suggested Materials

- |                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| paper                             | envelopes    |
| small bags                        | boxes        |
| cards                             | tape         |
| string                            | rubber bands |
| stickers or other types of stamps |              |

#### Preparation

- Set up a classroom "mailbox" and pick a day of the week to be Mail Day. Each week appoint a student to be the mail carrier. The mail may be either individual letters, cards, packages or one letter, card or package for the class. Address as you would any letter or package. See pages 21-23 for specific "Setting the Scene" mail.

#### Snack Time

- See page 24 for recipes.

