

Succession

Grade Level: 5-7

Teaching Methods: Analysis, Classification, Data Collection, Discussion, Investigation, Observation, Small Group

Time:

- Preparation Time: 1 hour
- Activity Time: 2 hours

Materials:

Activity I

- Stake wire flags
- Flagging tape
- Flip chart
- Markers—at least two different colors
- Per Group
 - Soil thermometer
 - Air thermometer
 - Light meter
 - Anemometer
 - Trowel
 - Ruler
- Beginner field guides or make a common plants and animals handout (see Getting Ready)
- *Community Claims* worksheet
- Clip boards
- Pencils

Activity II

- *Stages of Succession* worksheet
- Clipboards
- Pencils

Park Location:

Activity I—An area where two different stages of succession meet and show a gradual change from one community to another.

Activity II—An area with different successional stages other than those in Activity I.

Pre/Post Lessons:

- Pre-visit: Mapping Communities
- Post-visit: Signs of Succession

Summary:

Students investigate different stages of succession to identify their characteristics and learn that one community gradually replaces another.

Objectives:

- Students will identify at least two characteristics of different successional communities.
- Students will describe the features of an area where two communities meet and overlap.
- Students will define the term succession.
- Students will recognize six different ecological zones of succession found on Presque Isle.

PA Environment & Ecology Standards:

4.6.7. Ecosystems and their Interactions

- A. Explain the flows of energy and matter from organism to organism within an ecosystem.
- C. Explain how ecosystems change over time.

4.7.7. Threatened, Endangered and Extinct Species

- A. Describe diversity of plants and animals in ecosystems.
- B. Explain how species of living organisms adapt to their environment.

PA Science & Technology Standards:

3.2.7. Inquiry and Design

- B. Apply process knowledge to make and interpret observations.

3.3.7. Biological Sciences

- A. Describe the similarities and differences that characterize diverse living things.

3.7.7. Technological Devices

- B. Use appropriate instruments and apparatus to study materials.

Other PA Standards:

- Geography
- Mathematics
- Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening

Background:

With the passage of time, natural communities change. Old fields become

