

Instructional Recipe

Is it Alive?

Kindergarten, First Grade
 Science, Language Arts

Step 1 – Ask

Objectives: Students will classify organisms according to their physical characteristics. Students will distinguish between living and nonliving things. Students will identify living and nonliving things in their environment.



“Echinacea with bee.” Online Photograph. EBSCO Image Collection. 13 Oct. 2008 <
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=imh&AN=imh214874&site=srck5-live>>.

Introduction: Show students a variety of pictures of living things, including fish, insects, birds, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and plants. Include a few pictures of non-living things, such as household items, buildings, rocks, etc. Ask teams of students to sort the objects into groups that are the same. Ask each group of students to explain why they sorted the pictures the way they did. Then, ask students which of the pictures show things that are alive? Ask students to sort the items again. This time make two groups—living and nonliving.

Use the EBSCO Image Collection to locate the photographs you need. These may be printed, cut out, and distributed to groups of students for the sorting activity.

Ask:

- ★ What are some examples of living things?
- ★ What are some examples of nonliving things?
- ★ How can you tell if something is alive?
- ★ What are the characteristics of living things?

Vocabulary:

- ★ living
- ★ nonliving

Science TEKS:

(K.6) **Science concepts.** (A) sort organisms and objects into groups according to their parts and describe how the groups are formed;

(K.8) **Science concepts.** (A) identify a particular organisms or object as living or nonliving; and (B) group organisms and objects as living and nonliving;

(1.6) **Science concepts.** (A) sort organisms and objects according to their parts and characteristics;

(1.8) **Science concepts.** (A) group living organisms and nonliving objects; and (B) compare living organisms and nonliving objects.

Technology Application TEKS:

(2) **Foundations.** (A) use a variety of input devices such as mouse, keyboard, disk drive, modem, voice/sound recorder, scanner, digital video, CD-ROM, or touch screen.

(7) **Solving problems.** (A) use software programs with audio, video, and graphics to enhance learning experiences; and (B) use appropriate software, including the use of word processing and multimedia, to express ideas and solve problems.

(10) **Communication.** (A) use font attributes, color, white space, and graphics to ensure that products are appropriate for the defined audience; and (B) use font attributes, color, white space, and graphics to ensure that products are appropriate for the communication media including multimedia screen displays and printed materials.

(11) **Communication.** (A) publish information in a variety of media including, but not limited to, printed copy or monitor display

Step 2 – Investigate

Read the following articles with students. You may wish to print a copy of “Which Are Living Things?” for students to complete as a quiz.

K-12 Database Resources:

- ★ [Living Things Grow](#). Weekly Reader - Pre K, Sep2003, p3-6, 4p; (AN 10565917)
- ★ [Look at Other Living Thing!](#) Weekly Reader - Edition K, Sep2004, p2-2, 1p, 5c; (AN 14228668)
- ★ [Which Are Living Things?](#) Weekly Reader - Edition K, Sep2004, p4-4, 1p, 1c; (AN 14228671)

Books:

- ★ Zoehfeld, Kathleen Weidner & Wescott, Nadine Bernard. [What’s Alive? \(Let’s Read and Find Out Science 1\)](#). New York: Harper Trophy, 1995.



Step 3 – Create

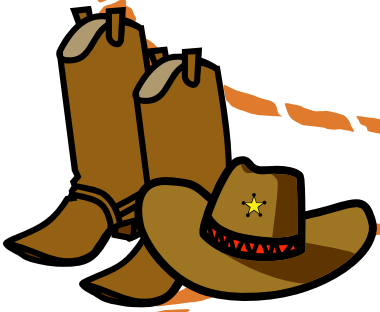
Have students re-group their photographs of living and non-living objects. Do they need to move any objects into a different group? When all of the students in the group agree that each photograph is in the correct category, they can glue the pictures onto a sheet of construction paper. They should label each group as living or nonliving.

Allow groups to share their work. Go over correct answers with the entire class to make sure that students agree and understand why each object was classified a certain way.

🔗 Technology Link – Images could be displayed using an interactive whiteboard and a projector. Students can move the objects on the screen into two different groups.

Step 4 – Discuss

- ★ Students will make their own poster of living organisms and nonliving objects found in their environment. Students may draw pictures of objects they see at school or at their home. They should label each group as living and nonliving. They should also include an explanation of how they know the difference between a living and nonliving thing. This explanation could be dictated to the teacher.
- 🔗 Technology Link – Students could use a digital camera to take pictures of items at school (with adult supervision). The pictures could be assembled into a slideshow or printed out to display on a poster. Students could also use a drawing program, such as Kid Pix to draw their own pictures.



Step 5 – Reflect

Allow students to present their projects to the rest of the class. Use the following suggested rubric to assess the students' work. Make sure that the students are familiar with the rubric *before* they begin creating their project. They should refer to the rubric repeatedly to monitor their progress in creating their project.

🔗 Technology Link: You can also create your own rubric with your students at <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>.

Poster of Living and Nonliving Things

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Identification of Living Things	Student correctly identified 7 or more living things.	Student correctly identified 5-6 living things.	Student correctly identified 3 -4 living things.	Student correctly identified only 1-2 living things.
Identification of Nonliving Things	Student correctly identified 7 or more nonliving things.	Student correctly identified 5-6 nonliving things.	Student correctly identified 3 -4 nonliving things.	Student correctly identified only 1-2 nonliving things.
Explanation	Student explained at least 3 ways to distinguish between living and nonliving things.	Student explained 2 ways to distinguish between living and nonliving things.	Student explained only 1 way to distinguish between living and nonliving things.	Student could not explain how to distinguish between living and nonliving things.
Attractiveness	The poster is exceptionally attractive in terms of design, layout, and neatness.	The poster is attractive in terms of design, layout and neatness.	The poster is acceptably attractive though it may be a bit messy.	The poster is distractingly messy or very poorly designed. It is not attractive.