

What Comprises an Ecosystem? A Good Introductory Lesson

Activate prior knowledge and teach observational skills with an ecosystem bulletin board:

- Make a bulletin board with just a few ecosystem anchors on it. For a forest ecosystem, you can use trees. A wetland could contain cattails or another native species.
- Take your students on a walk in that ecosystem. The students should bring notebooks to list what they see and hear (remember: there are many living and non-living elements to every ecosystem).
- Compile a list of everything in the ecosystem. Students choose items they want to color or cut out of construction paper.
- Create your bulletin board!
- Discuss all the different elements of your ecosystem. For a forest, you might include soils, leaf litter, and food webs as well as oxygen and carbon dioxide.

