

Help Wanted!

What is a niche?
 What is a community?
 What is adaptation?

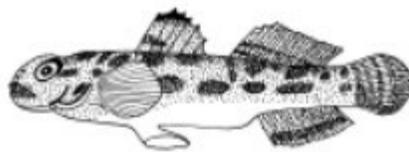
Objective

This activity will help students understand the term niche. Students write a newspaper-style want-ad looking for an organism to fill a certain niche.

Preparation

Have an example of a newspaper style “want-ad”.

Example: Black-necked Stilt—Elegant individual needed to probe into mudflats and feed on small mud creatures. Must enjoy the outdoors and be able to withstand long hours standing in salt water. Webbed feet, long legs, and long bill a plus. Formal dress (tuxedo, white shirt) required. 1-800-664-BIRD



Bay Goby—Excellent swimmer needed to live and work on the bottom of San Francisco Bay. Main responsibility will be eating plankton and detritus. Experience with camouflage required, prefer tan and olive colors. Must be able to recognize and avoid egrets, herons, and terns. 510-555-FISH

Delivery

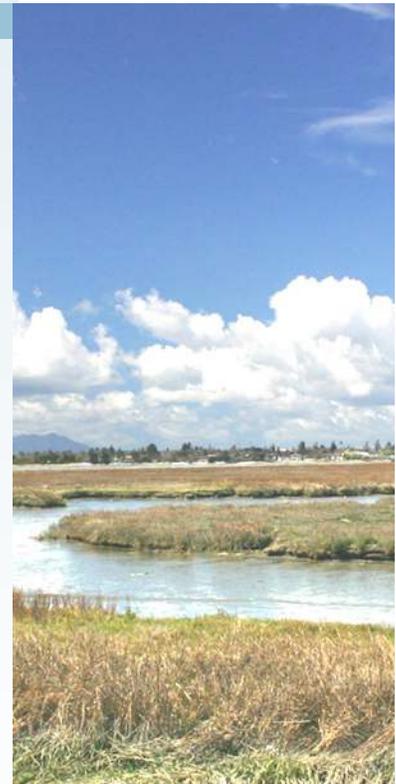
Students will choose an organism that lives in the San Francisco Bay (see Life in the Bay for species list). After researching the organism using reference books and the Internet, they will write a 30-50 word in the style of the want ads in the newspaper. The ads should describe the following:

1. The role of the organism in its habitat, including activities and relationships
2. How the organism finds food
3. How the organism protects itself
4. Where the organism lives
5. Its position in the food chain
6. Any unique features of its activities or relationships

Debrief

What did the students find interesting?

Instruct students to piece together a food chain using their organisms. Discuss the niche of each organism to understand its place in the food chain.



Theme

Ecology – Biodiversity & Food webs

Age

Grades 6-12

Duration

45-60 mins

Materials

Books and resources containing information on Bay Area flora and fauna

Writing utensils
 Paper

Standards

NGSS: LS3-A; 4-LS1; 3-LS4;
 EP&C: P3:CB-C

Vocabulary

Niche: the place or function of a given organism within its ecosystem

Community: an interacting group of various species in a common location

Adaptation: Physical or behavioral change a species makes to survive