



Muck, Snails and Rails



Pre-class Activity

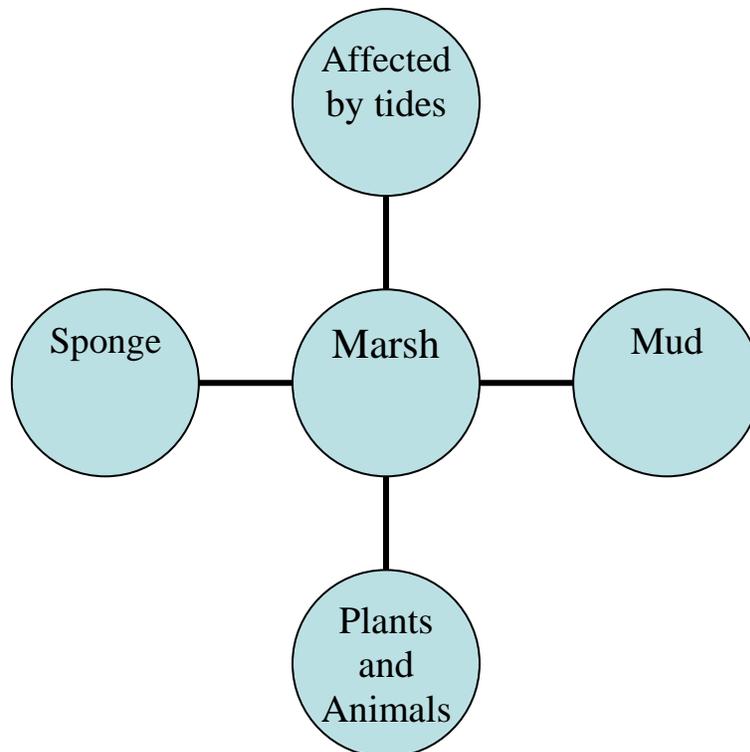
Marsh Splat

Introduction: During this activity, the students and the teacher will work together by writing what they know about a marsh on the board. Writing ideas on the board gives all the students a chance to see a variety of words.

Directions: Write the word **MARSH** in the middle of the board. Then ask the students what they know about a marsh. One by one the students can come up and write their ideas (try to keep it two words or less) on the board around the **MARSH** topic, or you can call on one student at a time. In the end, the topic **MARSH** will be in the middle with all the students' ideas around the topic.

If you would like to add an aspect of group work and creativity to the activity, they could work in pairs or singly to write their ideas on a piece of paper. They could even get artistic and draw on them or shape their paper.

Here are some ideas that will get you and the students out of a rut...





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Post-class Activity

Marsh Swat!

Introduction: During the activity, the students will have a chance to work as a team or alone to test their knowledge of a marsh. Using a shower curtain game board, students will swat the letters to the answers from the questions you ask them.

Materials: Shower curtain, fly swatter, permanent marker

Directions:

- 1) Take the shower curtain and create a game board out of it by drawing squares for each of the letters of the alphabet. For younger ages, put the letters in order of the alphabet, for older students mix the letters up on the board.
- 2) You can split the students into teams or have them play alone. If you have them play alone, you can make Popsicle sticks with their names on them and pull them out for their turn. If the students are on teams, they can converse before they answer the question.
- 3) When it is a student's turn, you will read a question aloud. They have to answer the question by swatting the letters with the fly swatter to make up their word or words.

Questions:

- 1) What is the marsh affected by four times a day? (tides)
- 2) What is the mud that contains all the nutrients? (detritus)
- 3) The marsh helps prevent flooding during a hurricane because it acts like what object? (sponge)
- 4) What does the marsh serve as for many baby animals? (nursery)
- 5) What is the name of the grass that makes up most of the marsh? (*Spartina alterniflora*, a.k.a. smooth cordgrass)
- 6) What type of zone is a marsh? (intertidal and/or transition)
- 7) What is the name of the river that creates St. Simons intertidal zone? (Frederica River)
- 8) What is the name of the type of forest that often borders a marsh? (maritime forest)
- 9) What type of animal is often seen around a marsh? (birds, crabs, fish, raccoons, etc.)
- 10) What is the area called that is a vital piece in the protection of land and, due to its nutrient content, contains many plants and animals? (marsh)
- 11) What is the transition from the marsh ecosystem through the maritime forest ecosystem called? (succession)