

Muck, Snails and Rails

Pre-class Activity

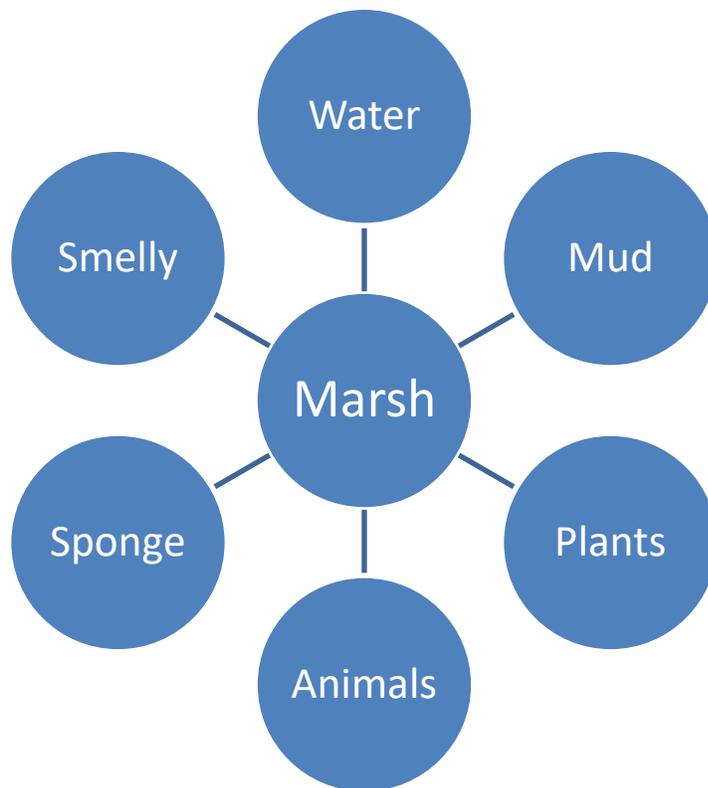


Marsh Splat

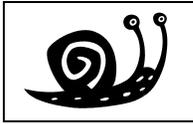
Introduction: During this activity, the students and the teacher will work together by writing what they know about a marsh on the board. Writing ideas on the board gives all the students a chance to see a variety of words.

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. 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 on a piece of paper their ideas. 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...



Once there are several words written around **MARSH**, discuss why they wrote these words and give examples of the word (such as examples of animals and plants in a marsh). If students don't know, take time to look up pictures of a Georgia marsh and research a little bit about the marshes we have here.



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Post-class Activity

A Muddy Game Show!

Introduction: During the activity, the students will have a chance to work as a team to test their knowledge of the tidal salt marsh. Students will use buzzers to answer the questions the teacher asks them. Students have to answer the question as soon as they buzz in.

Materials: Some sorts of buzzers and score keeper

Questions in no particular order:

- 1) What is the marsh affected by four times a day?.....Tides
- 2) What's another name for 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 ocean animals?..... Nursery ground
- 5) What is the name of the grass that makes up most of the marsh? Smooth cordgrass or Spartina
- 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, mussels, 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 in plants from the marsh ecosystem up through the maritime forest ecosystem called?.....Succession
- 12) Name four reasons why the marsh is an important habitat to animals or humans.
 - Acts as nursery ground for animals
 - Slows shoreline erosion
 - Offers shelter and resting sites for migratory birds
 - Absorbs excess nutrients that would lower oxygen levels in the sea and harm wildlife
- 13) Why does the mud smell wonderfully good? ...Hypoxia/ Methane/ Sulfurous rotten-egg smell
- 14) What are three major components of wetland ecosystems? Water, living organisms, and soils
- 15) What type of water is in the tidal salt marsh at Driftwood? Brackish
- 16) Name five varieties of wetland systems? Lagoon, marsh, bog, swamp, vernal pool, etc.