

## Welcome to My Neck of the Woods!

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**Subject/Course:** Life Science

**Suggested Grade Level:** 3rd

**Duration:** 2 weeks

**Materials:** Internet connection, tablets, desktop computer with Adobe Flash Player, books on Georgia's regions, craft materials (e.g. clay, paint, markers, glue, scissors, popsicle sticks, construction paper, pipe cleaners, any recyclable items, etc.)

**Science Standards:**

S3L1. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about the similarities and differences between plants, animals, and habitats found within geographic regions (*Blue Ridge Mountains, Piedmont, Coastal Plains, Valley and Ridge, and Appalachian Plateau*) of Georgia.

- a. Ask questions to differentiate between plants, animals, and habitats found within Georgia's geographic regions.
- c. Use evidence to construct an explanation of why some organisms can thrive in one habitat and not in another.

**Visual Art**

VA3.CR.1 Engage in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas by using subject matter and symbols to communicate meaning.

- c. Produce multiple prototypes in the planning stages for a work of art (e.g. sketches, 3D models).

VA3.CN.2 Integrate information from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of works of art.

- a. Apply art skills and knowledge to improve understanding in other disciplines.

**Connection to Literacy Standards**

ELAGSE4W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

ELAGSE4W4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience

ELAGSE4W7: Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

ELAGSE4SL1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (*one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led*) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

ELAGSE4SL4: Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

**Cross-Cutting Concept:**

6. **Structure and function.** The way in which an object or living thing is shaped and its substructure determine many of its properties and functions.

**Teacher Background:** Encompassing five distinct geographic regions, Georgia occupies an ecologically diverse region of the United States. It stretches from the southern reaches of Appalachia to the Atlantic coast, covering nearly 60,000 square miles in dense forest, mountains, and rolling lowlands. Each of Georgia's five regions presents a distinct type of ecosystem, providing abundant habitat for numerous plant and animals species. These different regions support an abundance of tree species, with approximately 250 native tree species occurring in the state.

**Resources:**

- <http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/forest-management/>
- <http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/topics/geography/article/geographic-regions-of-georgia>

**Lesson Objective:** Students will use their research skills to investigate and report on the various plants and animals that live within Georgia's geographic regions (*Blue Ridge Mountains, Piedmont, Coastal Plains, Valley and Ridge, and Appalachian Plateau*). Students will use the knowledge they have gained throughout the lesson to create a 3D model that represents the plants and animals that live within one of Georgia's regions and present it to their classmates.

**Driving Question:** What are the different kinds of plants and animals found within Georgia's five regions?

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### Engagement (1 day):

- Present the [Georgia Habitats and Regions](#) Power Point to students and discuss.
- After viewing the Power Point, ask students, “What is a habitat?” “What makes where you live a habitat?” “How do you survive in your habitat?”
- Allow students to draw pictures of their home, showing all the rooms, things that surround their home, and places they go within a normal week.
- Allow students to show their picture to a partner and describe their habitat.
- Have students spend some time simulating building a habitat by going to Build An Online Habitat at <http://switchzoo.com/games/habitatgame.htm>

### Exploration (2-3 weeks):

- Inquiry questions: What is an ecosystem? What things (plants, animals, rocks, etc.) exist in an ecosystem? What are the geographic regions of Georgia? What types of habitats exist within each Georgia region? What type of climate exists within each region? Which animals can be found in each of Georgia’s regions? Which plants and trees create the forests found in each of Georgia’s regions?
- Review the [Georgia Habitats and Regions](#) Power Point.
- Post a [blank map](#) of Georgia with the geographic regions drawn and work together to identify the regions.
- Discuss that the Appalachian Plateau, Valley and Ridge, and Blue Ridge Mountain regions are all mountainous regions with higher elevation, cooler temperatures, clear and fast moving rivers, etc. You may also draw attention to the fact that the Atlantic Ocean borders our state and designate that on your map. Draw in the Okefenokee Swamp area on the map within the Coastal Plain region. Draw attention to the diversity of our state by discussing the fact that we have mountains, coastal areas, swamps, and hilly areas all in one state. Ask the students how that fact might impact the types of living things that we find in each area (temperature, soil type, water sources, elevation, population).
- Employ the help of the school’s media specialist to teach students how to conduct proper research using age-appropriate websites and how to use presentation tools (e.g. Google slides, SeeSaw, SWAY, Power Point, etc.)
- Place students in groups and assign each group one of the five Georgia regions to explore and research.
- Teacher will guide groups, research using the inquiry questions (stated above).
- Students will use books, tablets, or desktop computers to engage in research based on their assigned region.
- This is a student-led activity, allow students to independently conduct their own research and gather information.
- Using the information gathered, groups will create a 3D model of their Georgia region that will showcase the type of plants and animals that live within that region.

### Explanation (1 day):

- Groups will present their research and 3D model on their assigned Georgia region to the class.
- While groups are presenting, individual students will complete the [Regions of Georgia](#) documentation sheet covering each of the five regions.
- After all groups presented their region, students will compare and contrast their regions (plants, animals, characteristics, etc.) with one of the other regions.
- Students should be able to observe: What are some similarities between each region? What are some differences between each region? What features in the regions allow plants and animals to survive in the particular region? Why might an animal, plant or tree not survive in another region other than the region where it is found?

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### Elaboration (1-2 days):

- Students will review Georgia's five regions by working in groups to complete the [Georgia Plant and Animal Sort](#).
- Using what they know about each of Georgia's five region, students will individually design a new plant or animal that will have the adaptations necessary to survive in a Georgia habitat of their choosing.
- Students will identify the needs of their plant or animal and justify why their plant or animal is best suited for the habitat they have chosen.

### Evaluation (throughout the lesson):

- [Georgia's Regions checkpoint](#)
- Teacher will monitor the research work of students and assist when necessary.
- [Habitats of Georgia](#) documentation sheet.
- Teacher will evaluate group's presentation using the [Georgia's Regions Presentation rubric](#).
- Teacher will check group work on the [Georgia Plant and Animal Sort](#).
- Teacher will evaluate students' design of a new plant or animal for a specific Georgia region for accuracy.