

## Comments on teaching this lesson –Jenny Willmer

I was able to implement the mangrove ecosystem lesson this spring with a class of 26 third grade students as well as with a small group of fourth grade students. The students really enjoyed the video clip of the mangrove (I only showed the longer one) and the photos of the animals living in a mangrove. It sparked their interest for further learning about the mangrove habitat itself, as well as the diverse animal life found in this ecosystem.

I guided the students through the TIDES site--the pictures and video as a whole group. This information is excellent when directed by a teacher, but I wouldn't expect them to utilize it independently. The related links were especially helpful to me as a resource for further information to share with the students. The TIDES Wetlands link was especially interesting to the students when diagramming food chains and writing from an animal's perspective.

Each teacher obviously needs to decide which elements of the lesson suits their class' needs the best. I decided to utilize the worksheet as a whole class discussion, with students individually diagramming various food chains. This lesson could easily take a week or more to implement, depending how in depth you choose to pursue the topic of mangroves, and the life within this ecosystem.

Several students chose to write a letter for the preservation of mangroves. Here is one suggestion for mailing:

Earth Island Institute  
300 Broadway, Suite 28  
San Francisco, CA 94133-3312

The students didn't want to just write the letters--they wanted their voices heard!