Plant and Animal Classification Lab Instructions

Purpose: To observe and classify Virginia-native organisms to determine the location within a habitat that the organism would be most likely to thrive.

Materials:

- One bean sprout
- Moss-covered bark
- Index cards
- Popsicle stick
- Tape/glue
- Colored pencils
- Blue play-doh
- Preconstructed habitat (soil in a clear plastic container)

Procedure:

1. Divide into groups of four or five students.
2. Within your group, assign each person one of the following combinations:
    a. one nonvascular plant and one vascular plant
    b. one vertebrate and one invertebrate
    c. one each, from two of the following groups: mammals, fish, birds, reptiles, or amphibians
3. Complete rows 1-4 on the lab sheet observation table.
4. Draw one of the organisms you classified on your index card.
5. Label the card with your name, the name of the organism, and its classification.
6. Tape/glue a popsicle stick to the back of the card so that it can be placed in the habitat.
7. Once your group has completed steps 1-6, raise your hand to receive a habitat from your teacher.
8. Have one group member make a water feature (lake, river, stream, etc.) out of blue Play-doh for your habitat.
9. Send another member to choose one vascular bean plant seedling from the location designated by your teacher.
10. Choose another member of your group to plant the seedling upon their return. Make a small hole in the soil and carefully place the dirt pod in the hole with the shoot system facing up.
11. Water the seedling and press the soil around the plant down it to ensure that it is firmly planted.
12. Once the bean sprout is planted, send a group member to get a piece of moss-covered bark.
13. Place the moss-covered bark near you water feature and use your spray bottle to moisten the moss.
14. Complete row five on your observation table.
15. Place your organism in the habitat in the location you described in row five.
16. If time allows, draw your group's completed habitat and label the organisms, water, and soil.
17. Submit your completed observation table and drawing to your teacher.