Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration

Name:

Intro: Aquatic ecosystems play a major role in our biosphere. Later this spring some of us will have an opportunity to carry out ecological habitat restoration. We will begin reconstructing three different types of aquatic habitats: freshwater, brackish water, and salt water. We will be replanting aquatic vegetation. These plants are considered to be producers. They make their own energy through photosynthesis. These plants will produce food, shelter, and oxygen; while helping to cut down on erosion at the same time.

Directions: Based off of our discussion in Biology regarding ecosystems, food webs, and food chains; you will select an aquatic ecosystem to restore and identify four organisms that would establish a balanced ecosystem.

At Shedd Aquarium:

- Choose an aquatic habitat (i.e. brackish, salt water, freshwater)
- Observe the different organisms within a habitat
- Describe the habitat (i.e. rocky, sandy, coral)
- Select 4 organisms
- Once you have chosen an organism what else is in the tank with it? (i.e. other species, plants)
- Describe relationships with the other organisms (i.e. fish using plants for shelter)
- Provide justification for those organisms being restocked into that habitat. Provide rationale regarding herbivores, omnivores, and carnivores, and predator/prey relationships.

Why do you think predator and prey would be separated in an aquarium?

Suggestions while at Shedd:

- Obtain as much information regarding each organism and its place within the habitat.
- Observe characteristics of the habitat
- Create a sketch of each organism to use on your diagram.

Back at School:

- Once you get back to school, you will construct your diagram of the newly reconstructed habitat.
- Be prepared to share your habitat, organisms, and their relationships with the rest of the class.