**Class Task: Observation Sheet**

**Instructions**

1. Look around your study site. What do you see, hear, smell? Describe and analyse what you observe.

2. Where is your local study site in relation to your school? Is it in an urban, suburban, or rural area?

3. Approximately how big is your study site (in feet or meters)?

4. Identify some examples of the five major components of the Earth system:

* Atmosphere (air, including wind, clouds, and precipitation):
* Hydrosphere (water):
* Lithosphere (soil):
* Biosphere (living things):
* Cryosphere (ice):

5. Identify and record connections among the five components of the Earth system by: making observations; recalling and integrating your existing knowledge about them; and speculating carefully about the connections that might be taking place.

Record your answers in the table on the next page.

An excellent list of interconnections will be long; it will involve all five of the components; it will be specific; it will bring in your knowledge from previous studies in other classes as well as this one; and it will show that you are thinking deeply and carefully about your study site.

**Tips, Questions, and Comments to Get You Thinking**

• Write down your observations as short phrases. Use verbs. Example: Leaves fall, decompose, and become part of the soil.

• Write down as many interconnections as you can think of. Be as specific as you can. You can even use general quantities, such as “a little,” “some,” or “a lot.”

• Examples of questions you might consider: What happens in the soil that changes the characteristics of the living things at the site? What happens in the water that changes the characteristics of the air? What moves from one study site component to another?

• It may help your thinking to compare this place to others. What’s happening at this site that doesn’t happen somewhere else? How is this one different? What about soil characteristics? Different kinds of plants? Less water, or more?

• After you’ve made an initial list, look it over. Be sure you have described examples at the study site for each of the five components. Is each of them acting upon each of the other three in at least two or three ways?

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| --- | --- |
| Hydrosphere – Atmosphere | Hydrosphere - Biosphere |
| Hydrosphere - Lithosphere | Atmosphere - Biosphere |
| Atmosphere – Lithosphere | Biosphere – Lithosphere |
| Cryosphere – Atmosphere | Cryosphere - Lithosphere |
| Cryosphere - Hydrosphere | Cryosphere – Biosphere |