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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1980 Volume V: Man and the Environment

The Evolution of Plants

Guide for Curriculum Unit 80.05.01
by Stephen P. Broker

This five week unit may be used in its entirety, or it may provide useful suggestions for a greatly reduced treatment of the subject. The evolution of plants is treated primarily in terms of a consideration of the concepts of time and change, and an appreciation of the great diversity of life on earth today. Classroom activities are provided which help the student in comprehending the vast periods of time during which the earth has been around, and during which life has had the opportunity to undergo change. There is a brief review of the major divisions of plant life on earth today, as well as in the past. The major trends of evolution in plants are mentioned, and suggestions are given as to how the teacher can follow one or more of these trends with classroom work. Particular emphasis is given to plant fossils, the study of fossil-containing material, the preparation of herbarium sheets for present day plants. Three excellent sets of slides are available to assist in teaching the unit. Suggestions are given for field trips which further enhance the study of this topic.

(Recommended for Biology, 9th and 10th grade level, and Botany, 11th and 12th grade level.)

Key Words

Plants Archeology Evolution Biology Ecology Environmental Science New Haven Connecticut Geological History

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