

Core Skills Analysis

Science (Biology and Ecology)

- Madalin learned how to research and identify reptile-safe plants, distinguishing between safe and harmful species in a terrarium environment.
- She explored the concept of environmental requirements for reptiles, such as humidity, temperature, and light, building an understanding of habitat needs.
- Madalin applied comparative analysis skills by matching different reptiles to appropriate plants based on their unique environmental preferences.
- She developed observational skills by reviewing real plants and assessing their suitability for the terrarium ecosystem.

Critical Thinking and Research Skills

- Madalin practiced evaluating reliable information sources to determine which plants were safe for reptiles.
- She used problem-solving strategies by considering multiple factors and making informed decisions about how to construct a suitable terrarium environment.
- This activity strengthened her ability to synthesize information from research to practical application.

Tips

To deepen Madalin's understanding of reptile habitats, encourage her to create a detailed terrarium project, incorporating the plants and reptiles she researched. She could document how specific plant characteristics meet the needs of certain reptiles, enhancing critical thinking and biology knowledge. Another extension involves observing and recording changes in the terrarium environment over time, noting how the plants and reptiles interact. Integrating a field trip to a local zoo or nature center with reptile exhibits could give her first-hand experience. Finally, she might write a short report or presentation explaining her choices, reinforcing communication and research skills.

Book Recommendations

- [The Reptile Keeper's Handbook](#) by Simon Permutt: A practical guide to reptile care, providing detailed information on habitat requirements and safe plants for terrariums.
- [Terrariums for Reptiles and Amphibians](#) by Mark A. O'Shea: This book offers insights into creating ideal terrarium environments and understanding the ecological needs of reptiles and amphibians.
- [Life in the Rainforest](#) by Katherine Byrne: A kid-friendly introduction to the ecosystems reptiles live in, focusing on biodiversity and environmental needs.

Learning Standards

- NGSS MS-LS2-1: Analyze and interpret data to provide evidence for the effects of resource availability on organisms and populations of organisms in an ecosystem.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.7: Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.3: Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text.
- NGSS MS-LS4-4: Construct an explanation based on evidence that describes how environmental and genetic factors influence the growth of organisms.

Try This Next

- Worksheet: Create a matching activity pairing common reptiles with their suitable plants and

environmental needs.

- Writing prompt: Describe how you would design a terrarium for a specific reptile, including plants and care conditions.