

# Lesson Plan: Minecraft Biome in a Box

## Materials Needed:

- A shoebox or small cardboard box
- Construction paper (blue, green, brown, tan, white)
- Child-safe scissors
- Glue stick and/or white school glue
- Crayons or markers
- **Craft & "Block" Materials (choose based on biome):**
  - **Forest Biome:** Twigs, green pom-poms or crumpled tissue paper for leaves, small rocks, brown blocks or paper towel tubes for tree trunks.
  - **Desert Biome:** Sand or yellow/tan construction paper torn into small pieces, small rocks, green pipe cleaners to bend into cacti.
  - **Snowy Biome:** Cotton balls, white paint, silver glitter, white or light blue pom-poms.
- Optional: Small toy animals that fit the biome (e.g., a toy wolf for a forest, a toy fox for a snowy biome).
- Optional: Building blocks (like LEGOs or wooden cubes) for creating structures.

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## 1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Identify one or two key features of a specific natural environment (biome). (e.g., "Forests have lots of trees," "Deserts are sandy.")
- Sort materials by color and texture to represent elements like water, grass, or sand.
- Demonstrate fine motor skills by cutting (with help), gluing, and placing small objects to build a diorama.
- Express creativity by making choices about how to represent their chosen Minecraft biome.

## 2. Alignment with Early Learning Domains

- **Cognition & General Knowledge:** Understanding basic concepts about the natural world (biomes).
- **Approaches to Learning:** Demonstrating creativity, persistence, and making choices.
- **Fine Motor Development:** Practicing grasping, pinching, gluing, and placing objects.
- **Language and Communication:** Using words to describe their creation and the environment it represents.

## 3. Instructional Steps (The Lesson)

### Part 1: Engage & Explore (5 minutes)

The goal here is to spark curiosity and connect to the student's interest in Minecraft.

1. **Start with a question:** "When you play Minecraft, what are some of your favorite places to explore? Is it the forest with all the trees, the sandy desert, or maybe a snowy place?"
2. **Look at examples (optional, screen-free):** If you have books about nature, quickly look at

pictures of a forest, a desert, and a snowy landscape. Ask, "What do you see in this forest? What color is the desert sand?" This helps connect the game concept to the real world.

3. **Introduce the project:** "Today, we are going to be master builders, just like in Minecraft! You get to choose one of these places—a forest, a desert, or a snowy land—and we are going to build it right here in this box. Which biome do you want to build?"

## Part 2: Build Your World (15-20 minutes)

This is the hands-on, creative part of the lesson. Guide your student, but let them lead the creative process.

1. **Prepare the Box:** Ask, "What does the ground and sky look like in your biome?" Help the student choose construction paper and glue it to the inside of the box to create a background (e.g., blue for the sky, green for forest floor, tan for desert sand).
2. **Sort the "Blocks":** Lay out the craft materials. Say, "Let's find all our building blocks. Which of these things look like wood for trees? Which look like snow?" Have the student group the materials. This is a simple sorting activity.
3. **Start Building:** Encourage the student to start creating the scene. Ask guiding questions to stimulate problem-solving:
  - "How can we make a tree? Let's use this twig for the trunk. What can we use for the leaves?" (Guide them to the green pom-poms or tissue paper).
  - "Where should the cactus go in our desert? How can we make it look spiky?" (Help them bend the pipe cleaner).
  - "Let's make it snow! Where should we glue our cotton ball snow piles?"
4. **Encourage Free Creation:** Allow the student to add their own touches. If they want to use building blocks to make a small shelter or draw a sun with a marker, that's fantastic! This is their world.

## Part 3: Share & Reflect (5 minutes)

This wrap-up solidifies the learning and gives the student a chance to be proud of their work.

1. **Show and Tell:** Ask the student to give you a tour of their biome box. "Wow, you're a great builder! Can you show me what you made? What is this part here?"
2. **Connect Back:** Ask one simple question to reinforce the objective. "What is one special thing about your [forest/desert/snowy] world?" (Acceptable answers: "It has trees," "It's sandy," "It's cold and snowy.")
3. **Display the Work:** Find a special place to display the biome box. This validates their effort and creativity.

## 4. Assessment (Check for Understanding)

This is an informal, observation-based assessment. While the student works, check for the following:

- **Did the student make choices about their creation?** (Observing their selection of materials).
- **Can the student name one feature of their biome?** (Listening during the "Share & Reflect" part).
- **Did the student engage with the materials?** (Observing their attempts to glue, place, and build).
- **The final product itself:** Does the box visually represent the chosen biome in a simple, age-appropriate way?

## 5. Differentiation and Inclusivity

- **For Extra Support (Simpler):**
  - Pre-cut some of the paper shapes.
  - Focus on just one or two elements (e.g., just making trees in the forest).
  - Use larger, chunkier materials like Duplo blocks or large pom-poms that are easier for small hands to manipulate.
  - Provide more direct help with gluing and placement.
- **For an Extra Challenge (More Complex):**
  - Encourage the student to create a creature for their biome using play-doh or clay.
  - Prompt them to add more detail. "What else might you find in a forest? Maybe a river? How could we make a river with blue paper?"
  - Ask them to tell a short story about what happens in their biome box. "What is this Minecraft person doing in your forest today?"