**Statement of Purpose**

**Problem**

Having new content standards implemented poses a problem for many school districts. In 2014, Ohio fully adopted a new science curriculum and the district did not have the funding necessary to purchase a new curriculum to meet the needs of the standards. Therefore, content in current science books did not match what was required of the new curriculum. As with most of the early elementary years, students are building the foundation for future learning and science is no exception. A science curriculum that meets the needs of the students and meets the necessary science model curriculum is necessary.

**Needs of the Learner**

Understanding how animals and plants survive and co-exist in an Ohio habitat is the foundation and stepping point needed for first graders to understand what is needed for their future learning. It is also a starting point to know how plants and animals change their environment as well as what can happen if we alter our resources.

As most teachers know, students learn better and retain more information if they are actively engaged in a lesson or discussion. This means students need to have a hands-on and socially interactive lesson. Haury and Rillero write, “If students are not doing hands-on science, they are not doing science. Science is a process and if students are not actively engaged in the process, they are not doing science” (1994). Students are going to learn better through direct experience. It will not only help them acquire and retain the information, but also retrieve it when necessary.

**Needs of the Society**

Our habitats and environments surround us and affect us on a daily basis. Students need to begin by learning how plants and animals survive and are dependent on many things, such as light and water, to get energy. In later years, students will need the knowledge to understand renewable and non-renewable resources, water quality importance and evaluations, and energy types that can benefit the local, state, national, and global level (Science Model Curriculum, 2011).

**Value of the Subject Matter**

Much of the information covered in this unit is a building block for future learning. Students will learn about plant and animal needs and how those needs change throughout the season and over time. Students will later learn how the environment impacts living things, and vice versa, such as pollution and deforestation.

In addition to future learning, this also allows benefits students when caring for their own plants and pets. By knowing how to properly care for animals and plants, students will be able to better care for their pets, other animals, and plants.

**Educational Goal**

According to the Ohio Department of Education, the primary goal for this topic is for students to be able to understand how and why plants and animals get energy and how needs are changed over the seasons (2011). Ohio’s Model Curriculum also notes that this curriculum should promote the use of scientific explanation, generating scientific explanations, and participate in scientific discourse.

This unit should provide the necessary content requirements that this curriculum requires. It will also address the needs of the model curriculum by providing students with hands-on activities and peer-collaboration.

**References**

Haury, D., & Rillero, P. (1994). *Perspectives of hands-on science teaching*. Retrieved 02/20/2015 from http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/content/cntareas/science/eric/eric-2.htm

Ohio Department of Education. (2011). *Model Curriculum: PK-12 Science.* Columbus, OH: Retrieved 2/20/15 from http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Ohio-s-New-Learning-Standards/Science/Science\_Standards.pdf.aspx