

Biome in a Box/Vacation Destination Project

As the year draws to a close, students in grades six through eight at St. Francis de Sales School, present their final project for Life Science entitled, “Biome in a Box and Vacation Destination.” The project represents the culminating activity for their unit on the Earth’s ecosystems.

For the project, students, in groups or individually, created a 3-D replica of one of the Earth’s biomes, in a box, no larger than they could carry. The children followed a lengthy set of guidelines that included, identifying biotic and abiotic factors, and producers and consumers. But, this was only part one!

In the second part of their project, students were asked to “sell” their biome to their classmates and teacher, as a “Vacation Destination”. Through the use of technology, and multimedia, the children chose from a wide range of ideas to accomplish this task. Some wrote and performed original commercials or songs. Others created movies, going to various destinations to film, such as the Columbus Zoo, or Coco Key Water Park and Resort. Power Point presentations, DVDs, and travel brochures were popular as well while others elected to make digital slide shows.

Everyone gets into the act for this project! It’s not unusual for a movie to pop onto the screen that finds parents and siblings sitting around a campfire in a “coniferous forest”, friends having fun at a resort in a “tropical coral reef”, or the family dog romping through a field, dressed as a lion, on the “savannah” in Africa.

Student presentations average ten minutes in length and are always enjoyed by all! This project-based learning gives the children an opportunity to not only demonstrate their knowledge of scientific concepts through a visual display, but also provides a forum for the older students in the building to exercise their creativity through the use of state-of-the art technology and multimedia.