

Dune Model

This activity is designed to assist you in creating a miniature dune system modeled after those found along the eastern shore of Lake Ontario. You will need to consult a map to determine the correct north, south, east and west directional orientations for your dune. Materials that might be used include twigs for trees and drift wood, tiny bits of grass for dune grass, and toy or Monopoly houses for homes. To build the beaches and dunes you can use sand, or a mixture of brown sugar, salt and flour.

Once you have constructed your model, you can conduct several experiments including one to determine the impact of wind on dune systems. This can be done by using a drinking straw and gently blowing from the direction of the prevailing winds.

What happens?

What do you think will happen if the "wind" is stronger, or blows from another direction?
Try it and record what happens.

If you visit a dune area, be sure to look for examples of the role the wind plays in creating and changing the dune ecosystem. Make a list of these examples and try them on your model.

By investigating the way wind changes dune systems, you can begin to think about what the area looked like the year you were born. We know that the wind will keep blowing and the dunes will continue to change.

Draw a picture that shows what this section of the dunes will look like in 5 years or in 50 years.



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