**Introductory Assignment: Human Ecology—Ecology of a High School Classroom**

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Student introductions, self-evaluation, and an understanding of ecology

Excerpts from Ed Ricketts (marine biologist) “The Outer Shores Transcript” (1945 trip)

*Ecology is the science of relationships. Of living relationships. There are 3 or 4 approaches. The* ***first*** *is the most superficial. But it’s also the most primitive. And it’s more or less . . . cataloguing . . . quantitatively with regard to the environmental rather than the taxonomic aspects. Thus it’s not only important what occurs (though that has to be known first), but where it occurs physiographically as well as geographically, in what quantities, and, . . . , with what other animals. In such a method, the region is the large unit, and type of shore, tidal level, etc, the immediate unit.*

(OUR CLASSROOM)

**I.** Based on the description above write your full name, age, date of birth, gender, height, eye color, hair color, and shoe size (catalogue and quantify yourself)

*With the* ***second*** *method we associate . . .to determine the loose aggregations of several species, or associations, into which animals band themselves; . . . there are always plenty of generalized forms that occur sometimes in great quantity.* (YOUR GROUPS, PREFERENCES, PERSONALITY, LEARNING STYLE, ASSOCIATIONS, ETC.)

**II.** A. Identify your groups: sports teams you belong to, clubs, church, place of work, ETC.

B. Using the links below, identify your picture personality, your learning style, and your multiple intelligence inventory, and then document what you discover.

* <http://www.davidpbrown.co.uk/psychology/personality-test.html#1>
* <https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Documents/IDEAS%202014%20Handouts/LearningStyleInventory.pdf>
* <http://www.businessballs.com/freepdfmaterials/free_multiple_intelligences_test_manual_version.pdf>

*. . . the* ***third*** *method . . . so much favors . . . the natural history, but especially the complete life history . . .—to what association or associations it belongs at various times of its life, and why. You know what physical environment or environment it’s most likely to get into at various times of the day, or the season, or of its life; and why that should likely happen. . .*

**III.** NATURAL HISTORY—LIFE HISTORY IN CONTEXT: Conduct an interview of a fellow classmate using the assigned questions, and then write up an introduction of your classmate.

*A fourth significant method hasn’t even been suggested so far as I know: that of the “feeding-habitat-niche” or the “reproductive-habitat-niche” or the “protective-habitat-niche” or the “hibernation—(resting stage)—niche”’ I suppose habitat and niche are redundant. I’ve noticed, for instance, that whenever I’ve been on the completely open rocky shore, one starfish, usually no more than one urchin, one or two barnacles, etc. have established themselves as sort of an ecological niche. Different animals have solved this in different parts of the world, but the animals themselves, though widely separated, are strikingly similar morphologically, and of course they occupy an identical niche.* (LIKE A CLASSROOM)

*Of course the “answer” is that an integration of all this [LEVELS] would give a true picture of ecology. But all these things could be tied in together by a true ecology in which the important thing is neither the region, or the association, or the animal itself . . . or its various stages or needs, or even the ecological niche, but in which the unit is the relationship. And that could get an exact and a satisfyingly quantitative science in which the vectors representing these relationships, their direction, extension, and strength or intensity, would be considered and evaluated. . . . between the individual animal and others of the same species, individually or en masse, between the individual and the individuals and the groups of individuals of other species, enemy and mate and fellow traveler, between the animal and its inanimate environment; and would consider similar clauses in connection with the whole species* (HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS) *under treatment.*

**IV.** NICHE AS IT ASSOCIATES WITH OTHER NICHES—We will correspond and interview students from another high school classroom to compare our niche to theirs