

## COVER ARCHITECT

STUDENT NAME:

CLASS:

DATE:

Let's face it ... fish are yummy snacks for a plethora of species on Planet Earth. So fish need places to duck and cover when a predator is nearby ... That's where you come in. Your job is to construct cover for crappies that will hide and protect them from danger. Your efforts will help increase the odds that crappie can grow, reproduce, and survive in your habitat. So let's get building, architect!



**To make sure your habitat increases crappies' odds of survival, research the following:**

Black crappies need some of the most protected areas to lay their eggs and spawn. Where do black crappies reproduce? \_\_\_\_\_

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Crappie will commonly return to the same area to spawn year after year. Any ways you can indefinitely maintain this cover? \_\_\_\_\_

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Crappies may hide in thick vegetation or weed beds. What kinds of vegetation would you plant in your habitat? \_\_\_\_\_

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Where do the schools of crappie fry like to grow and find cover from predators? \_\_\_\_\_

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Cover can also help crappies sneak up on and ambush their prey. Coordinate with your prey specialist to find out where prey like to hangout. \_\_\_\_\_

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Crappies eyes are sensitive to light or water temperature. So they also like to hangout in areas with shade and low-light conditions. Where can crappies find this kind of cover? \_\_\_\_\_

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Don't forget that man-made structures can provide cover for crappie too. Coordinate with your Angler Guru for ideas! \_\_\_\_\_

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**Next, combine your research findings with your team members. As a group, use all of your discoveries to design and craft your own crappie fishing habitat inside a shoebox.** This is the time to let your creativity shine! You may paint, sketch, mold clay, cut construction paper, or even glue in natural resources like sticks, pebbles, sand, moss, or grasses. Remember ... your habitat must suit the needs of anglers, crappies, and the ecosystem! **You will present your habitat diorama to your class with supporting research and reasons for features in your habitat.** The group who ends up with the most crappie in their habitat wins the challenge!



**Black Crappie**