

Terrariums and Ecospheres – for kids

Sam Micheal, 2018/AUG/02

Terrariums and ecospheres are *micro-ecologies*, for kids.

Here are some examples:



terrarium in a globe



terrarium in a bottle



MyZen ecosphere [parents, can purchase at website below]

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/MyZen?ref=12-shopheader-name>

Note to kids: please do **not** use your parents' credit card to make purchases **without your parents' explicit permission** before you start shopping online or otherwise.

Terrariums are **micro-ecologies**:

rule number one: *choose complementary species*
this rule is SO important, I have it first
so, if you choose the adorable **dwarf baby tears** as part
of your first terrarium, write it down making a list



http://aquariumplants.club/product/potted-dwarf-baby-tears-aquarium-live-plant-2/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI6a_-40XP3AIVF3ZeCh07RwWIEAkYAIABEqLHF_D_BwE

Note to kids: *before you shop online*
look in your backyard/neighborhood
keep your list with you
check-off 'baby tears' on your list if you find it! :)

YOU'RE DOING GREAT!!! :)

Another favorite for terrariums are *cactus*:



If you live in the American Southwest, you might be able to find this outside in your backyard/neighborhood, in that case, I envy you! :)

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/solsucculents1?ref=12-shopheader-name>



a jade plant

https://www.bonanza.com/booths/jm_4evergreen

Jade plants are nice complements to cacti in your garden or terrarium! :)

rule number two: *diversify* – choose many species
this rule is just as important as rule number one
because *without diversity, your terrarium may not thrive*

This is something very important you may want to talk with your science teacher at school about. My point here is that we want our terrariums to *thrive not just survive!* :)

Finally, rule number three:

likely, you may have to put your terrarium outside for a few days in order to *stabilize* it

Let me tell you a little story about my latest terrarium. I put dry palm-roots (wood chips) on one side and dirt+plants on the other side. Sounds interesting, right? But, as soon as I put water on the whole thing to give the plants moisture to start thriving, the wood chips started to grow fungus! O.O Uh oh! Maybe not so good, right?

It depends..

If you're going for beauty, not so good..

If you're going for realism in a micro-ecology, fungi are decomposers which are *absolutely necessary* in the circle of life! :)

So, I put my terrarium outside to stabilize it as I say in rule three, BUT, it started to rain and I ended up having to drain the water safely with aquarium-air tubing! Yuck!

So as with life, terrariums usually end up with trade-offs; meaning, we want beauty? We may end up sacrificing balance in the micro-ecology.

So, nurturing your terrarium and getting it to thrive is like your life! :) If you care about your life as much as you do your terrarium, you will be Fine! :)

Note to parents: I have been a life-long naturalist and sometimes science teacher at the high-school level. Please encourage your kids to focus on stability/balance with their terrariums. That should help them understand the importance of both in their lives.