

C-MORE Grant Summary of Project
4th Grade Class at Green Acres Elementary, Santa Cruz CA
Katy Gilpin
C-MORE donated a microscope with digital video attachment

The California 4th Grade Life Science Standards states that students need to understand: 1) how microorganisms play an important role in food chains and food webs, 2) how microorganisms help recycle matter from dead plants and animals, and 3) that most microorganisms are beneficial to the environment. Using our school's Houghton Mifflin science textbook program, we were able to read about different types of microorganisms and how they play an important role in ecosystems. However, to really understand this concept I believe students need to see it themselves. It is very different to look at a photograph in a textbook than see it with your own eyes during a hands-on experiment.

We ran a microorganism experiment that used the microscope and digital video attachment awarded to our school, Green Acres Elementary School in Santa Cruz, California, through the C-MORE Grants for Education in Microbial Science (GEMS). Using this microscope system, students were able to view organisms that live in water environments. Kristine Walz was able to collect and bring in seawater samples from Moss Landing harbor. We observed plankton, diatoms, amphipods, and copepods. We were also able to observe cultured brine shrimp from the seawater lab at MBARI. The microscope magnified the microorganisms so beautifully—students could easily discover and observe what was in just a few drops of water.

The students were very excited to see how much life was in seawater. The experiment was very engaging and the students learned a lot about the diversity of these organisms. This experiment would not have been possible without this microscope system. Thank you to everyone at the C-MORE institute for granting us this microscope and digital video attachment.