INTRODUCTION

FOSSweb technology is an integral part of the Diversity of Life Course. It provides students with the opportunity to access and interact with simulations, images, video, and text—digital resources that can enhance their understanding of life science concepts. Different sections of digital resources are incorporated into each investigation during the course. Each use is marked with the technology icon in the Investigations Guide. You will sometimes use the digital resources to make presentations to the class. At other times, individuals or small groups of students will work with the digital resources to review concepts or reinforce their understanding.

The FOSSweb components are not optional. To prepare to use these digital resources, you should have at a minimum one computer with Internet access that can be displayed to the class by an LCD projector with an interactive whiteboard or a large screen arranged for class viewing. Access to a computer lab or to enough computers in your classroom for students to work in small groups is also required during one investigation, and recommended during others.

The digital resources are available online at www.FOSSweb.com for teachers and students. We recommend you access FOSSweb well in advance of starting the course to set up your teacher-user account and become familiar with the resources.
FOSSweb and Technology

REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCESSING FOSSWEB

You’ll need to have a few things in place on your computer before accessing FOSSweb. Once you’re online, you’ll create a FOSSweb account. All information in this section is updated as needed on FOSSweb.

Creating a FOSSweb Teacher Account

By creating a FOSSweb teacher account, you can personalize FOSSweb for easy access to the courses you are teaching. When you log in, you will be able to add courses to your “My FOSS Modules” area and access Resources by Investigation for the Diversity of Life Course. This makes it simple to select the investigation and part you are teaching and view all the digital resources connected to that part.

Students and families can also access course resources through FOSSweb. You can set up a class account and class pages where students will be able to access notes from you about assignments and digital resources.

Setting up an account. Set up an account on FOSSweb so you can access the site when you begin teaching a course. Go to FOSSweb to register for an account—complete registration instructions are available online.

Entering your access code. Once your account is set up, go to FOSSweb and log in. The first time you log in, you will need to enter your access code. Your access code should be printed on the inside cover of your Investigations Guide. If you cannot find your FOSSweb access code, contact your school administrator, your district science coordinator, or the purchasing agent for your school or district.

Familiarize yourself with the layout of the site and the additional resources available by using your account login. From your course page, you will be able to access teacher masters, assessment masters, notebook sheets, and other digital resources. Explore the Resources by Investigation section, as this will help you plan. It lists the digital resources, notebook sheets, teacher masters, and readings for each investigation part. There are also a variety of beneficial resources on FOSSweb that can be used to assist with teacher preparation and materials management.
Setting up class pages and student accounts. To enable your students to log in to FOSSweb to access the digital resources and see class assignments, set up a class page and generate a user name and password for the class. To do so, log in to FOSSweb and go to your teacher homepage. Under My Class Pages, follow the instructions to create a new class page and to leave notes for students.

If a class page and student accounts are not set up, students can always access digital resources by visiting FOSSweb.com and choosing to visit the site as a guest.

FOSSweb Technical Requirements
To use FOSSweb, your computer must meet minimum system requirements and have a compatible browser and recent versions of Flash® Player, QuickTime®, and Adobe® Reader. The system requirements are subject to change. It is strongly recommended that you visit FOSSweb to review the most recent minimum system requirements.

When using FOSSweb, you can test your browser to confirm that it has the minimum requirements to support the multimedia. You can do so by accessing the Technical Requirements section on FOSSweb.

Preparing your browser. FOSSweb requires a supported browser for Windows or Mac OS with a current version of the Flash Player plug-in, the QuickTime plug-in, and Adobe Reader, or an equivalent PDF reader program. You may need administrator privileges on your computer in order to install the required programs and/or help from your school’s technology coordinator.

By accessing the Technical Requirements page on FOSSweb, you can check compatibility for each computer you will use to access FOSSweb, including your classroom computer, computers in a school computer lab, and a home computer. The information at FOSSweb contains the most up-to-date technical requirements.

Support for plug-ins and reader. The Flash Player and Adobe Reader are available on www.Adobe.com as free downloads. QuickTime is available free of charge from www.Apple.com. FOSS does not support these programs. Please go to the program’s website for troubleshooting information.
Accessing FOSS Diversity of Life Digital Resources

When you log in to FOSSweb, the most useful way to access course materials on a daily basis is the Resources by Investigation section of the Diversity of Life Course page. This section lists the digital resources, student and teacher sheets, readings, and focus questions for each investigation part. Each of these items is linked so you can click and go directly to that item.

Students will access digital resources from the Resource Room, accessible from the class page you’ve set up. Explore where the activities reside in the Resource Room. At various points in the course, students will access interactive simulations, images, videos, and animations from FOSSweb.
Other Technology Considerations

Firewall or proxy settings. If your school has a firewall or proxy server, contact your IT administrator to add explicit exceptions in your proxy server and firewall for these servers:

- fossweb.com
- streamingmediahosting.com

Classroom technology setup. FOSS has a number of digital resources and makes every effort to accommodate users with different levels of access to technology. The digital resources can be used in a variety of ways and can be adapted to a number of classroom setups.

Teachers with classroom computers and an LCD projector, an interactive whiteboard, or a large screen will be able to show multimedia to the class. If you have access to a computer lab, or enough computers in your classroom for students to work in small groups, you can set up time for students to use the FOSSweb digital resources during the school day.

Displaying digital content. You might want to digitally display the notebook and teacher masters during class. In the Resources by Investigation section of FOSSweb, you’ll have the option of downloading the masters “to project” or “to copy.” Choose “to project” if you plan on projecting the masters to the class. These masters are optimized for a projection system and allow you to type into them while they are displayed. The “to copy” versions are sized to minimize paper use when photocopying for the class, and to fit optimally into student notebooks.

If this projection technology is not available to you, consider making transparencies of the notebook and teacher masters for use with an overhead projector when the Getting Ready section indicates a need to project these sheets.

NOTE

FOSSweb activities are designed for a minimum screen size of 1024 × 768. It is recommended that you adjust your screen resolution to 1024 × 768 or higher.
TROUBLESHOOTING AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

If you experience trouble with FOSSweb, you can troubleshoot in a variety of ways.

1. First, test your browser to make sure you have the correct plug-in and browser versions. Go to FOSSweb and select the “Technical Requirements” page to review the most recent system requirements and test your browser.

2. Check the FAQs on FOSSweb for additional information that may help resolve the problem.

3. Try emptying the cache from your browser and/or quitting and relaunching it.

4. Restart your computer, and make sure all computer hardware turns on and is connected correctly.

If you are still experiencing problems after taking these steps, send FOSS Technical Support an e-mail at support@FOSSweb.com. In addition to describing the problem, include the following information about your computer: Mac or PC, operating system, browser and version, plug-ins, and versions. This will help us troubleshoot the problem.