

Growing Up WILD Lesson

Participant Name: Alisha Kapparos

Current teaching situation: Currently a stay-at-home mom, writing lesson for a prekindergarten class

Activity: Wildlife is Everywhere! (Page 24 – 25)

Opportunities within current program or curriculum to integrate lesson: Incorporate this activity into a Fall unit so that students begin early in the year to develop their scientific observational skills.

Outline of use of activity components:

Possible pre-learning opportunity: Give students a few days to explore a center set up in the classroom that includes the following items:

- Books about domestic versus wild animals
 - Stuffed animals and/or plastic replicas of both domestic and wild animals and insects
 - Wildlife and domestic habitat (woodlands model/diorama versus a barn for example)
 - Post photos of animals in their natural environment
1. Using hand puppets of a dog and squirrel read “What’s Wild, A day in the life of a dog/squirrel” Page73. Ask students to share similarities and differences that they noticed between the animals. Introduce the vocabulary, *wild* and *domestic*. Using the clues from the story, guide children in defining the new vocabulary then place the “animal card” pictures (page 66-69) in a venn diagram suggested in “Mighty Math” pg 25.
 2. Define *observe* (watch carefully). Tell students that we are using our eyes and ears to watch and listen for any signs of animal life (animal movement, calls, tracks, tunnels, droppings, etc.). Using the “Healthy Me” section pg 25, remind students that when observing wildlife it is very important to keep a safe distance, not to touch the animal and to stay calm. Give a demonstration of observing a classroom animal or stuffed/replica animal.
 3. “Take me outside” pg. 24 to the playground for a wildlife hunt. Students will carry a magnifying glass and a clipboard with paper and pencil to record their observations. The class will be accompanied by the teacher and two additional school staff members, all adults will carry a bug box and a camera.
 4. Upon returning from the wildlife hunt students will be served an “Ants on a log” snack.
 5. To build upon this activity, later in the week, the teacher would arrange for a naturalist, Chris Anderson (319-277-2187) from the Hartman Reserve Nature Center in Black Hawk County to visit the classroom to share the program “Animals of Black Hawk County”. The naturalist would bring a turtle, snake or salamander and a variety of animal pelts into the classroom, expanding our list of wildlife.
 6. Immediately following our presentation from the naturalist we would take another wildlife hunt walk, this time to the woods and wetlands within walking distance of our school. If possible the naturalist would join us, as well as enough parent volunteers to keep our ratio at two children to one adult. Teacher would carry a clipboard, paper, pencil and magnifying glass for each student until we reached the woods where the students could find a spot to sit/explore for an extended period. The students could then, with the help of an adult, record in words or drawings what evidence of wildlife they observe.
 - a. In the weeks prior to this outdoor exploration the teacher would have communicated with each students’ family through a note and a phone call requesting parent volunteers as well as proper outdoor clothing and shoes (long pants, long sleeves and hiking shoes) for the students.

Identify local natural areas, parks, or guest speakers that could be included in activity.

Hartman Reserve Nature Area could provide a field trip opportunity or an outreach program. Contact: Chris Anderson at 319-277-2187

Description of the outdoor exploration:

Would begin on the school playground and later extend to a wooded wetland that is part of the school grounds.

Time spent in a natural wooded area. Students will have time to spot evidence of wildlife in a wooded wetland location. With teacher and adult volunteers supporting their observational skills and taking pictures of what they find.

Identify additional preparation needed for exploration. Parent contact, as written above, to ensure volunteer support and proper clothing for the students. Teacher needs to carry a first aid kit, a charged cell phone and “back-up” activity for students who may lose interest in their wildlife hunt (such as a coloring sheet, plastic toy insects, etc.)

Draft 2 open – ended questions to encourage further student investigation.

1. Where do you think that animal’s home is?
2. What do you think the animal eats and how does it get that food?

List standard/benchmarks/concepts that were met using components taught.

2.A.08 essential characteristics, 2.B.04 social/emotional development, 2.C.04 physical development, 2.D.04 language development, 2.G.05 science, 2.K.03 health and safety, 2.L.04 social studies

Indicate any modifications you will make to the activity or components within (classroom usability).

In the event of inclement weather, our outdoor playground wildlife hunt could be done inside of the school building. As mentioned in the outline there will be one adult for every two students in order to support students observational recording and aid in any disruptive behavior. Speak and work with parents of any children with physical disabilities about how to make the woodland walk inclusive.

List age appropriate literature (books, periodicals, websites) that can be used as part of the activity.

In My Backyard by Margariet Ruurs (fiction), read prior to outdoor playground wildlife hunt
Peterson First Guide to Urban Wildlife by Sarah B. Landry (non-fiction), set out at the pre-learning exploration center

List activities that could be used as pre and/or post learning opportunities.

- Bind students’ observational recordings into a classroom book
- Continue observation of any wildlife that we found on hunt by bringing them into the classroom for a couple of days (ants, worms, etc).
- Hang a bird feeder outside of the classroom window for observation