

Lesson: Learn About a Native Animal

Grade: 4



Objective:

Students will learn about native animals through a hands-on field trip and research-based activity. They will observe the animals in their natural enclosures, develop questions based on their observations, conduct research to answer those questions, and create visual representations of their discoveries.

Skills and Concepts:

- Demonstrate curiosity about the natural world
- Identify questions about familiar objects and events that can be investigated scientifically
- Make predictions based on prior knowledge
- Suggest ways to plan and conduct an inquiry to find answers to their questions
- Collect simple data
- Make observations about living and non-living things in the local environment
- Represent and communicate ideas and findings in a variety of ways, such as diagrams and simple reports, using digital technologies as appropriate

Materials:

- Field trip permission slips and arrangements for the trip
- Clipboards, paper, and pencils for notetaking and sketching during the field trip
- Visual aids or prompts for students to observe and note down important characteristics
- Computers or access to research materials for the research phase
- Art supplies for creating visual representations (poster boards, colored pencils, markers, PowerPoint software, etc.)

Preparation:

- Organize and plan the field trip to a local wildlife sanctuary, zoo, or any suitable place where students can observe native animals in their enclosures.

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- Divide the students into groups beforehand, with each group focusing on a different native animal.
- Collect suitable research resources for the students to use when answering their questions about the animals.

Background Information:

Native Animals:

Native animals are species that naturally occur and have evolved in a specific geographic region or ecosystem. These animals have adapted to the climate, food sources, and other factors unique to their habitat over time. Native animals play a crucial role in maintaining the balance of ecosystems and contribute to biodiversity.

Biodiversity:

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life forms found in a particular ecosystem or on Earth as a whole. It encompasses all living organisms, including plants, animals, fungi, and microorganisms. Biodiversity is essential for the health and stability of ecosystems, as each species has its role in the complex web of life.

Habitats:

A habitat is the natural environment where an organism or community of organism's lives. Habitats provide the necessary resources, such as food, water, shelter, and space, for the survival and reproduction of native animals. Different types of habitats include forests, grasslands, wetlands, deserts, oceans, and more.

Adaptations:

Adaptations are the unique features and behaviors that help an animal survive and thrive in its habitat. These can include physical traits like camouflage, sharp claws, long beaks, or behavioral traits like hibernation, migration, or forming social groups. Adaptations are essential for an animal's survival and successful reproduction.

Ecosystems:

An ecosystem is a community of living organisms (plants, animals, and microorganisms) that interact with each other and their physical environment. Every ecosystem has its unique set of native animals and plants that have co-

evolved over time. Changes to one part of an ecosystem can impact other organisms and the entire balance of the ecosystem.

Procedure:

Field Trip Day:

- Begin with a brief introduction to the field trip. Remind students of the animals they will observe and the importance of keen observation.
- Divide the class into their predetermined groups, each focusing on a specific native animal.
- During the field trip, allow each group 15-20 minutes at the enclosure of their chosen animal. Encourage students to:
 - Observe and note down important physical characteristics, behaviors, and interactions with the environment.
 - Sketch images or diagrams of the animal and its surroundings.
- Provide a worksheet with prompts to guide their observations and note-taking. Prompts may include questions about the animal's diet, habitat, adaptations, etc.

Research and Visual Representation:

- Back in the classroom, each group will share their field trip observations with the class. This can be done orally or by presenting the sketches they made.
- In their groups, students will develop three questions based on their observations and the information they want to learn more about regarding the animal.
- Allow students to conduct research using available resources such as books, articles, and websites to find answers to their questions.
- Instruct the students to create visual representations of their discoveries. They can choose to make a poster, PowerPoint presentation, or any other creative medium to showcase their findings.
- Allocate time in the next few class periods for students to work on their visual representations.

Presentation (30-60 minutes):

- Each group will present their visual representations to the class. Encourage them to explain their observations, the questions they developed, and the research they conducted to find answers.

Conclusion (5 minutes):

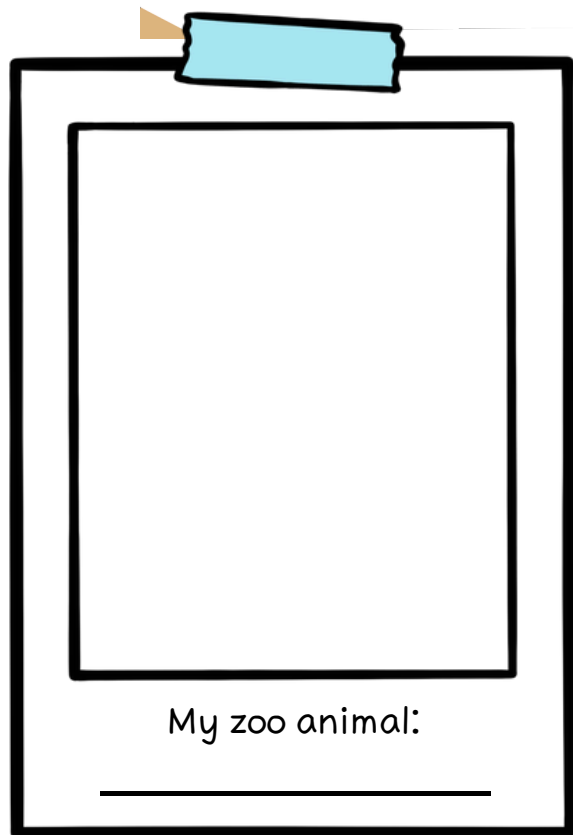
- Summarize the lesson by highlighting the importance of observing animals in their natural habitats and the value of research in gaining a deeper understanding of the world around us.
- Ask the students to reflect on what they learned during this activity and how it connects to broader concepts of animal habitats, adaptations, and the importance of preserving native wildlife.

Assessment:

- Assessment will be based on the quality of students' field trip observations, the relevance of their questions, the accuracy of their research findings, and the creativity and clarity of their visual representations during the presentation.

Learn About an Animal

Observing animal adaptations at work!



My zoo animal:

My animal's skin looked like:

☐ FLUFFY FUR



☐ SHARP OR SPINY



☐ SCALES



☐ SLIMY



☐ OTHER:

My animal eats:

☐ LEAVES



☐ GRASS



☐ FRUIT



☐ BUGS



☐ MEAT



My animal's feet looked like:

☐ HOOF



☐ PAW



☐ BIRD FOOT



☐ HUMAN FOOT



☐ NO FEET

My 3 favourite new things I learned about my animal:

☐☐☐