

Project WILD

The following lesson plans are arranged by topic. They are derived from the Project WILD Curriculum and Activity Guide. Appropriate grade levels are listed below each description, but please email a request to our educator at teddi-stark@juniataccd.org if you teach another grade level or have group of students varying in age, but have interest in an activity that is listed for other grade levels in order to discuss adaptation options for that lesson. Each lesson will take approximately 30-60 minutes unless otherwise stated.

Ecological Knowledge

Wildlife Populations

Grasshopper Gravity

Students will learn about insects by capturing Grasshoppers and Crickets from the school yard and observing them very closely before releasing them outside once again. Students will fill out a sheet on their observations and reference it during a classroom discussion about the insects. (Adaptable for grades K-5, outdoor component)

What's Wild?

Students will learn the difference between Wild and Domesticated Animals. They will then identify a variety of pictures of animals as either Wild or Domesticated. Students will then help create a class list of words that describe Domesticated Animals and words that describe Wild Animals. Students will help create a collage of Wild Animals and one of Domesticated Animals that can be displayed in their classroom to remind them of the lesson. (Adaptable for grades K-1)

Classroom Carrying Capacity

Students will become familiar with the concept of carrying capacity through small classroom experiments. Students will discuss what basic needs animals require to live healthy lives. They will discuss what animals might be affected by carrying capacity, how carrying capacity can affect people, and what kind of effects it can have on a population. (Adaptable for grades 2-5)

Oh, Deer!

Students will learn about carrying capacity, limiting factors, predators, prey, population fluctuations and the resources animals need to survive in their habitats through playing a game where some students become "Deer" and other students become "Resources" the deer need to survive. (Adaptable for Grades 2-5, outdoor component optional)

Habitats, Ecosystems and Niches

Wildlife is Everywhere!

Students will learn that wildlife is found everywhere, not just in the rainforests in South America or on African Savannahs. There might even be signs of life right in their own classroom and school yard! Students will explore their school area to search for signs of wildlife and then discuss as a class how humans and wildlife interact every day.

(Adaptable for grades K-3, outdoor component)

Habitacks

Students will work in small groups to “track” animals around their school ground to learn about habitat and animal needs. Each group will be assigned an animal and given a map of where that animal has gone. Students will locate habitat components that have been placed along their animal’s path as marked on their maps. When each group has found all of the components, students will return to their classroom to discuss why each animal went where it did, and what types of things the animal found along the way. Did all the different groups find that their animals were visiting the same types of things? Students will discuss how all animals have the same basic needs, but they meet those needs in different ways. Bears need more space and more food than insects do, and deer eat different types of food than birds. (Adaptable for grades 2-5, outdoor component)

Interdependence

Microtreck Treasure Hunt

Students will work in small groups while gaining and understanding that humans and wildlife share the same environments, and that wildlife is all around us, even when it is not seen or heard. In their groups, students will go on a “wildlife treasure hunt” on school grounds to see if they can find evidence that humans and animals are living and interacting there. They will be given a list of things to look for, and tools to collect evidence with. Upon returning from the treasure hunt, each group will have a chance to present their evidence to the class. (Adaptable for grades 2-5, outdoor component)

Owl Pellets

Students will learn about food chains and predator-prey relationships through dissecting owl pellets and examining what owls typically eat. Students will be split into small groups and given one owl pellet per group to dissect. They will arrange the bones and try to figure out which type of animals they came from, and what those animals might have been eating by examining their teeth. (Adaptable for students in grades 3-5, please give two weeks advance notice to acquire owl pellets for this lesson)

Changes and Adaptations

Seeing is Believing!

Students will learn about how some animals see differently than we do. They will use binoculars, kaleidoscopes, fisheye lenses, etc. to “see like animals” and try to predict which animals see in these ways. Students will then make posters in small groups to depict an animal that sees differently than we do. Posters can be displayed in the classroom. (Adaptable for grades K-3)

Quick-Frozen Critters

Students will learn about Predator-Prey relationships, and the importance of food, water and shelter within a habitat. They will play a game where students role-play as either predators or prey and try to “survive” to the next round by collecting enough resources and not becoming someone else’s meal. (Adaptable for Grades 2-5, outdoor component optional)

Biodiversity

Move Over Rover

Students will learn about a variety of ecosystems, and why certain animals live in certain ecosystems. Students will discuss adaptations and specializations vs. generalist species in a group, and then play a game in which they will determine what ecosystem an animal they represent is likely to live in. (Adaptable for grades 4-5)

Sustaining Fish and Wildlife Resources

Attitudes and Awareness

Animal Charades

Students will discuss the difference between wild and domesticated animals, and how domesticated animals got to be that way. They will then select an animal (either wild or domesticated) out of a hat, and portray them silently in charades form while the other students guess what animal they are trying to depict, and then deciding whether that animal is domesticated or wild. (Adaptable for grades K-2)

Human Impacts

Shrinking Habitat

Students will learn about habitat, its components, and what plants and animals need to survive. They will also discuss human's role in natural environments and habitats. Students will then role play as carnivores, herbivores, plants, and human developers to mimic a habitat and notice the effects on that habitat when the area is developed. Are animals harmed? What animals are more affected? How could the developers have developed differently and how might the wildlife and plants been affected by different types of development? (Adaptable for grades 4-5)