

K - Act. 26: Animal Research and Report

Summary

Students will complete an in depth study of an animal that lives near them.

Materials

One per class:

- 4-5 sheets of chart paper
- markers
- animal of teacher's choice
- books and other resources to obtain information about the given animal

One per student:

- paper
- pencil and/or crayons
- clipboard

Additional Resources

All About Frogs by Jim Arnosky

Amazing Frogs and Toads by Barry Clarke, Eyewitness Juniors

Frogs by Gail Gibbons

How to Hide, A Meadow Frog by Ruth Heller

It's a Frog's Life by Steve Parker

The Frog Alphabet Book by Jerry Pallotta

Tale of a Tadpole by Barbara Ann Porte

Frog's Eggs by Alex Ramsay and Paul Humphrey

From Tadpole to Frog by Kathleen Weidner Zoehfeld

Background for Teachers

The teacher will be responsible for identifying an animal that can easily be found and observed in the local area. The setting in which children observe or interact with the animal should be safe both for the child and the animal. Some creatures to consider are insects, worms, frogs, toads, lizards, turtles, rabbits, birds, and fish. The teacher should be prepared to help the children find books, web-sites, resource people, etc. so they can find information to answer questions generated by the class.

Intended Learning Outcomes

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1. Demonstrate a positive learning attitude.
5. Understand and use basic concepts and skills.
6. Communicate clearly in oral, artistic, written and nonverbal form.

Process Skills

Observation, description, data collection and interpretation, investigation, problem solving, form conclusions

Instructional Procedures

Invitation to Learn

Create an anticipation guide to introduce the animal that will be studied by the class. An appropriate anticipation guide for kindergarten students would consist of three to five true or false questions written on a chart or overhead. The students listen and follow along as the teacher reads aloud the

questions. After each question the class indicates whether the answer is true or false. This can be done by having the students show thumbs up for true or thumbs down for false. The teacher can write on the chart or overhead the response that the majority of the students indicate. The teacher then reads a short selection of text that answers each of the questions. After listening to the text, the teacher and students reread the questions and check to see if their answers are correct. Each question should be clearly answered from a portion of the text (see the example "Anticipation Guide" about frogs).

Instructional Procedures

Tell the students that they are going to begin an in depth study of an animal that lives near them. The study of frogs will be the example given here. However, these steps and strategies can be used to study any topic of the teacher or student's choice.

Give each student a clipboard, pencil, and paper. Take students to a place where they can carefully observe a frog. Students should record with drawings and words the interesting things they notice about the frog.

After making individual observations, ask the class to share their observations with the class. The teacher should record these findings on a large chart paper entitled "Our Observations About a Frog."

Ask the class, "Now that we have made some interesting observations about the frog, do you have any questions that you wonder about or that come to your mind?" Record the class questions on another chart entitled "Our Questions About a Frog." It is suggested that the class only record three to five questions that are especially interesting to them. This will make finding the answers to the given questions more manageable.

Tell the class, "These are some great questions! I can't wait to find out the answers to these questions. Do any of you have some ideas about how we could get answers to our questions?" The class will brainstorm a variety of ways to get answers to questions. The list should at least include different kinds of books, internet options, resource people, and possible places to visit. The teacher should model for students and help them understand the different ways that questions can be answered. This is an example of modeling how to read and listen to find answers in books. A teacher could begin by saying, "I think we could do some reading so we can answer our questions. I'll read part of this book. Listen for information that might answer this question (identify a specific question for the question chart) and give me the thumbs up sign when you hear some information we should remember." After reading, allow the students to tell the answer they think they heard to a partner sitting near them. Record the answer the class agrees upon on a separate chart entitled, "Answers to Our Questions?" This chart should be placed by the question chart so that the students can clearly see the relationship between the question and the answer. This process of finding answers to questions is repeated over several days until all of the questions have been answered.

Throughout the animal research process, a separate chart containing content vocabulary words could be created. The chart may be entitled, "Words About Frogs." As the class comes across new vocabulary words in their reading the words could be added to the chart. One or two students could draw a simple picture next to the word illustrating its meaning. This list does not need to be lengthy. Rather it should simply meet the immediate needs of the students.

After the class has found answers to their questions, the students may be asked to work independently or with a partner to draw a picture and write a simple sentence showing their understanding of one of the new facts they learned. These pages could be shared orally with the class and then compiled into a class book.

Extensions

Family Connections

Each child should select a local animal of their choice to research at home with their family and create a book about the animal to share with the class (see the example parent letter and animal fact book format).

Assessment Plan

As an entire class, create a summary paragraph about what the class learned and what they would still like to know. The paragraph could be written on chart paper or on the overhead (see the example summary paragraph).

Authors

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