Learning about polar bears (or any topic)

Summary
With guidance and support students will explore using various research tools to help them access information about a specific topic. In this lesson we are learning about bears but you could choose another animal or topic as well.

Main Core Tie
Elementary Library Media (K-5)
Strand 4 Standard 2

Additional Core Ties
Science - 1st Grade
Standard 4
Science - Kindergarten
Standard 4

Time Frame
3 class periods of 15 minutes each

Group Size
Large Groups

Materials
"The Bear Report" by Thyra Heder
Books, computer websites, videos, music, posters, magazines (your resources may change depending on what you have access to) featuring polar bears.

Background for Teachers
Knowledge of how to use and access the sources that you want to focus on.
"The Bear Report" by Thyra Heder
books on polar bears
Juvenile magazines on bears
Possible online media resources listed below

Student Prior Knowledge
What is a polar bear? Basic knowledge of resources. Vocabulary resources, research, adaptations, habitat,

Intended Learning Outcomes
Students will learn to use a variety of research tools to learn about a given topic.

Instructional Procedures
Pacing
(min.)
10-15 Ask students what they know about polar bears.
Ask them what questions they have about them. What do they need to know? Write their questions on the board.
Read to the students "The bear report" by Thyra Heder. Ask them if they have new questions about bears.
Have students watch a video clip about polar bears and then discuss what they learned from the video. i.e. were they able to answer any of the questions that we discussed earlier? Point out to students that videos are just one kind of resource. "Where else could we find answers to our questions about polar bears? Guide their conversation and bring up some of the other types of resources if students don't come up with them on their own. Make a list of the different types of media students can use to help them research and learn.
Use the list of different resources that you and students came up with to direct the rest of your lesson. Show students examples of the different types of resources (books, video, websites, posters, magazines, encyclopedias etc) and help them see what they can learn, about polar bears, from each. Refer back to the questions students had about polar bears as you explore with different types of media.
This lesson can be carried over into multiple sessions to give you more time to explore different resources.
Give students the attached worksheet and have them write/draw something they learned about polar bears.

Strategies for Diverse Learners
Have tangible examples of the different types of resources so that students can have hands on experience with them.

Assessment Plan
Have students tell you which resource they liked using the best and why.

Bibliography
"The Bear Report" by Thyra Heder

Authors
Kathy Ballard
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