

Keep Wild Animals Wild: Wonderfully Wild!



Introduction

Unit Instructional Goal

By the end of the unit, students will be able to answer the essential questions:

- What does it mean to be wild?
- How do we live respectfully alongside wildlife?

Prepare for the Unit

- Many teachers and students like to develop ground rules within their classrooms to promote positive listening, respect, and sensitivity to different points of view. See page 11 in the Program Overview for a ground rules activity.
- You may want to do a pre- and post-assessment of your students' knowledge about wild animals and how to live alongside them respectfully. See pages 13–15 in the Program Overview for assessments.
- In Lesson 7, you will be taking your students on a walking trip around the neighborhood to view wildlife. Choose a date for your excursion and send out permission forms. Organize parent volunteers to go with you.
- You may want to take photos of the students and their work throughout the unit. These could be put together to make a slideshow for parents and students to enjoy once the unit is finished.
-  For additional resources and online interactive activities for students go to www.ifaw.org/keep-wild-animals-wild.

Lesson 1: Introducing the Unit

Overview

This lesson introduces the essential questions of the unit: What does it mean to be wild? and How do we live respectfully alongside wildlife? As an introduction, students will think about and discuss wild and domestic (not wild) animals. They will consider whether particular animals are wild or not wild, and they will do a sorting activity to reflect their understanding.

Materials

chart paper, sticky notes

Time

50 minutes

Subject Areas

ELA, Science, Math

Instructional Goal

This lesson will help students begin to understand how wild animals are different from domestic animals.

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Begin to define animals as either “wild” or “not wild.”

Introduce Lesson Target Question

Write the target question on the board and read it aloud to students.



What does it mean to be wild?

Explain that as students work through this lesson, they will think about this question. At the end of the lesson, they will discuss their thoughts about the question.

Introduce “Wild” and “Not Wild” Animals

1. Explain to students that they are going to read a magazine about wild animals. They will also view a video about these animals. Explain that in this unit they will explore questions about what it means for an animal to be wild and how people can live respectfully alongside wild animals.

2. Have students take a minute to think about what the words *wild* and *not wild* mean. Then have them turn and talk with a partner about what they think the words mean. Ask partners to share their ideas. Note students’ responses to get a sense of what they do and don’t understand about animals that are wild and animals that are not wild.

Activity: Sorting Animals

1. Create a large chart on the board with the headings “Wild” and “Not Wild.” Write the name of a different animal on several sticky notes—for example, lion, horse, elephant, hedgehog, lizard, turtle, chicken, cow, etc.
2. Read the name of each animal and ask students to talk with a partner to decide if they think the animal is wild or not wild. Allow about half a minute for children to talk about the animal. Then discuss these questions with the class.
 - *This sticky note says “elephant.” Should we put an elephant in the wild or not wild column?*
 - *Why do you think an elephant is wild?*
 - *Why do you think an elephant is not wild?*
3. Place the sticky note in the column according to what the majority of students think. If students do not agree, place the sticky note in the column that has the most support from students, but add a question mark to the sticky note.
 - *We don’t all agree about whether [animal’s name] is wild or not. We will come back and look at this animal again after we have read and talked more about wild animals. We might decide to place the animal in a different column.*
4. Repeat with the rest of the sticky notes.
5. Depending on the level of your students, you may want to choose animals that can be both wild and not wild, such as ducks.
 - *Do you think ducks are wild or not wild? Why?*

Some students may think about domestic species of ducks they see being raised on a farm and say ducks are not wild, while other students may think about wild duck species and reason that ducks are wild.
6.  Revisit the target question: What does it mean to be wild? Remind students that they will learn more about what it means to be wild in this unit.

Lesson 2:

Keep Wild Animals Wild Video

Overview

Students will watch chapter 1 of the *Keep Wild Animals Wild* video, which gives an overview of the differences between wild and domestic animals, explains that wild animals are adapted to live in the wild, and discusses how people can share their world with wild animals. Students will begin exploring adaptations and habitat by focusing on the green iguana shown in the video.

Materials

video, crayons or colored pencils, **Worksheet 1: Meet a Green Iguana**

Time

50 minutes

Subject Areas

ELA, Science

Instructional Goal

This lesson will reinforce the concept that some animals are wild and some are not and build understanding of what it means to be wild.

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Build curiosity about wild animals.
- Begin to list the conditions that wild animals need to survive.
- Distinguish between harmful and helpful human behaviors towards wild animals.
- Begin to demonstrate the willingness to treat wild animals with respect.

Introduce Lesson Target Question

Write the target question on the board and read it with students.



How can we treat wild animals with respect?

Explain that as students work through this lesson, they will think about this question. At the end of the lesson, they will share their thoughts on the question.

Preview/View the Video

1. Tell students that they will be watching a video about wild animals, what they need to live, and how people can share the world with them. Ask students:
 - *What kinds of things do you think you will see in this video?*
 - *What do you think wild animals need to live?*
2. The students will view the video twice, once uninterrupted and once with pauses for discussion. For the first viewing, tell students to pay close attention to the wild animals and what it means for them to be wild.
3. Play chapter 1 for the students. NOTE: Chapters 2 and 3 of the video cover wildlife trade, a subject that is beyond the scope of this unit.

Discuss the Video

1. Tell students that they will view the video again, but this time you will stop the video at certain places so they can talk about it.
2. Stop the video at the following minutes and ask students to respond to the questions below:
 - 1:10–1:19 (after the scene that shows the lion cub): *The lion cub in the video looks like a cute kitten, but how is it different?*
 - 7:00–7:12 (after the scene that asks about whether birds and tigers would make good pets): *Would these animals make good pets? Would an elephant make a good pet? Why or why not? Have one or two students respond. Let's see what might happen with an elephant pet.*
 - 7:55–8:22 (after the scene with the animation of the child behaving poorly towards the animals): *Does this look safe for the animal? Does it look safe for the child? What do you think?*
3.  Revisit the target question: How can we treat wild animals with respect?
 - *Let's think about our target question. What are some ways you saw people treating wild animals respectfully in the video? What are some ways we can treat wild animals with respect?*

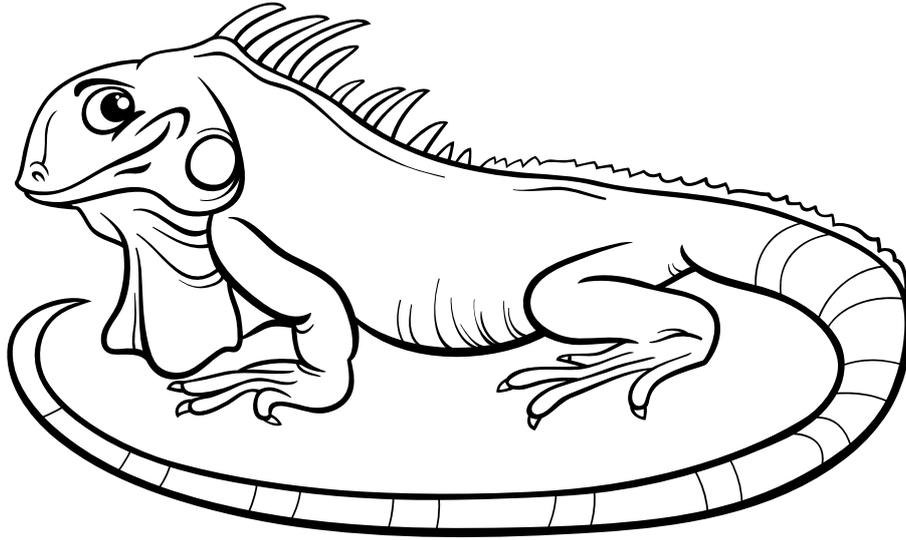
Activity: A Green Iguana's Natural Home

1.  Give students **Worksheet 1: Meet a Green Iguana**.
Remind students of the scene in the video about the green iguana and review minutes 5:40–6:55 of the video if necessary. Ask the following questions and list student responses on the board:
 - *What does the green iguana's natural home look like? What things does the iguana need where he lives?* (trees, leaves, flowers, fruit, water)
 - *Where does the green iguana get his food? Where does he sleep? Where else does he go?* (finds leaves, flowers and fruit in trees; sleeps in the treetops; sometimes jumps into the water and swims)
2. Tell students to draw and color the iguana's home on their worksheet, including all the things they know the iguana needs to live. They may also color the iguana.
3. When finished, ask the students to share their drawings. Then discuss the green iguana's adaptations and habitat:
 - *What body parts help the iguana live in his natural home?* (claws to climb; long tail for balance; tail and spines for defense; sharp teeth to eat leaves, flowers and fruit)
 - *What would happen to the green iguana if he lived somewhere without trees?* (Students' responses may vary, but remind students that iguanas use trees for shelter, food, sleeping, and keeping warm.)
 - *What would happen if he lived somewhere without trees and water?* (Green iguanas would lose their source of food and shelter and place to escape [water].)

Worksheet 1: Meet a Green Iguana

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Draw and color the green iguana in his natural home.



Lesson 3: Born to Be Wild

Ages 5–7

Overview

Students will preview the Student Magazine and read, or follow along with, the article “Born to Be Wild.” Students will discuss how wild animals meet their needs compared to how domestic animals meet their needs. To extend the lesson, students may draw and label an illustration showing how a lion’s needs are met.

Materials

Student Magazine, video, chart from Lesson 1, drawing paper, markers/crayons/paints

Time

60 minutes core lesson;
20 minutes extension activity

Subject Areas

ELA, Science

Instructional Goal

This lesson will help students understand that for wild animals to survive, they must meet their own needs from the wild.

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Understand the conditions that animals, wild and domestic, need to survive.
- Understand that the difference between wild and domestic animals is how the animals meet these needs.
- Begin to describe the physical, social, and behavioral requirements necessary for wild animals to thrive.

Introduce Lesson Target Question

Write the target question on the board and read it aloud to students.



Why do wild animals belong in the wild?

Explain that as they work through this lesson, they will think about this question. At the end of the lesson, they will discuss their thoughts about the question.

Preview the Magazine and Article

1. Give each student a copy of the Student Magazine. Have them preview the magazine by first looking at the table of contents. Read aloud the names of the articles and stories and have students read along with you if they can.
 - *What kinds of things do you think we will read about in this magazine?*

2. Tell students that today they will read the article “Born to Be Wild.” Ask them what page the article begins on and have them turn to that page.
 - *Let’s look at the pictures in this article. What do you see in the large pictures on page 3? (lion cub and pet kitten) Which animal do you think is wild? (lion cub)*
 - *What does the chart on page 4 show us? (animals that are wild and animals that are not wild)*
 - *Look at the words in bold on page 3: domestic and wild animals. These words are in the glossary at the back of the magazine. Let’s turn to the glossary on page 18 and read the definitions together.*
3.  Show students minutes 1:14–3:04 in the video that talk about what makes wild animals different from domestic animals and what wild animals need. *Before we read, let’s go back and look at what we learned from the video.*
 - *What does the video tell us about wild animals and domestic animals?*
 - *The heading on page 5 says, “What do wild animals need?” What did you learn about what wild animals need from watching the video?*
 - *Let’s read this article and see what it says about being wild. Let’s see whether the information is the same as we learned in the video.*

NOTE: If it is not possible to view the video, help students recall what they saw in this segment of the video.

Read

Have students read the article. Some students will be able to read the article independently. Other students may benefit from reading the article with a partner. You may want to read the article to beginning readers as they follow along.

Discuss

1. Have students look at the chart on page 4.
 - *What animals are wild? What makes them wild? (Wild animals take care of themselves.)*
 - *What animals are domestic or not wild? What makes them domestic? (Domestic animals have lived with people for so long that they have changed. They need people to take care of them. Provide the example of wolves living close to people and over thousands of years becoming domesticated dogs.)*

-  Look back at the bottom of page 3. Which sentence gives important information that the video tells us too? (Wild animals take care of themselves.)

NOTE: Some students may ask about feral animals. Explain that a feral animal is a domesticated animal that survives in a wild state but is still considered domestic. Feral animals still depend on humans for food and shelter so they usually live near people.

2. Have students use the chart on page 5 to compare how wild and domestic animals meet their needs.
 - Look at the chart on page 5. Let's compare the needs of wild animals and domestic animals and how these needs are met.
 - How do wild animals get shelter? How do domestic animals get shelter?
 - How do wild animals get food? How do domestic animals get food?
 - How do wild animals get water? How do domestic animals get water?
 - How do wild animals get space? How do domestic animals get space?

3. Direct students' attention to the chart they made in Lesson 1. Discuss the placement of each animal on the chart.
 - Let's look at the chart we made in a previous lesson. Did we say an elephant is wild or not wild? Let's think about how elephants get their needs met. Where do elephants get shelter? Where do elephants get food? How do they get water? Space?
 - Is an elephant wild or domesticated? After you have watched the video and read this article, do we need to move the sticky note to a different column?
4. Explore the diagram of a tiger's special features on page 7.
 - Wild animals' bodies help them survive in the wild. What do the picture and labels on page 7 tell us? (how the parts of a tiger's body help the tiger survive)
 - How does a tiger's tail help the tiger survive?
 - How do a tiger's padded paws help the tiger survive?
5.  Revisit the target question: Why do wild animals belong in the wild?
 - Let's think about our target question. How would you answer this question?

Lesson 3 Extension: "What a Lion Needs" Drawing

Have students apply what they learned about wild animals' needs by drawing a picture showing what a lion needs in order to survive. Ask students to draw a lion in the center of their paper. If necessary, reread the chart on page 5 with students. Use leading questions to help them think about and then draw and label what a lion needs in order to live.

- What things do lions need to survive? (food, water, shelter, space)
- Where do lions get their food? Draw a picture that shows what a lion eats. (Guide students to draw other animals that a lion would hunt—for example, buffalo, antelope, etc. Have students label the food source or dictate to you as you write it for them.)
- Lions need water to drink. Where do lions get their water? (Guide students to draw a watering hole. Have students label the water source or dictate to you as you write it for them.)
- Lions need a place to rest or get out of the hot sun. Where do you think they get shelter? Draw a picture of it. (Guide students to draw tall grass or a tree. Have students label the shelter or dictate to you as you write it for them.)
- What else do animals need? Show the space where lions live and can roam.
- Where does the lion find all of the things you have just drawn?

Lesson 4: Meet a Wildlife Vet

Ages 5–7

Overview

Students will read a profile of a wildlife veterinarian and learn what the role entails. They will role-play a veterinarian working with wild animals. To extend the lesson, students may draw a picture of a wildlife vet releasing an animal into the wild.

Materials

Student Magazine, drawing paper, markers/crayons/paints, video (optional)

Time

50 minutes core lesson and activity; 20 minutes extension activity

Subject Areas

ELA, Social Studies

Instructional Goal

This lesson will help students understand how caring for wild animals is different from caring for domestic animals.

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Participate in a discussion about the role of a wildlife veterinarian.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the difference in how wild animals and domestic animals are given treatment.

Introduce Lesson Target Question

Write the target question on the board and read it aloud to students.



How is caring for wild animals different from caring for domestic animals?

Explain that as they work through this lesson, they will think about this question. At the end of the lesson, they will discuss their thoughts about the question.

Preview

Give each student a copy of the Student Magazine. Have them turn to the profile of the wildlife veterinarian on page 8. Read the title and have students preview the photographs. Ask students:

- *What do you think a veterinarian does?*
- *How do you think caring for sick or hurt wild animals is different from caring for sick or hurt pets?*

Read

Have students read the profile. Some students will be able to read the profile independently. Other students may benefit from reading with a partner. You may want to read the profile to beginning readers as they follow along.

Discuss

Use the following question prompts to have students discuss the profile.

- *Look at the second paragraph. What does the text say is different about treating pets and treating wild animals? (Vets can pet cats or dogs to calm them, but they can't do this with wild animals.)*
- *Why do you think Ian says he needs to work quickly when dealing with wild animals? (Wild animals are afraid of people, so he wants to get the scary situation over quickly for them.)*
- *What does Ian say is the best part of his job? (releasing animals back into the wild) Why do you think he says this? (He knows wild animals belong in the wild, and he loves to see them back where they belong.)*

Activity: Role-Play

1. Have students engage in a role-play showing how a wildlife veterinarian treats wild animals. If your students have had experience with taking a pet to the vet, have them think about the following questions before they participate in the role-play.
 - *How do you get your pet to the vet?*
 - *How does your pet feel when you take him or her to the vet?*
 - *How do you comfort your pet when you are with the vet?*
 - *Who else might be in the room with you and your pet?*
 - *What are some reasons people might take their pets to the vet?*
2. Next have students imagine they have to take a wild animal to a wildlife vet. Have them consider things such as:
 - *What animal is the veterinarian treating?*
 - *Why is the animal being treated by the veterinarian? (hit by car, gunshot wound, sick, etc.)*
 - *Where is the veterinarian treating the animal?*
 - *What in this environment would be frightening to a wild animal? (bright lights, people, voices, strange sounds and smells)*
 - *How can the vet make the experience less scary for the animal?*

3. Place students into groups of three. One student can role-play the vet, one can role-play the wild animal, and one can play a person who alerted the vet to the wild animal's problem. Have each group prepare a short role-play to present to the class.
4. After students have presented their role-plays, have them point out the major differences between caring for a wild animal compared to caring for a pet. Students might mention things such as: not talking when working with a wild animal, working quickly, trying not to handle the animal, turning off lights, moving other people away, etc.
5.  Revisit the target question: How is caring for wild animals different from caring for domestic animals?
 - *Think about the target question. How would you answer this question?*

Lesson 4 Extension: Draw the Release of a Wild Animal

1. Ask students if they remember what Ian, the wildlife veterinarian, said was the best part of his job (releasing the wild animal back to where the animal belongs... in the wild).
2. Have students draw a picture of a wild animal being released back into the wild after he has been treated by a wildlife vet. Tell students to be prepared to explain their drawing to their classmates.
3.  You may want to show students minutes 8:40–9:40 of the video as the wild animal is released into the wild.

Lesson 5: Two Kinds of Cats

Overview

Students will read a poem comparing domestic cats and tigers. They will use a Venn diagram to make comparisons and relate their findings to the essential questions. To extend the lesson, students may use the poem as a model to write their own poem or song.

Materials

Student Magazine, chart paper, sentence starters (see below)

Time

50 minutes core lesson and activity; 20 minutes extension activity

Subject Areas

ELA, Science

Instructional Goal

This lesson will help students understand the difference between wild animals and domestic animals and to appreciate how we can live respectfully alongside wildlife.

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Interpret information presented through a poem.
- Identify the theme of a poem.
- Understand the difference between how wild animals and domestic animals meet their needs.
- Compare and contrast the different physical, social, and behavioral requirements necessary for a tiger and a domestic cat to thrive.
- Distinguish between harmful and helpful human behaviors towards tigers and cats.
- Distinguish between positively interacting with cats up close and enjoying tigers from a safe and respectful distance.

Introduce Lesson Target Questions

Write the lesson target questions on the board and read them aloud to students.



How are wild tigers and domestic cats the same and different?

How do we show our love for them?

Explain that as students work through this lesson, they will think about these questions. At the end of the lesson, they will discuss their thoughts about these questions.

Preview

1. Give each student a copy of the Student Magazine. Have them turn to the poem on page 9.
 - *What kind of text is this?*
 - *What do you think the two kinds of cats are that we will read about in the poem?*
2. Call attention to how the poem is laid out in verses. Tell students that the bold text tells them they should read the words more forcefully. Explain that the words are not neatly laid out in sentences like in a story or an article.

Read

1. Read aloud the poem as students listen and follow along. Model reading with expression, varying the speed and rhythm of your reading to match the text cues.
2. Read aloud the poem again, this time having students read it with you.

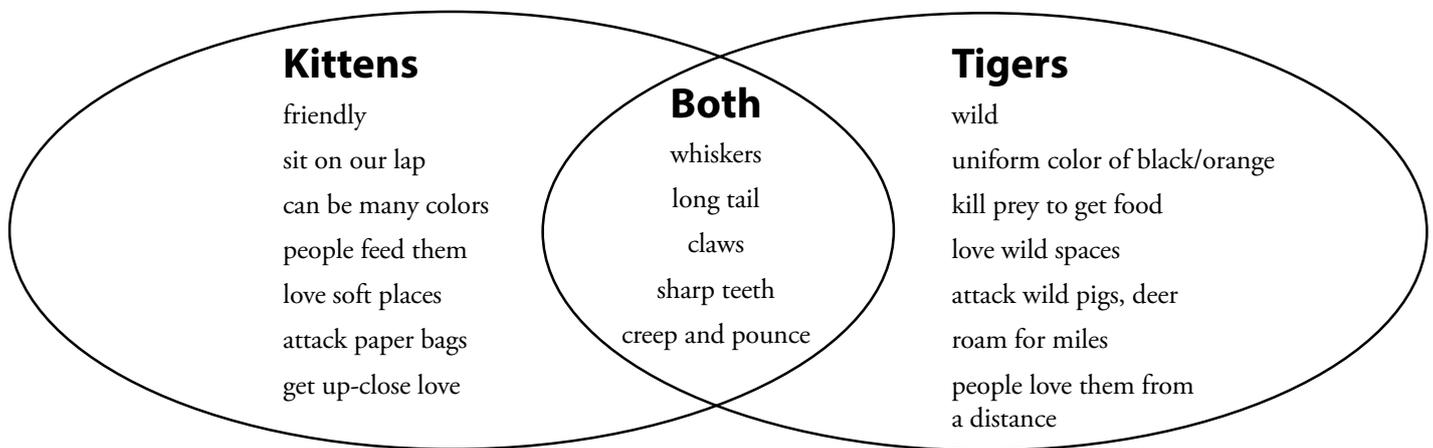
Discuss

Encourage discussion to help students understand the theme of the poem.

- *What are the two cats in the poem?* (pet kitten, tiger)
- *What are some things that a cat and a tiger have in common?* (whiskers, tails, sharp teeth, claws, both slink and creep)
- *What is different about the way kittens and tigers eat?* (People feed kittens; tigers kill their prey to get food.)
- *What is different about the places kittens and tigers like?* (Kittens love people's laps, soft resting places; tigers love forests, creeks, space to roam.)
- Call attention to the line where the words run together. *Can we read this in a way that sounds a bit like a cat purring?* Read the line with students. *Why do you think the poet wrote the line this way?* (to emphasize the difference between kittens and tigers—kittens are loving, we can hold them close)
- *What message do you think the poet wants us to understand after reading this poem?* (Kittens are pets but tigers are wild; tigers need to live in the wild.)
- *What do you think are ways we can respect wild animals?* (We should respect tigers by keeping our distance from them and letting them be wild and free.)

Activity: Venn Diagram

1. Have students complete a Venn diagram and use information from the poem to compare and contrast kittens and tigers. One side of the Venn diagram lists the characteristics of kittens; the other side lists the characteristics of tigers. The overlapping part in the middle lists characteristics of both kittens and tigers. You may want to create the Venn diagram with students as a whole group to support them.
2. Have students look at the completed Venn diagram. Ask:
 - *Look at the information we have written on the Venn diagram. How do we know a tiger is wild?*
 - *How can we best love tigers?*
3.  After completing the Venn diagram, call attention to the target questions: How are wild tigers and domestic cats the same and different? How do we show our love for them?
 - *Think about the target questions. How would you answer these questions?*



Lesson 5 Extension: Write a Poem or Song

1. Explain to students that in groups of two or three they will write their own poem or make up a song that compares a wild animal and a domestic one—for example, a domestic dog and a wolf.
2. Discuss the structure of the poem with them and have students notice how one line talks about a kitten and the next line talks about the tiger. Explain that they will use the poem as a model to write their own poem or song. Provide sentence starters that can help them, such as these examples for comparing dogs and wolves.
3. Before students begin working on their poem or song, brainstorm some differences between dogs and wolves, using similar topics from the poem: how the two animals look, things they love, what they eat, etc. Record students' ideas on chart paper for them to use as they write.
4. For younger children, create the poem or song as a group activity. Ask students to help you decide on the words to use. If students choose to do a song, they could add percussion, dance steps, or motions.

Dogs are _____ Dogs love _____
 They _____ Wolves love _____
 Wolves are _____
 They _____

Lesson 6: Daisy and the Dragon

Overview

Students will read a fantasy story and relate the theme of the story to the unit's essential questions. Students will respond to statements about pets by "voting with their feet." To extend the lesson, students will draw their own mythical wild creature.

Instructional Goal

This lesson will reinforce the idea that wild animals belong in the wild and that people cannot adequately provide for their needs.

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Identify and describe story elements.
- Understand the story theme: It is better for wild animals and people if wild animals live in the wild.
- Distinguish between harmful and helpful human behaviors towards wild animals.
- Consider the natural behaviors and needs of wild animals.
- Indicate an awareness of the "feelings" of wild animals.
- Explore multiple perspectives on how to live respectfully alongside wildlife.

Materials

Student Magazine, card or chart paper, drawing paper, markers/crayons/paints, video

Time

50 minutes core lesson and activity; 30 minutes extension activity

Subject Areas

ELA, Science, Social Studies

2. Read aloud the title and page 10 as students follow along.

- *What do you think might happen in this story?*

Read

Have students read the rest of the story. Some students will be able to read the story independently. Other students may benefit from reading with a partner. You may want to read the story to beginning readers as they follow along.

Discuss

1. Encourage discussion to help students understand story elements and the theme of the story.

- *Who are the characters in this story?* (Daisy, baby dragon)
- *Where is the setting of the story?* (a make-believe forest near a castle)
- *How does Daisy try to take care of the baby dragon?* (tries to give the dragon food, find things for the dragon to play with, give the dragon a bath, find a place for the dragon to sleep)
- *Why don't the things Daisy tries to do work?* (The dragon is wild, not a pet. He doesn't respond to things the same way a domestic dog or cat would.)
- *How is the problem of the baby dragon solved?* (The dragon mama comes and takes him back to the wild.)
- *Why does the text say "And Daisy was very happy to wave good-bye"?* (It was too hard for her to take care of a wild animal.)
- *What do you think Daisy learned from her experience with the dragon?* (Dragons are better off living in the wild.)
- *What do you think the author of this story might say to someone who has a wild animal as a pet?* (Possible answer: Wild animals are not pets and should be in the wild.)
- *What do you think the vet Ian Robinson would say?* (Possible answer: Wild animals belong in the wild.)

2.  Show students minutes 7:12–7:45 in the video. Ask them to compare what happened with the animated elephant in the video and the dragon in the story.

- *How are the message of this part of the video and the message of the story the same?*

NOTE: If it is not possible to view the video, help students recall what they saw in this segment of the video.

Introduce Lesson Target Question

Write the target question on the board and read it aloud to students.



Why should wild animals live in the wild?

Explain that as students work through this lesson, they will think about this question. At the end of the lesson, they will discuss their thoughts about the question.

Preview

1. Give each student a copy of the Student Magazine. Have them turn to the story on page 10.

- *What is the girl in the picture doing?*
- *What animal do you see?*

Activity: Vote with Your Feet!

1. Write the words *yes* and *no* on large pieces of card or chart paper. Tape the paper with the word *yes* in one corner of the room and the paper with the word *no* in another.
2. Tell students they will vote with their feet and have the chance to convince others to agree with them.
3. Read the agree/disagree statements to students one at a time, and have them walk to the “yes” corner if they agree with the statement and to the “no” corner if they disagree. Call on students to explain why they think the way they do. Allow students to move if they are convinced to change their position. Then read the next statement.

Agree/Disagree Statements

- The best place for a wild animal is in the wild.
 - Wild animals would like it if people petted them.
 - Wild animals do not need people to feed them.
 - A tiger could be tamed and be just like a kitten.
4.  After students have completed the activity, call attention to the target question: Why should wild animals live in the wild?
 - *Think about the target question. How would you answer this question?*

Lesson 6 Extension: Wild Creature Drawings

1. Discuss with students what they have learned in this unit about wild animals and how they are adapted to live in the wild.
2. Have students draw their own fantasy wild animal in the creature’s habitat. They should label their creature’s body parts, highlighting how the body parts help the creature find food, water, shelter, or space in the wild.
3. Allow students to present the drawings of their creatures and explain why their creature would not make a good pet.

Lesson 7: Wild Animals—In Your Neighborhood!

Overview

Students will read an article to find out how wild animals live in neighborhoods with people. They will choose a wild animal and research the animal's needs to find out how they are being met by the neighborhood habitat. To extend the lesson, students will take a walking trip to observe the wildlife near their classroom.

Materials

Student Magazine, sheet of paper for each student, reference materials including website links, chart paper, markers, video

Time

25 minutes reading and discussion; core activity and extension time may vary

Subject Areas

ELA, Science, Social Studies

Instructional Goal

This lesson will help students understand that there are wild animals all around them. It will also help them understand that they can observe wild animals, but they should be careful not to harm or disturb the animals in any way.

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Identify wild animals that live in their neighborhood.
- Research a wild animal that lives in their neighborhood and find out how the animal's needs are met there.
- Demonstrate the willingness to inform others about how to minimize the harm they cause wild animals by explaining what they should do when they see a wild animal.

Introduce Lesson Target Question

Write the target question on the board and read it aloud to



How can we live respectfully alongside wild animals?

students.

Explain that as students work through this lesson, they will think about this question. At the end of the lesson, they will discuss their thoughts about the question.

Preview

1. Give each student a copy of the Student Magazine. Have them turn to page 13. Read the title of the article with them.
 - *Do you think there are wild animals in our neighborhood? What wild animals could live here?*
2. Read the headings in the article with students.
 - *Based on the headings, what might we learn when we read this article?*
 - *What does the text in the box on page 13 tell us? (how to spot signs of wild animals)*
3. Point out the words in bold: *habitats, suburbs, rural*. Ask students if they know what the words mean. Then read aloud the glossary definitions with them.
4. Depending on where the students live, they may not be familiar with some of the animal names in the article: *peregrine falcon, hedgehogs, caracal, hyena, gazelles, Indian muntjac, serow*. You may want to pre-teach these animal names and show students pictures of the animals before they read the article. They can find pictures of some of these animals on page 14.

Read

Have students read the article. Some students will be able to read it independently. Other students may benefit from reading with a partner. You may want to read the article to beginning readers as they follow along.

Discuss

1. Discuss the article with students using the following question prompts.
 - *How can you tell if there are wild animals around? (animal sounds, rustling grass, paw prints, trails, holes, nests, poop [scat or droppings])*
 - *Let's look at the clues on the list on page 13. What wild animals might leave these clues?*
 - *What are some wild animals you might see in a neighborhood in London? (peregrine falcons, foxes, hedgehogs, squirrels, mice) In the Arabian Peninsula? (gray wolves, caracal, striped hyenas, gazelles) In rural southern China? (mongoose, deer, Indian muntjac, serow)*
 - *Why is it good to have wild animals in our neighborhoods? (eat insects, spread seeds, add beauty to our lives)*
 - *Why do some people not like having wildlife nearby? (dislike having wild animals use people's homes for shelter or food, they might make noise, they might chew on things)*

- *Why does the author say that “it’s their neighborhood, too”?* (Possible answer: because animals need homes the same as people do; because people move into places where wild animals live; because sometimes we create habitat for wild animals when we create habitat for ourselves, e.g. a pond in a golf course, a barn, etc.)
2. Discuss the sidebar text on page 15.
 - *This box gives us hints on what to do to see wild animals and what to do if you see a wild animal. What are some things we should do?*
 - *What does “slow down, go around, and don’t step on” mean?* (Be careful not to hurt any kind of wildlife.) *What might you be careful not to step on?* (possible answer: insects; an animal’s home, such as a log; a turtle on a path, etc.)
 3.  Show students minutes 7:55–8:22 in the video. Ask students:
 - *Is the child observing wild animals respectfully? How do you think the animal feels? What would you tell the child to do instead?*

Then show minutes 8:22-8:40 in the video.

 - *What is the child doing now that is respectful of wild animals? How do you think the animal feels now?*

NOTE: If it is not possible to view the video, help students recall what they saw in this segment of the video.
 4. Have students turn to page 16.
 - *Here are some more things we can do to watch wildlife. Let’s read this list together.*
 - *What should we remember when we want to see wildlife?* (to do things that keep ourselves and the animals safe)
 5. Have students turn to page 17.
 - *This puzzle shows pictures of children observing wildlife in their backyard. How good are you at observing? Can you spot ten small differences between the pictures?*

Activity: Wild for a Reason Poster

1. Choose a wild animal that the class is interested in that lives in their neighborhood.
2. Provide reference materials for students, including website links, on the wild animal. You may even find a webcam of a wild animal in your neighborhood.
3. Have students work in groups of two or three. Have them fold a blank sheet of paper in half and then in half again. Have them write the wild animal’s needs in each box (food, shelter, water, space). As students research the animal, have them draw or write ideas of how the wild animal is getting his needs met in their neighborhood.

With young children, you may want to direct the research, reading sections from the text, asking students to paraphrase what you read, and then showing students how you take notes on a research sheet on chart paper.

Research Sheet

Food	Water
Shelter	Space

4. Once students have found information on the wild animal, discuss what physical characteristics the animal has that help him live in his habitat.
5. Have students work in groups or with a partner to create an informational poster about the wild animal. Have them draw the wild animal and write the animal's name as a heading. Ask them to label the body parts that help the wild animal survive. Have them add pictures to show how the animal gets the things he needs from his habitat: food, water, shelter, space. For example, students could label a tree squirrel's tail, which helps the squirrel keep his balance when climbing trees, sharp claws that help the squirrel grip the tree, big ears to hear any predators nearby, sharp teeth to crack the nuts the squirrel eats. The habitat would show trees that provide nuts and seeds for food, places for building nests, leaves that provide the squirrel with the water he needs, and so on.

Ask each group of students to add messages to the poster about how people can live respectfully with wild animals in their neighborhood—for example, turn off lights at night, do not disturb wild animals, give a wide berth, don't litter, protect natural spaces, protect streams, etc.

You may want to help younger students complete the poster. They might add their own drawings or cut out pictures and paste them on the poster. Ask students what they want to write on the poster and record it for them. Point to each word after you are finished writing, and have students read the text with you.

6.  After students have had a chance to research, create, and present their posters, discuss the target question: How can we live respectfully alongside wild animals?
 - *Think about the target question. How would you answer this question?*

Lesson 7 Extension: Backyard Wildlife Investigation

1. Have students brainstorm a list of wild animals that live in their neighborhood.
2. Tell students that they will be taking a short walking field trip around the school or the neighborhood to look for these wild animals or evidence of these animals. Students may also see wild animals that are not on their list.
3. Before students go looking for wild animals, have them create a “code of conduct” for viewing animals on their walk. The “code of conduct” should outline simple rules for observing wildlife safely and respectfully. Have students refer to the sidebar on page 15 and the information on page 16 as you create the “code of conduct” together.
4. Give students **Worksheet 2: Observation Chart**. During the walking trip, as students observe wild animals, or evidence of animals, have them make notes on the chart. Remind students that they might not see the actual wild animal, but they might see evidence of the animal, such as a feather, a nest, or poop. Younger students can draw pictures of what they observe, rather than writing words.

Worksheet 2: Observation Chart

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Write or draw what you see.

Animal I See	Location	
Evidence I See	Location	What Animal?

Lesson 8: Culminating Project

Overview

Students will create a culminating project to demonstrate their learning and spread awareness of how to keep wild animals wild.

Materials

Chart paper; other materials will vary based on project selected.

Time

Time will vary based on project selected.

Instructional Goal

This lesson will allow students to demonstrate their understanding of what it means to be wild and how people can live respectfully alongside wildlife.

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Discuss what they learned and answer the essential questions.
- Use a variety of media to share what they have learned in the unit.
- Demonstrate that they are positively inspired by wild animals and the environment through artistic expression, language, expressive thought, etc.
- Demonstrate the willingness to influence others to be personally responsible for minimizing the harm they cause individual wild animals and populations.

Introduce Lesson Target Question

Write the target question on the board and read it aloud to students. Explain that it is time for them to show what they have learned.



What have we learned?

Discuss Essential Questions

1. Ask students to turn to a partner and share the important things they learned in the unit. Then ask partners to share with the class. Write their ideas on chart paper.
2. Display the essential questions and read them aloud.
 - *What does it mean to be wild?*
 - *How do we live respectfully alongside wildlife?*

Discuss the questions with students. To ensure that all students think about the questions, you may want to have partners discuss the questions first before opening up the discussion with the whole class.

Post-Assessment

See pages 13–15 in the Program Overview for a post-assessment to help you evaluate what your students have learned about wild animals.

Prepare for the Project

1. Discuss with students how they will teach others what they learned about wild animals in this unit. Use the ideas below, or ideas students have, to share information.
2. Have students consider the specific audience they want to target. You may choose for students to present their projects to the classroom, the greater school community, or an online community for educators. Keep in mind your school's privacy policies and protecting your students' privacy when sharing their work or pictures/videos beyond the school setting.
3. Determine what resources are available for students and how much time they will spend on the projects. This will help determine the scope of the students' projects.

Project Ideas

1. **Visual Arts Showcase:** Have students choose a wild animal and create a visual representation of the animal. Depending on resources available, you may have students choose from several visual arts mediums: drawing, painting, clay models, paper models, dioramas, and so on. For drawings and paintings, have students write at the top of a piece of paper: "I am wild, not a pet." For three-dimensional models, have students write the sentence on a small card to place in front of their model. Have students share their artwork in one or more of the following ways:
 - **Sharing with students in the classroom:** Have students set up their art projects at their seat locations along with a blank piece of paper for comments. Have students walk around the room, viewing each other's projects and writing compliments about the work.
 - **Sharing with greater school community:** Choose a location in the school for other students to view the projects. Invite other classes to come view the student projects.
 -  **Sharing with an online community for educators:** Pictures of students' visual arts projects can be uploaded to the online community for classrooms around the world to see. Students may also enter their drawings in the Animal Action Art and Writing Contest. See page 10 in the Program Overview for information about the online community and the art and writing contest.

2. **Class Video:** Work with the students to create a video that everyone in the class can contribute to. In order to teach others about the ideas in this unit, ensure the video answers the unit’s essential questions: “What does it mean to be wild?” and “How do we live respectfully alongside wildlife?” Have students share their video in one or more of the following ways:
- **Sharing with students in classroom:** View the completed video in the classroom.
 - **Sharing with greater school community:** Present the video at an assembly or invite classes to view the video in the classroom.
 -  **Sharing with an online community for educators:** The video can be uploaded to the online community for classrooms around the world to see.
3. **ABC Wild Animal Book:** Assign each student a letter from the alphabet and help them choose a wild animal whose name begins with that letter to read about and draw. Give each student a piece of paper that includes the letter they are assigned, shown in large type, and the phrase: “I am wild because ...”
- Have students read about their wild animals from text or online resources. Then have them draw their wild animal on the paper and write what makes the animal wild.
- When students are finished, collect the papers and create a class ABC wild animal book. Share the class book in one or more of the following ways:
- **Sharing with students in classroom:** Read the book aloud and then place it in the classroom library for students to read on their own.
 - **Sharing with greater school community:** Place the class book in the school library or other common place for other students to read.
 -  **Sharing with an online community for educators:** Scan pages from the book and upload them to the online community for classrooms around the world to see.
4. **Class Skit:** Work with the students to create a skit that highlights what they learned in the unit. Ensure the skit answers the unit’s essential questions: “What does it mean to be wild?” and “How do we live respectfully alongside wildlife?”
- **Sharing with greater school community:** Have students perform their skit at an assembly or for other individual classes.
 -  **Sharing with an online community for educators:** Videotape a performance and upload it to the online community for classrooms around the world to see.
5. **Mural:** Choose a spot in the school to create a mural. Tell students they will work together to create a mural that tells other students how they can observe wildlife in a safe and respectful way. Explain that the mural will contain the following elements:
- A background that shows a particular environment, like a backyard, a forest, or a city block
 - Wild animals that live in the environment
 - Children and/or adults following one or more of the “Be Aware and Take Care” guidelines from page 15 in the Student Magazine
 - A label or title that tells how to observe wildlife safely and respectfully
6. **Class Display:** Provide wall space and/or a table for students to display the work they have completed during the unit—for example, the poems they created, their wild creature drawings, their “what a lion needs” diagrams. Invite other classes to come in and view their work, while students talk about what they did.
7. **Celebration:** Help students plan a “Go Wild!” party and invite parents and other students. Have students consider:
- Who they will invite
 - What their party invitations will look like and say
 - How they will decorate their classroom
 - How they will educate others about what they have learned
 - What games/food/activities they will provide
- If students create some of the other project ideas, such as the ABC book, visual arts, or the class video, the party would be a good time for them to share their work with others.