Lesson Plan

Title: "Endangered Species"

Subject: Science

Grade level: 2-5

Endangered Species Lesson

An elementary science teaching lesson covering endangered species. Includes printable teaching worksheets

Learning Objective

After reading about and discussing endangered species, students will be able to gather information about a particular endangered species and present findings to the class, by completing a research outline and making a realistic sketch of the animal.

Content Targets

Science: Life Science, investigation skills, animals and their habitats, endangered species

Language Arts: Research skills, reading comprehension, writing mechanics, responding to a prompt, listening and speaking skills, referencing. Visual Arts

Lesson Materials

- A variety of media for research: books about endangered species, Internet websites (a list of links compiled onto a Word document or web page), science magazines, etc.
- White construction or legal paper
- Crayons, poster paints, glue, paint brushes, oil pastels, pencils, markers, scissors

Academic Language Focus

- What it means for a species to be endangered.
- How to reference resources.
Key Vocabulary
Endangered species, threatened species, extinct species, habitat, population, life span

Modifications for English Language Learners
Provide students with research material that is easy to decode, with a highlighter. For beginning and intermediate students, allow them to write phrases rather than complete sentences. Encourage them to draw their picture and write related phrases directly on their picture.

Modifications for upper grades or advanced students
Upper grade or advanced students can write essays and these students can be encouraged to do more critical thinking about the animals’ situation, such as devising measures to save the animal, or deciding why particular measures are working or not working.

Extension Activities
Students can use the outlines as pre-writing graphic organizers to write research papers.

Assessment
Use the research outlines and presentations to assess students content knowledge of the animal they research, ability to engage in the research process, and listening and speaking skills.

Part 1
Lesson Warm-Up
Write the phrase “Endangered Species” on the board and ask students what they think this means. Brainstorm ideas as a class and write their ideas on the board in cluster formation.

Introduction
Read a non-fiction book or article about endangered species to the class.

After reading, ask students if they can give the definition for endangered species and write their idea on the board. Remind students that endangered species do not just have to be animals, but can also be plants.

Ask students if they can remember any endangered animals that were mentioned in the book. Make a list of animal species on the board.

Tell students that they will be doing a research outline on an endangered animal. Assign or let students choose an animal to research (I would use popsicle sticks with
their names on them to be fair). Have each student write their name on the board next to the species they pick.

Body

Pass out a copy of the Research Outline (printable) and read it with students. Ask students what resources might be available to do their project (books, a trip to the school, library, Internet, magazines, etc.) If students only have access to a few computers in the classroom, make a sign-up sheet for different days.

Using an animal that has not been chosen, model how to gather research. Be sure to explain exactly what is expected by reading the questions in the research report and finding most of their answers. This can be posted in the front as an example and can be used as a reference for students. Show students how to reference their materials (APA style).

Closure

Ask students to share one fact their learned about their species with a partner.

Ask students, as a whole class, what are some reasons that their animals are endangered. Discuss as a class

Part 2

Introduction

Tell students that now that we have finished our written reports, we are going to make realistic sketches of our animals. Show students how to find a photograph of their animal (in books, or Internet).

Body

Model how to sketch a realistic picture. For example, if they are drawing a cheetah, they want to color it orange with black spots, not purple. Show students how to color in their animal with oil pastels, markers, crayons, etc. They can cut their finished animal out.

Next show students how to make the background of the picture. Tell students to look back in their reports to find the animals’ habitat. They will be using crayons and watered-down paint to create a background. For example, if their animal lives in the ocean, they might draw some seaweed and rocks with crayon and then paint their background with blue and green paint. Explain to students that having a somewhat abstract background will make their realistic animal pictures standout. Let the paintings
dry before mounting them on colored construction paper or tag board.

Lastly, give students a square of foam to glue onto their painting. Show them how to glue their animals on the foam to make the picture appear 3-D.

When projects are completed, students will do a brief oral presentation. Model for students how to stand up straight, make eye contact with the audience and talk with a clear and audible voice. Ask students to share: three facts about their animal, why their animal is endangered and what is being done to save the species. They can also present their pictures. Remind students what it means to be a good listening audience.

**Closure**

Students can put up their reports and pictures on a bulletin board. For another lesson, you could have your class make a bulletin showing different habitats or a world map and then place reports on them to match the animals’ environment or region in which they live.