Animals in the Wild Unit

Tara Cramer
Spring 2012

Rice Elementary, Early Childhood Classroom
Mary Slavik
March 19, 2012 – April 5, 2012
## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting and Context</td>
<td>3-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community Context: Wellington, CO</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• District Context: Poudre School District</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• School Context: Rice Elementary</td>
<td>4-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Classroom Context: Early Childhood</td>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Topic and Rationale</td>
<td>9-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Standards, Goals and Objectives</td>
<td>12-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unit Standard, Goals and Objectives Alignment Chart</td>
<td>15-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Tools</td>
<td>18-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Plan</td>
<td>21-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Weekly Layout</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lesson Plans</td>
<td>23-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of Data</td>
<td>41-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>46-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Setting and Context

Community Context: Wellington, CO

Rice Elementary is located in Wellington, CO in Larimer County. As of 2009 Wellington’s population was 5,372 persons with an average age of 30 years. Since 2000 the population in the city of Wellington has grown 101.05%. It is located north of Fort Collins and just 30 minutes south of Cheyenne, Wyoming. About 94% of people here are Caucasian, 1% African American, 7% Hispanic, and less than one percent is Asian or Native American. Children fourteen years and younger make up 27% of the population with 93% of households claiming English to be the primary language spoken at home and 5% Spanish speaking families.

The average family size in Wellington is 3.3 persons with family households making up 71% of the town’s population. The Colorado Rocky Mountains create a wonderful backdrop to Wellington. With mountains so close to town it is easy to be an avid outdoors fan. The climate is not severe during any of the four seasons, and is enjoyable for year-round activities with an average temperature of 45.1 degrees Fahrenheit. Farm and grazing land are seen on all sides of Wellington which creates a nice small town atmosphere. In Wellington there are three public schools: Wellington Middle School, Eyestone Elementary School, and Rice Elementary school. There are no private schools within the city. Wellington has a desirable location being so near the mountains and Fort Collins and is a nice city to live in with a family.

District Context: Poudre School District

Poudre School District is made up of 26,250 students and includes 52 schools. These schools are located in Fort Collins, Wellington, Timnath, and the mountain schools which
include: Livermore, Red Feather, and Stove Prairie. Poudre School District hosts a wide variety of families. Population rates include: 4,811 Hispanic or Latino, 30,819 non Hispanic or Latino, 30,630 White, 348 Black or African American, 292 American Indian or Alaskan Native, 713 Asian, 25 Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and the population of those who claim two or more races is 1,631. The district has many different populations to serve and therefore has many different programs in place to accommodate every need. The number of English Language Learners is 1,650 and there are 1,556 teachers of every kind to meet the needs of these students and those needing extra and specialized help. The average teacher to student ratio in Poudre School District is one to seventeen which allows for a manageable classroom size. All classes use a district wide curriculum for literacy called Treasures and for math instruction Everyday Math is the curriculum used. Each grade level has different forms of instruction to accommodate the needs of each child at different ages and stages of development.

School Context: Rice Elementary School

Rice Elementary School is located in Wellington off of Interstate 25. It was built in 2007 and designed with sustainable design guidelines which have helped Rice to score a perfect 100 on the Energy Star rating for two years. The mission at Rice is to give “an extraordinary education for every child... every day” (Rice Elementary, 2012). All students are included in this mission including all students with special needs. Students requiring special services are integrated in every classroom with no pull out necessary. There are a total of 376 students enrolled at Rice from PreK to fifth grade. Of these students approximately 83% are Caucasian, 13% are Hispanic or Latino, while 2.89% makes up all other races including those identifying as two or more races. Currently 22.61% of students
are receiving free lunch, 10.64% reduced lunch, and 66.76% are paid lunch. The staff includes 33 teachers from PreK to fifth grade including IMPACT, Integrated Services, and Literacy teachers. The principal is Karen Koehn and there are three other women on the office staff.

Rice uses the Treasures curriculum for literacy instruction and other types of instruction that meet the needs of the students. This curriculum is used throughout Poudre School District and is a research based method of instruction. Everyday Math is used for math instruction which implements a spiral method to ensure that students are being exposed to math material multiple times throughout their education rather than teaching it once then moving to another topic. In each class from first to fifth grade there is I/E time for intervention and enrichment to ensure that the needs of all students are being met. During this time students are in small groups and teachers are given the chance to progress monitor specific skills to help guide later instruction. While teachers are progress monitoring there is time for students to read independently to encourage fluency and comprehension. For writing there is not a specific curriculum. However, teachers at Rice created writing rubrics that are on a continuum to ensure that students in every grade are developing common language and skills.

Rice is a Positive Behavior System (PBS) school. This means that the staff is trained to support and praise positive behaviors rather than only focusing on negative ones. This is done in part by the use of ‘SOAR’ tickets. This stands for Self Control, Optimism, Appreciation, and Respect. Each month the school holds a SOAR assembly for every class where teachers are encouraged to select a student for each category that has been a spectacular role model for others. SOAR tickets are given on a daily basis in the classrooms
and during IMPACT which includes art, music, and physical education. Each classroom has a system for encouraging positive behaviors with SOAR tickets. For example one classroom has a rule that if a student has ten tickets they may pick a prize from the prize box. Positive behavior is encouraged and supported which creates an atmosphere in which students want to show good behaviors.

At Rice Elementary there is large support from the community for all events. Recently the Main Street Market in the town of Wellington had a fundraiser in which Rice won for the school with the highest number of receipts from the market. Community and family volunteers are encouraged and sought after in every class. Rice has even marketed using flyers to grandparents for daily volunteer assignments and for specific days such as the Dr. Seuss read-a-thon. There is a lot of community support in Wellington and every family does as much as they can to become involved. Rice has multiple opportunities throughout the school year for families to come in and observe what has been happening during the school days. These events include science fair night, art fair, social studies spectacular, and tech day for parents. Rice has also held multiple family nights at Rollerland to encourage families to come and participate in school events. Rice Elementary is a good school with many opportunities for all students.

Classroom Context

In the PreK wing there is Ms. Mary’s afternoon preschool class. When you enter you immediately see cubbies for each child, work tables, and learning centers around the entire room. The atmosphere is friendly, inviting and extremely child safe. In this room there are a total of 16 students: 8 girls and 8 boys. One student is an English Language Learner (ELL). He is extremely bright and friendly and has parents who are very involved in his learning
and growth of his English language. In this room there are five students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) for speech. Depending on the amount of time associated with each child's speech services they are pulled out during centers and left in the room for observation and testing. A majority of the class is Caucasian with the exception of two students that are Hispanic or Latino. No child is ever looked at differently because of their ethnic background and every child is extremely encouraging to one another.

Classroom management in this room focuses around safety rules. These rules are: we keep ourselves safe, we keep each other safe, and we keep our things safe. Safety is established during the first days at school and is continually referred back to if students are not behaving accordingly. Another classroom management technique is social and emotional behavior. In Ms. Mary’s PreK everyone is friends and we try to ensure that everyone’s feelings are being listened to. Friendship with all is encouraged through buddy centers in which students are paired with one another and each child has to agree on what to do during centers for that day. Another tool to use for effective classroom management is delegated jobs and a carpet square for students needing to refocus. Student conflict is handled using a problem solving kit and teacher intervention if necessary. A problem solving kit includes a timer, popsicles sticks and a feelings chart. Using these tools students can tell each other how they feel, choose who gets to go first by who chooses the Popsicle stick delegating first or second, and using the timer to set allotted amount of times to use a toy before switching to encourage sharing. This kit is in an accessible place for all students to go to if needed.

Parents are encouraged to come and help during small groups and on days celebrating holidays. In Ms. Mary's room parents are extremely supportive and involved in
their child’s learning. Children in Ms. Mary’s room feel safe and appreciated and Ms. Mary has done an excellent job to ensure every child is welcome and their needs are being met.
Unit Topic and Rationale

In our world today many children are not able to experience animals besides the ones in their homes, and some children do not even have that exposure. Our world continues to become more urban, and as cities replace wildlife children are no longer easily able to observe nature and how animals live in it. This is why I felt that designing a unit based on animals in the wild was so important. Students need and want background knowledge of where animals live, where they come from, and how they survive.

When beginning to plan this unit I noticed students in my class playing with one another as if they themselves were mother animals protecting their babies. My unit began as one about animals in the wild. However, it transformed to incorporate what my students were interested in; dinosaurs. I began the unit with dinosaurs to engage my students and get their attention. After the first week was done we then moved on to safari animals and finished the unit talking about ocean animals. My ultimate goal in creating this unit was that my students walk away with a basic understanding of animals in the wild: where they live, what they look like, and what they eat.

To begin my unit I started with a pre-assessment of student knowledge. I asked them what they knew about wild animals, including the questions in my ultimate goal. From these answers I was able to continue with my lesson plans knowing what areas to support or expand upon. With whole group lessons I was able to focus on all the curricular domains: literacy, math, science, and social studies.

Throughout the unit various stories were read to model reading and engagement in text. These stories correlated with whole group lessons to emphasize what was being
taught. *Over in the Grasslands, I Wish I Had a Dinosaur, From Head to Toe, Miss Spider’s ABC,* and *Rainbow Fish* were all stories read throughout the course of the unit. Other literacy lessons included using describing words to talk about animals and learning vocabulary words including extinct, omnivore, carnivore, and herbivore. When learning how to describe students looked at real pictures to focus on specific parts of animals such as fur and number of legs. The vocabulary words were used throughout the unit to describe animals that live on land and animals in the ocean. All literacy lessons were ones that students were able to apply to other areas of learning.

Next, I created a graph for students to fill in with tally marks. They were to put a tally next to their favorite wild animal. After all students had placed a tally on our graph we added all tallies and found which animal had the most votes and which had the least. Students were able to visualize numbers with the tally marks and had a good example of a graph.

Our science lesson for this unit focused around how animals develop. When talking about dinosaurs and land animals two subjects we focused on were where they live and what they eat. Once our unit shifted to ocean animals we discussed how they also have places that they live and things they eat. These lessons all tied together to have the students understand that all living creatures develop in certain ways and need certain things to survive.

Finally we discussed where animals live. This tied in to our social studies lessons as we discussed what they need to have in their homes and where their homes may be. It is important for students to understand that not only do all living things develop in similar patterns, but certain things are also needed by all living things, including a home.
Overall, the unit was successful in that students were very excited about the topic and wanted to learn more. They learned vocabulary that can be used in many other areas of study and they were also able to see how all living things are similar; we all need basic things in order to survive, even wild animals.
Unit Standards, Goals and Objectives

Unit Goals:

- Students will have a basic understanding of animal vocabulary and how to use it.
- Students will be able to talk about and discuss animals in the wild.
- Students will understand basic needs of all living things.
- Students will be able to recognize correct number sequence.

Unit Objectives:

- Students will be able to successfully bring information from their current schema to name things that are already understood about animals in the wild.
- Students will be able to successfully remember the meanings of various vocabulary words and variations in dinosaur types and be able to retell and use them.
- Students will understand the meaning of habitat and be able to successfully sort animals into the habitat to which they belong.
- Students will successfully cut out a habitat and glue it next to the animal that lives there.
- Students will be able to successfully write tally marks, count these tally marks, and recognize that there is a largest and smallest number.
- Students will be able to successfully give descriptor words for various animals when asked to do so.
- Students will be able to successfully cut a dinosaur into pieces then glue it back together using the correct number order listed on the pieces.
- Students will be able to successfully name animals that live in the ocean and describe what makes them different from and the same as land animals.
- Students will successfully recognize numbers and count them in order.
- Students will show the growth of their knowledge by naming things that they have learned about wild animals that live on land and in water.
Unit Standards:

Content Area: Science

- Standard 2. Life Science
  2.1. Living things have characteristics and basic needs.
    2.1.a. Uses senses to gather information about living things.

- Standard 2. Life Science
  2.2. Living things develop in predictable patterns
    2.2.a. Identify the common needs such as food, air, and water of familiar living things

Content Area: Reading, Writing and Communicating

- Standard 1. Oral Expression and Listening
  1.1. Conceptual understanding conveyed through vocabulary words can occur using a variety of modalities.
    1.1.c. Demonstrates use of vocabulary in oral language to express ideas and events.

- Standard 3. Writing and Composition
  3.1. Pictures express ideas
    3.1.b. Orally describe or tell about a picture.

Content Area: Mathematics

- Standard 1. Number Sense, Properties and Operations
  1.1. Quantities can be represented and counted
    1.1.b. Match and quantify with a numeral.

- Standard 1. Number Sense, Properties, and Operations
  1.1. Quantities can be represented and counted
    1.1.a. Count and represent objects including coins to 10
Content Area: Social Studies

- Standard 2. Geography
  2.1. Develop spatial understanding, perspectives, and connections to the world
    2.1.d. Use pictures to locate familiar places
### Unit Standards, Goals and Objectives Alignment Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>State Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Students will have a basic understanding of animal vocabulary and how to use it. | • Students will be able to successfully remember the meanings of various vocabulary words and variations in dinosaur types and be to retell and use them.  
• Students will understand the meaning of habitat and be able to successfully sort animals into the habitat to which they belong. | Content Area: Reading, Writing and Communicating Standard 1. Oral Expression and Listening  
• Conceptual understanding conveyed through vocabulary words can occur using a variety of modalities.  
c. Demonstrates use of vocabulary in oral language to express ideas and events. |
| Students will be able to talk about and discuss animals in the wild.  | • Students will be able to successfully bring information from their current schema to name things that are already understood about animals in the wild.  
• Students will be able to successfully give descriptor words for various animals when asked to do so.  
• Students will show the growth of their knowledge by naming things that they have learned about wild animals that live on land and in water. | Content Area: Science Standard 2. Life Science  
• Living things have characteristics and basic needs  
a. Use senses to gather information about living things  
Content Area: Reading, Writing and Communicating Standard 3. Writing and Composition  
• Pictures express ideas  
b. Orally describe or tell about a picture |
| Students will understand basic needs of all living things.           | • Students will understand the meaning of habitat                         | Content Area: Science Standard 2. Life Science  
• Living things develop |
and be able to successfully sort animals into the habitat to which they belong.

- Students will be able to successfully name animals that live in the ocean and describe what makes them different from and the same as land animals.
- Students will successfully cut out a habitat and glue it next to the animal that lives there.

### Content Area: Mathematics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 1. Number Sense, Properties and Operations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Count and represent objects including coins to 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Match and quantify with a numeral.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Students will be able to successfully cut a dinosaur into pieces then glue it back together using the correct number order listed on the pieces.
Assessment Tools

Pre- and Post-Assessment

For this unit I chose to track overall knowledge at the beginning and end of the three weeks for my unit assessment. It was based from a KWL chart. However, I focused on what the students already knew and what they learned and omitted what they wanted to know. This section was omitted from my assessment because I felt that it was not developmentally appropriate for the 3-5 age group I was working with. This group of students can tell you what they know and what they are interested in but I felt asking them to think about what they wanted to know would not have served my purpose as well as testing if overall knowledge was gained.

The pre-assessment was given on the first day of the unit to assess knowledge that was current and previously known without any lessons being given from me. The students were told the unit topic then asked to answer four questions: what animals live in the wild, where do they live, what they eat, and if there was any other knowledge they knew not fitting into these three categories. All students were given the opportunity to answer these four questions and give any knowledge they had on the subject.

The post-assessment was given on the final day of the unit to assess knowledge gained. Students were asked similar questions to the pre-assessment. These questions included: where do they live, what do they eat, what do they look like, and any other information they knew. Again, all students were given the opportunity to answer one of the four questions.
Only one question was different between the pre- and post-assessment. This was done because I felt that the question on the post-assessment (what do they look like) was a more appropriate measure of knowledge gained than the question asked on the pre-assessment (what are some animals that live in the wild). The students were very easily able to list animals that lived in the wild so to ask this question again for the post-assessment would have been redundant because the students already demonstrated full understanding of the question.

**Instructional Assessments**

In addition to my cumulative pre- and post-assessment there were two small group assessments given and other assessments noted during whole group instruction. The first small group assessment was to assess knowledge of various animal habitats. Students were given a handout with animal pictures and names on it then a smaller handout with animal habitats. They were assessed on their ability to correctly match the cut out habitat with the animal that lived there.

The second small group assessment was to assess the student’s ability to correctly identify numbers and place them in correct number sequence. They were given a picture of a dinosaur that was divided into five parts, each part with a corresponding number. Students were assessed on their ability to cut out these sections then re-glue them in the correct number sequence to re-create the dinosaur.

During whole group lessons assessment consisted of observations and student participation. I felt that for this age group informal assessments were more developmentally appropriate due to the fact that they are not developmentally able or ready to read directions then act out what is expected from those directions. The
worksheets given to them were the closest to formal assessment within my unit and for these they were given verbal instructions and modeling. All forms of assessment guided my instruction and allowed me to see whether students were gaining knowledge and what lessons should be re-evaluated to be more effective in the future.
**Instructional Plan**

My PreK unit based on Animals in the Wild took place over three weeks. Lessons and objectives were incorporated into the whole group setting and within daily centers and small groups. Each week lessons incorporated math, literacy, science, and social studies. All but one of my lessons took place during one twenty minute whole group. The lessons were designed to be short due to the age group I was working with. However, ideas in the lessons will be brought back to their attention in later units and other lessons in their school careers. Overall, the students learned vocabulary, were able to read about and explore various types of wild animals, and learned more about where they live and what wild animals look like. All of these ideas were put into lessons that centered on rich literacy development, mathematics skills, and knowledge of where animals live. Throughout my unit I incorporated five different teaching strategies: inquiry based learning, hands-on learning, modeling, cooperative learning, and interest based learning.
Overview of Animals in the Wild Unit: March 19 – April 5

Week 1, March 19th-22nd:
- Initial Assessment – what do we know about animals in the wild?
- Learning about Dinosaurs
- Animal vocabulary: carnivore, herbivore, omnivore, habitat
- *Over in the Grasslands* – different types of habitats
- *I Wish I Had a Dinosaur*
- Small group assessment – habitat sort
- Introduce the letter Vv

Week 2, March 26th-29th:
- Learning about safari animals – animals that live on land
- Favorite animals graph – mathematics, number recognition and sequence
- Learning how to use words to describe animals
- *Miss Spider’s ABC* and *From Head to Toe*
- Watching dinosaurs grow – water capsules
- Small group assessment – dinosaur sequencing puzzle, putting dinosaur back in order using correct number sequence
- Introduce the letter Jj

Week 3, April 2nd-5th:
- Learning about ocean animals – basic needs of all animals (food, shelter, air, etc.)
- Sink or float science activity
- *Moving Day* and *Rainbow Fish*
- Final Assessment – what have we learned about animals in the wild?
- Introduce the letter Qq
Week One

Monday March 19
Whole Group – 12:45-1:05

Activity Name: What do we know about animals in the wild?

Objective: Students will be able to successfully bring information from their current schema to name things that are already understood about animals in the wild.

Standard: Content Area: Science
   2. Life Science
      2.1. Living things have characteristics and basic needs.
      2.1.a. Use senses to gather information about living things.

Materials: markers, dry erase markers, butcher paper with title (“Animals in the Wild”), Vv picture and letter cards

Procedure:
• Ask students to list some pet names that they know
• Write these names on the board
• When students have listed the pet names they can remember tape a large piece of white paper to the board
• Read students the title – “Animals in the Wild”
• Explain that wild animals are different than animals that we have as pets
• Using the name cards have each child say one thing they know about wild animals
   ➢ State each question category on board – where do they live? What do they eat? What do they look like? Anything else you know?
• When everyone has had a turn review the answers and explain to them that for the next three week we will be talking about wild animals
• move bodies
• introduce the letter Vv with letter pictures
   ➢ say each picture name and clap the number of syllables for each word
• Read If I Had a Dinosaur
• choose centers

Assessment: Students will be assessed at the end of the three weeks. They will be assessed for knowledge of animals in the wild that is different at the end of the three weeks, or more detailed than the knowledge stated in this lesson.

Accommodations:
To Simplify: For students needing more support they will be given a specific animal to think of when expressing the knowledge they already have. This knowledge has to be previously known.
To Extend: For students needing more of a challenge they will be asked to name specific examples of what they already know of animals in the wild. They will be asked to not only give the name of a wild animal but also give where they live or what they look like. This knowledge has to be previously known.

Reflection: The pre-assessment was a struggle due to the fact that it was the first day I had completely taken over the lesson instruction. The students were very excited and it was
hard to keep them sitting long enough to have every child answer the way I had intended. In the future I hope that this lesson will be able to be given to a class that is familiar with me being in charge and that I will be able to ensure every student answers accordingly.
Tuesday March 20
Whole Group – 12:45-1:05

Activity Name: Types of Dinosaurs
Objective: Students will be able to successfully remember the meanings of the various vocabulary words and variations in dinosaur types and be able to retell and use them.

Standard: Content Area: Reading, Writing and Communicating
1. Oral Expression and Listening
   1.1. Conceptual understanding conveyed through vocabulary words can occur using a variety of modalities.
      1.1.c. Demonstrates use of vocabulary in oral language to express ideas and events.

Materials: Dinosaur name cards, dinosaur vocabulary cards (carnivore, extinct, etc.), dinosaur picture cards, Vv zoo phonics animal card, Q-tips, mirrors

Procedure:
• Ask students what they know about dinosaurs – have vocabulary card that spells dinosaurs on the board
• Explain to them (if they have not already said it, if it is said expand at that time) that dinosaurs no longer live, they are extinct
  ➢ Show vocabulary card with this word on it and restate what it means
• Discuss that there are different kinds of dinosaurs
• Explain the differences between a dinosaur and a prehistoric reptile, also show the differences between a biped and quadruped
  ➢ give examples and show pictures
  ➢ show students pictures of dinosaurs and have them state whether it is a biped dinosaur or a quadruped dinosaur
• explain what an omnivore, herbivore, and carnivore are
  ➢ Show vocabulary cards and have students say what each picture is without restating the word. For example first state that carnivores eat only meat, show a picture of meat and ask students to restate the word that means an animal only eats meat
  ➢ restate what each word means
• wrap up with a brief summary of each topic discussed and have students repeat to you what each word means aloud
• move bodies
• introduce the zoo phonics animal – vampire bat
• Read If I Had a Dinosaur
• choose centers – buddy centers

Assessment: Students will be assessed on their ability to recall vocabulary taught during lesson. Can they remember what it means and use it correctly? These are the questions that will be asked when assessing knowledge gained.
Accommodations:

To Simplify: For students needing extra support they will be asked to look at a picture and repeat the word the picture represents. Exposure to the vocabulary is most important for younger students.

To Extend: For students needing a challenge they will be asked to rename a vocabulary word without a picture to use as a reference.

Reflection: This lesson was very successful. The students were engaged and excited about the topic. They were able to restate each word when asked to do so and even remembered the meanings of all words when asked to restate them in a different lesson two weeks later (when talking about ocean animals). In the future I would have a little more interaction with me and the students. For example rather than showing the picture and having the students say whether it was a biped or quadruped dinosaur I would have a sorting activity for the students to be able to move their bodies and come up to the pictures and move them to the correct categories.
**Wednesday March 21**

**Whole Group – 12:45-1:05**

**Activity Name:** What is a habitat?

**Objective:** Students will understand the meaning of habitat and be able to successfully sort animals in the habitat to which they belong.

**Standard:** Content Area: Reading, Writing, and Communicating

- 1. Oral Expression and Listening
  - 1.1. Conceptual understanding conveyed through vocabulary words can occur using a variety of modalities.
  - 1.1.c. Demonstrates use of vocabulary in oral language to express ideas and events.

**Materials:** dry erase markers, animal pictures and pictures of habitat for each animal, Vv letter tub

**Procedure:**

- ask students if anyone knows what a habitat is
- write words of what they say on the board
- when students are finished guessing if they have not already said the answer give them the answer
  - a place where something is found that has things they need to live
  - example – a fish is found in a lake because it needs water to survive, the lake is its habitat
- give students an animal name and picture then ask if they can describe its habitat
  - Where does a polar bear live? What is its habitat?
  - If more time give another animal and brainstorm a habitat
- Show students four pictures of animals, have them name the animals as you show pictures
- Next show students four pictures of various habitats, have students name the habitat as you show pictures
- Shuffle the habitats and lay the animal picture cards in order on carpet
- Call students forward to first choose an animal then find the habitat where that animal lives
- Continue until all habitats have been selected for the correct animal
- Repeat each animal and its habitat/home
- wrap up lesson with a brief reminder of what a habitat is
- move bodies
- Vv letter tub
- Read *Over in the Grasslands*

**Assessment:** Students will be assessed during the small group cut and paste assessment activity. Their knowledge will be assessed by their ability to correctly match the habitat with the animal that lives there.

**Accommodations:**

**To Simplify:** For students needing more support they will be shown specific parts of the picture of the animal then asked to find the habitat for that animal. For example when
looking at the picture of the dolphin you can see water, the student needing more support will be asked what he or she sees in the picture of the dolphin. Once water has been seen they will be able to quickly identify ocean as its habitat. If more support is needed the teacher can state that ocean is water and it is the habitat of the dolphin then have child match them.

**To Extend:** For students needing more of a challenge they will be asked to name both the animal and its habitat. They may also be asked to think of an animal and its habitat that is does not already have a picture in the whole group.

**Reflection:** This lesson was successful. When first introduced to the word there were one or two students who had previous knowledge of what a habitat was. These students were asked to give their definition of the word then it was repeated with more detail by me, the teacher. Students responded well to knowing the animals and the habitats that I had chosen for them to sort. Each child chosen to sort was successful in doing so. In the future I would try to find a way for every child to sort in the whole group setting. It might be beneficial to have this lesson over multiple days in order to fulfill this goal. I feel that this is an important extension to this lesson for future plans because it allows me to assess the students that need support before they are given the small group assessment.
Small Group (Tuesday-Thursday, rotating groups):
Habitat Sort

- **Objective:** Students will successfully cut out a habitat and glue it next to the animal that lives there.
- **Standard:** Content Area: Social Studies
  
  2. Geography

  2.1. Develop spatial understanding, perspectives, and connections to the world.

  2.1.d. Use pictures to locate familiar places.

- **Procedure:** Students will be given a piece of paper with four animal names and pictures on one side, on the other will be the title habitat. Under this title students will be asked to cut out habitats that coincide with the animals. They will then glue the appropriate habitat next to the animal it belongs. They have already been shown the habitats on this page in whole group lessons and stories.

- **Assessment:** Students will be assessed by their ability to correctly cut and glue a habitat next to the animal that lives there.

- **Accommodations:**
  For students needing fine motor support they will be given help with cutting and gluing. However, as an assessment they will not be allowed more support within their habitat placements because my goal is to assess knowledge gained from whole group.

- **Reflection:** This small group activity went very well. I was pleased with the results and the only change I would make would be more differentiation between papers to accommodate the higher and lower level students.

Centers

**Monday**

- **Art:** sponge painting with dinosaur stencils

**Tuesday and Wednesday**

- **Art:** make pet dinosaur (cut and glue)

**Thursday**

- **Art:** dinosaur skeleton rubbings

**Monday-Thursday**

- **Writing Center:** dinosaur words, dinosaur writing paper, dinosaur coloring and word book
- **Housekeeping:** dinosaur puppets, dinosaur pictures, costumes
- **Science:** dinosaur teeth
- **Table Toys:** dinosaur lacing cards
- **Blocks:** dinosaur toys, building blocks
- **Messy Table:** excavating; corn meal with plastic dinosaur bones, toothbrushes/paintbrushes, clipboards, crayons
- **Library:** National Geographic animals in the wild magazines
Week Two

Tuesday March 27
Whole Group – 12:45-1:05

Activity Name: Favorite Animals in the Wild

Objective: Students will be able to successfully write tally marks, count these tally marks, and recognize that there is a largest and smallest number.

Standard: Content Area: Mathematics
1. Number Sense, Properties and Operations
   1.1. Quantities can be represented and counted
      1.1.b. Match a quantity with a numeral.

Materials: pictures of various wild animals, chart paper, markers

Procedure:
• Show students the graph with pictures of various wild animals on it
• Have students tell you what each animal is
• Explain to students what favorite means
• Have each student come up and put a tally next to the animal that is their favorite
• Count up tallies in each row with students – write the number of tallies next to that animal
• Have students tell you which animal has the most votes and which has the least
• Wrap up by restating which animals were liked the most and which were liked the least
• Move bodies
• Jj letter tub
• Read From Head to Toe
• Choose centers

Assessment: Students will be assessed by their ability to count with the group and being able to recognize certain numbers as least and most.

Accommodations:
To Simplify: For students needing more support they will be given help with writing a tally mark and be given modeling from their peers as we count as a group.
To Extend: For students needing more challenge they will be asked to identify the largest and smallest number in relation to all other categories and they will be asked to identify which number was the next largest and next smallest.

Reflection: This lesson went well. Students were excited to come up to the board and responded well to directions after I modeled expectations. Most students were able to follow along as we counted the tallies and the students needing a challenge were able to identify all numbers in their correct placements; largest, smallest, next largest, and next smallest. In the future I would change how many choices of animals I had on the graph, instead of ten I would have seven. This would allow for less confusion and forgetfulness when they come to the board to choose their favorite animals, and it would allow for more variation in the voting. With ten animals there were many categories that had one tally mark which caused some confusion to which was the least (a lot of students focused on one
as the least when only one or two students were able to scan the entire graph and see zero). Number recognition went well and I felt the graph was a great way to give students a visual representation of numbers.
Thursday March 29
Whole Group – 12:45-1:05

Activity Name: How do we describe animals?
Objective: Students will be able to successfully give descriptor words for various animals when asked to do so.

Standard: Content Area: Reading, Writing and Communicating
3. Writing and Composition
   3.1. Pictures express ideas
      3.1.b. Orally describe or tell about a picture.

Materials: picture cards of wild animals, dry erase marker, Jj zoo phonics animal card

Procedure:
• Tell students what it means to describe something (give specific examples)
  ➢ To describe something means to say words in order to tell someone else what is looks like, smells like, feels like and more
• Show students some pictures of wild animals
• First have them tell you the name of the animals, write this name under each picture card
• Pull cards with student’s name so that every student gets a turn and have them give descriptions of the animals until everyone has been called – not every student will describe the same animal
• As the students give descriptor words write them under the picture of that animal
• Restate the descriptions that were thought of for each animal
• Remind students what it means to describe something
• Move bodies
• Introduce the Jj zoo phonics animal – Jellyfish
• Read Miss Spider’s ABC
• Choose centers – buddy centers

Assessment: Students will be assessed by their ability to name words the correctly describe their chosen animal.

Accommodations:
To simplify: For students needing support they will be asked to describe something specific. For example, rather than leaving it an open ended question ask a student to describe how many legs the animal pictured has. Give these students more prompts for what to look for.
To Extend: For students needing more of a challenge ask them to give two descriptions of the animal pictured, and make sure their descriptions are detailed. For example, these students will be expected to say an animal has striped fur not only fur as their answer.

Reflection: This lesson did not go as well as I was hoping. Every student was able to describe something about an animal. However, for some students I felt that their answers could have been more specific. In the future I think the lesson would benefit from adding a more detailed explanation of what it means to describe something before I begin the
It would also help to have more modeling of how to describe something rather than just defining the word description and having students then give me descriptor words.
Small Group (Tuesday-Thursday, rotate groups):
Dinosaur sequencing puzzle

- **Objective:** Students will be able to successfully cut a dinosaur into pieces then glue it back together using the correct number order listed on the pieces.
- **Standard:** Content Area: Mathematics
  1.1. Quantities can be represented and counted
    - 1.1.a. Count and represent objects including coins to 10
- **Procedure:** Students will be given a picture of a dinosaur that is separated into five parts by dotted lines. At the bottom of each part is a number to show the order of the parts. Students will be asked to cut on dotted lines, when they have cut each piece they must put the dinosaur back together by looking at either the numbers on the bottom of the page and putting them in order or noticing different parts of the body that should be together. Students will glue the pieces in order on a piece of construction paper.
- **Assessment:** Student’s fine motor skills will be assessed by their ability to cut on each dotted line and their number sense will be assessed by their success at putting the dinosaur back together correctly by looking at the numbers at the bottom of each strip.
- **Accommodations:** Students will be given help with their fine motor cutting and gluing if it is needed. However, I wanted this to be an assessment of their number skills so I did not offer help when putting the dinosaur back together. I was interested in how many could independently do this task.
- **Reflection:** The only thing I would change in the future would be the way in which I presented the directions. For some children it was confusing and when I explained it again it made more sense to them. Overall I felt this was a good way to assess student’s ability to follow directions, their fine motor skills, and their ability to recognize numbers and place them in order.

**Centers**

**Monday**
- **Art:** easel painting with dinosaur cutouts

**Tuesday – Thursday**
- **Art:** making animals face masks with paper plates and popsicle sticks

**Monday – Thursday**
- **Writing Center:** dinosaur words, dinosaur writing paper
- **Housekeeping:** Dinosaur and safari animal puppets
- **Science:** Dinosaur growing capsules (place pill like substance in water and watch a dinosaur grow)
- **Table Toys:** Dinosaur grabbers and dinosaur pick up toys
- **Blocks:** Dinosaur and safari animal toys
- **Messy Table:** excavating; corn meal with plastic dinosaur bones, toothbrushes/paintbrushes, clipboards, crayons
- **Library:** National Geographic animals in the wild magazines
Week Three

Monday April 2

Activity Name: Oceans Animals

Objective: Students will be able to successfully name animals that live in the ocean and describe makes them different from and the same as land animals.

Standard: 2. Life Science
2.2. Living things develop in predictable patterns
2.2.a. Identify the common needs such as food, air, and water of familiar living things

Materials: pictures of land animals and ocean animals, Qq picture and letter cards

Procedure:

- Review names of animals talked about previously (wild animal names)
- Have students look around the room and see if anyone notices anything new
  - we are now learning about ocean animals
- Ask students if they know animals that live in the ocean
  - if students name animals that you have pictures of place pictures on board, if they are animals without pictures write the names of the animals on the board
- Ask students to name some things that animals need if they live in the ocean
- Expand on other things that animals need if they live in the ocean
  - Gills to breathe, food to eat, homes, water to swim and live in, etc.
- Are these the same as land animals? Do they need food? Do they have homes? Do they breathe? YES!
- All animals need certain things in order to live
- They live in different places but they need the same things
- Review the animals talked about and what was discussed as needed
- Move bodies
- Introduce the letter Qq – Q picture cards
  - say names of each picture and tap out the number of syllables in each word
- Read Moving Day
- choose centers

Assessment: Students will be assessed by their ability to acknowledge that animals all need similar things in order to survive. They will be asked to rename things that are needed to survive and say whether or not this is the same as other living animals.

Accommodations:
To Simplify: For students needing more support the pictures will act as a visual for them to discuss. Parts of the picture will be pointed to specifically for both land and ocean animals in order for these children to be successful in what they choose as something that the animals need. For example when supporting a child one can point to eyes on a whale and eyes on a giraffe to point out that all animals need to see.

To Extend: For students needing to be challenge ask them to name where ocean animals might live and compare that to a land animal. Is that the same or different? Is it still a home?
Reflection: I felt this lesson went well. For the younger PreK students the concepts might have been too abstract. However, most of the students were able to understand and relate back to land animals. They were also able to pull vocabulary from the first week of the unit and say those in relation to ocean animals, such as animals that eat meat are carnivores. In the future I want to find a better way to explain how all living things are alike. I felt that when I tried to express this in the lesson it was lost. Some students understood what ocean animals needed, and when I related back to land animals they were able to remember. However, I felt it was a concept that may have been a little more advanced for some students.
Tuesday April 3

Activity Name: Counting Starfish

Objective: Students will successfully recognize numbers and count them in order.

Standard: 1.1. Quantities can be represented and counted.
        1.1.a. Count and represent objects including coins to 10

Materials: starfish number cards (0-15), Q zoo phonics animal card

Procedure:

- show students starfish number cards
- explain that each starfish has a number and that they are going to help me put these numbers in order
- ask what number we start counting with
  - we start with zero
- call every student to come up once and place the number in the right spot
- when a child comes up to pick a number have them count all of the animals with the class first then pick their number
- this will continue until all numbers are placed in order
- the whole class will count all numbers together
- move bodies
- Zoo phonics Qq animal
- Read Rainbow Fish
- Choose centers

Assessment: Students will be assessed by their ability to count each animal and show one to one correspondence. Their success will also be measured by whether or not they were able to recognize and place each number in its correct spot.

Accommodations:

To Simplify: For children needing support the whole class will count with them so that the student knows what number they will be looking for. If they still struggle with finding their number it will be shown to them and the student can still place the number in its place.

To extend: For children needing challenge they will have to tell the class what number they are searching for without any extra help or guidance and place the number where it goes in the number chain.

Reflection: This lesson was great. The students were engaged and happy to move their bodies to come pick a starfish. I noticed that in this lesson some students had a difficult time recognizing the numbers. This was perfect for assessing not only their number recognition but also their counting skills. For the most part all students were able to count with the class and find their number during their turn. I would not change anything about this lesson in the future. I felt the range of numbers chosen was appropriate and the content of the lesson was engaging while also meaningful.
Thursday April 5

**Activity Name:** What about animals?!

**Objective:** Students will show the growth of their knowledge by naming things that they have learned about wild animals that live on land and in water.

**Standard:** Content Area: Science

2. Life Science

2.1. Living things have characteristics and basic needs.

2.1.a. Use senses to gather information about living things.

**Materials:** butcher paper with what we know about wild animals from week 1, white butcher paper with title (“Animals in the Wild”), rhyming tubs for V, J, and Q

**Procedure:**

- Have students close their eyes
- Explain to them that we are going to visualize or picture what we have learned about animals in the wild
  
  ➢ While they have eyes closed list off some things that have been talked about (how we describe animals, where animals live, how they are different or the same as us, etc.)
- Give a minute or so
- Tell them that when they are done picturing what they have learned to quietly open their eyes
- Have each child say one thing they have learned about animals in the wild
- Write these answers on a large piece of paper
- Compare this paper to the one done at the beginning of the unit and see if the answers have changed
- Wrap up by talking about all the different things the students said they learned
- Move bodies
- Rhyming tubs

**Assessment:** Students will be assessed by their ability to state new knowledge learned about animals in the wild. New knowledge will be based on what they remembered from the various lessons given during the two weeks of dinosaurs and safari animals and ocean animals.

**Accommodations:**

**To Simplify:** For students needing more support remind them of a specific topic for them to remember something about. For example state that we learned about how to describe animals, was there a way that you remember we described their fur? Give student prompt until they can remember something learned. If nothing comes into their memory on their own that is ok.

**To Extend:** For students needing more challenge have them state two things learned in the past unit or have them elaborate on what it is that they learned. For example if they say they learned dolphins live in the ocean have them tell you what it is that an animal home is called.
**Reflection:** This was a good way to assess student growth. I was very impressed with answers and the things students were able to remember. I feel that for this age group a comprehensive assessment to look at growth of overall knowledge was appropriate, especially because whole group time is limited to how long their bodies can sit and their attention spans. Overall I think the post assessment was successful and showed growth of student knowledge.
No Small Groups

Centers
Monday
   Art: sponge painting
Tuesday-Thursday
   Art: making rainbow fish: students cut out fish bodies then glue tissue paper and foil on the body to make their own rainbow fish

Monday-Thursday
   Writing Center: Ocean animal name cards, writing paper with ocean scene
   Housekeeping: Ocean – ocean pictures and large building toys
   Science: sink or float objects
   Table Toys: word cards with letter tiles to make words
   Blocks: building blocks and connect toys
   Messy Table: Water table with boats and other water toys
   Library: Ocean animal National Geographic magazines
Assessment Data and Analysis

For the overall unit assessment I used a whole group discussion and chart to assess complete knowledge. For the class the trend in my data was growth. Each student did not individually fill out an assessment form. However, based upon the amount of answers, descriptions, and detail used within their answers growth is clear. The following graphs depict both the pre- and post-assessments. In each graph it was seen whether students could name where animals live (their habitat), what animals eat, what they look like, and if they had any other information about animals in the wild. The three categories used to assess the data included: whether or not the answer was correct, if there was detail and specific words used to say what they meant (for example say eat an apple not just eat food), and if learned vocabulary was used when answering each question. These are the general trends in my data; later will be a discussion on specific demographics.

![Pre-Assessment - Animals in the Wild Unit](image-url)
As shown in these graphs student’s knowledge of the subject grew throughout the unit. In the post-assessment there were details in the answers. For example in the pre-assessment under where do animals live a student said “water,” and the other answer was “ice.” In the post-assessment when asked the same question a student said “tigers live on land and have stripes.” The answer in the post-assessment shows three details: tiger, land and stripes. The other answers for this section were similarly detailed. In the post-assessment it was also clear that vocabulary for some students had been mastered with words being used such as mammal, herbivore, and carnivore. In general students used more detail, said the animal name when answering the question, and were able to talk about each category using correct terminology.

The pre- and post-assessment of the class was done for general knowledge of the subject and I had one small group assessment that was also meant to show growth of knowledge of animal habitats. This data also showed growth. When habitats were
introduced during whole group, which acted as the pre-assessment for this mini assessment, only two students were able to tell me what a habitat was. During the small group assessment there was growth as seen in the following chart.

As seen in this pie chart most students had mastered the concept of a habitat by the time this assessment was done. The assessment asked students to sort four habitats by the animal that lived there. Mastery was defined as correctly sorting all four habitats, proficiency was defined as correctly sorting 1-3 habitats, and no evidence was defined as not being able to sort any habitats. As you can see all students were at least able to sort one habitat correctly. This evidence also shows me that throughout the unit the students were understanding and engaging in the lessons being taught.

My subgroup in this class was my students currently on an IEP. This includes five children, and based upon my post-assessment data these students showed growth along with the other 11 students in the class.
There were five students on IEPs during this unit. Of these five children two students had correct answers in the Pre-Assessment, 3 students showed mastery in the small group assessment, and 4 students had correct answers on the Post-Assessment. These students, although their numbers are smaller showed growth between the Pre- and Post-Assessments. I feel that both groups within the class showed growth because students on IEPs are not taken out during whole group instruction or during small group time. They are in the classroom for general instruction with all other children. This allowed them to show growth along with the students not on IEPs.

The data from my assessments show me that students were able to learn based upon the objectives stated in my lessons. The data showing overall growth is important because it shows me that my lessons were correctly aimed at a goal of overall knowledge of the subject. Students showed growth in their ability to answer each question, the details and vocabulary used to answer each question, and mastery of individual assessments.
throughout the unit. Every student mastered at least two of my objectives and was able to show growth between the pre- and post-assessments.
Student Teaching Experience and Reflection

I was apprehensive at the beginning of my student teaching. Was I ready? Would I remember what I had learned in the classroom? These and many other questions were running through my thoughts, and I was almost paralyzed as I walked through the door to Rice Elementary my first morning. However, as the semester has progressed I am more confident than ever before and feel that I have not only gained confidence in myself but also in my teaching practice and philosophy. My classroom has taught me more than I would have ever thought and has prepared me for self-reflection and ways to better my teaching in the future.

Throughout all of my practicum experiences I had many opportunities to create lessons and implement them. However, when I was only in the classroom for a couple hours two days a week it was difficult to take over whole group instruction. Because of this I had many experiences running small groups and observing whole group, but I did not feel confident that I was prepared to take over a whole group lesson. Classroom management and whole group instruction became my main goals; to learn, to implement and to be effective while doing it. While student teaching I have been able to accomplish this goal. I have been given six weeks in which I have implemented my own lessons and taught whole group instruction. In my short teaching career I have never felt more confident in my abilities to be a teacher than I do now. I have learned excellent classroom management strategies and have been given advice that has helped me to better my implementation of these strategies. I feel that I can now lead a whole group while being effective in teaching a lesson. My confidence has grown tremendously and I have now accomplished my goals of
learning effective classroom management and learning to better my control during whole group instruction.

My teaching practice has been strengthened during my student teaching and so has my teaching philosophy. Previously I had felt that children learn through doing. Their experiences are what help them to gain knowledge and remember that knowledge in the future. I now more than ever believe this to be true. In my placement I was able to create interactive lessons and centers that reinforced whole group lessons. Every day I witnessed the students engage in the lessons then go to centers and act out what we had learned in the morning whole group. It was amazing to watch learning take place not only from me teaching, but from my students experiencing their learning. My teaching philosophy centers around student experience and this has become an even stronger philosophy of mine as I have witnessed students become more excited about their learning when they were able to fully participate in it.

Another aspect of my teaching philosophy that has developed through my student teaching experience is the importance of modeling. In small group settings I had practice with modeling but not that much. However, in my PreK placement I have had to model during every lesson I teach. I have not only gained more experience with it, but I have been able to truly see the importance of modeling. Students thrive off of knowing what you expect of them. Modeling not only shows them a final product of an art activity for them to see what we expect, but it also gives them examples of how to properly do things. For instance when I read a story to my class I am modeling how to turn the pages, what is the top and bottom, that we read from left to right, and that our pictures match our words. All of these are important for them when learning to read and for future years in their
educational experience. This and so many other examples are why modeling is important for students. My teaching philosophy has evolved to even more emphasis on learning through experience but to also include modeling as an important process in learning.

My teaching practice and philosophy has grown tremendously and I have learned even more throughout my student teaching experience. I have learned ways to be effective and how to handle various situations. Being an effective teacher is vital to student success.

In the weeks at Rice Elementary I feel that I have learned ways to help my students achieve their personal best. First, being flexible is number one to being effective. If something is not working stop and re-evaluate. Plans do not mean much if it is not working for your students. For example if a routine has caused too much time sitting and your students are becoming less engaged it might be beneficial to try work stations to minimize the amount of whole group instruction. I have learned that as a teacher nothing is set in stone and every day you must be prepared to change in an instant. Being flexible is a good quality and something I have been witness to every day.

How to handle various situations has also been a huge lesson throughout my student teaching. Parents and problem behaviors are two that I have had multiple opportunities to learn about. I have been able to conduct a parent teacher conference, I have been witness to parent teacher conflict and the best ways to approach and handle that type of a situation, and I have been given many opportunities to just talk with parents. When learning about problem behaviors I have been able to implement a behavior chart and learn specific classroom management strategies that are for those children. Two of these strategies include a carpet square for refocusing and direct communication with specific and non-negotiable expectations. During my student teaching I have learned
something different every day. These are two examples of lessons I feel to be very important for me as a new teacher.

At Rice I have also been able to reflect on myself and how I teach. This has given me the opportunity to make my teaching better and has allowed me many opportunities to learn how to assess each child and myself at all times. In my own classroom I plan to implement calendar every day. Other than this I do not have any specific things that I would do differently in my own classroom that I have not learned during my student teaching. I feel that I could not have asked for a better mentor. My student teaching has given me the opportunity to develop and strengthen my teaching philosophy and practice, it has taught me to be flexible and how to handle any situation, and it has also allowed me self-reflection in how to better myself as a teacher. I have had an amazing experience during student teaching and feel prepared to implement what I have learned in my own classroom.
References


# Classroom Schedule

**Pre-Assessment: What do we know about Animals in the Wild?**

**Mini Assessment: Habitat Sort**

**Mini Assessment: Dinosaur Sequencing Puzzle**

**Post-Assessment: What did we learn about Animals in the Wild?**