



TREE BRANCH POEMS: Exploring Endangered Species Around the Globe

OVERVIEW

In this lesson students will use the resources of EekoWorld as they read stories, collect facts, and learn about endangered species around the globe. They will conduct Internet research, compile a graphic organizer, and create original cinquain poems and illustrations highlighting what they have learned. Students will create poetry tree branches to showcase their work.

GRADE LEVEL

2

OBJECTIVES

Students will do the following:

- Use varied strategies to comprehend written or oral language from a variety of sources
- Actively listen to audio information using Internet resources
- Summarize information
- Interpret visual media
- Synthesize information from multiple sources
- Create graphic organizers
- Make connections between new information and prior knowledge
- Explore relationships among organisms and their environment
- Participate in group activities and class discussion
- Create original poetry
- Recite original poetry

SUBJECT AREAS

Language Arts, Science

INTERNET LINKS

Bookmark the following Web sites:

- [EekoWorld](http://pbskids.org/eekoworld) <http://pbskids.org/eekoworld>
- [Thinkquest Endangered Species](http://library.thinkquest.org/25014/english.index.shtml) <http://library.thinkquest.org/25014/english.index.shtml>
- [Nature Kids](http://www.audubonintl.org/projects/kids/poem/) <http://www.audubonintl.org/projects/kids/poem/>
- ["A Small Green Riddle"](http://www.joycesidman.com/poemofmonth.html) <http://www.joycesidman.com/poemofmonth.html>

MATERIALS

- Poetry templates
- Tree branches to hang poems from
- String
- Construction paper
- Pencils, crayons, markers
- Graphic organizer template



BUILDING BACKGROUND

Activity One: Defining Images of Endangered Species

Introduce students to the following vocabulary by asking them to brainstorm what they think these words mean. After doing so, provide them with these definitions by posting them on a blackboard or chart paper so they can be viewed during the lesson activities.

- Endangered Species: An organism in danger of disappearing from the face of the earth if its situation is not improved.
- Threatened Species: Those species that may soon become endangered.
- Extinct: An organism that has not been seen in the wild for over fifty years.

As a class, view five brief videos of the following endangered species on ThinkQuest:

- Asian elephant
- Gorilla
- Jaguar
- Panda
- Indo-Chinese Tiger

On the same Thinkquest Web site, click on the word "Definition". Explore this page with your students to provide further background information on endangered species.

Activity Two: An Internet Adventure

As a class, visit the Plants & Animals section of the EekoWorld Web site.

Ask the students to discuss what they learned about endangered species from reading or listening to the story.

STEPS

Activity One: Graphic Organizers

Step 1

Divide the class into groups of four students. Ask each group to go to the Thinkquest Web site and select one of the animals from the that they would like to learn more about. Tell them to click on the box that says "Profiles" to see a list of endangered animals. Tell the students that they can choose one of the animals they saw in the video profiles, or they can choose an alternative. Provide students with the graphic organizer template. Ask the students to collect three facts about the endangered animal they select.

Activity Two: Writing Cinquain Poems

Step 1

After the students have collected their facts, tell them that they are going to write a poem about the endangered species they have selected. Introduce students to a form of poetry called a cinquain, which is a five-lined poem. Share the following example with the class:

Spider
Furry, black
Climbing, spinning, weaving
They make an intricate web
Tarantula

The form is as follows:



- Line 1: subject
- Line 2: two describing words
- Line 3: -ing words about what the subject does
- Line 4: a sentence about the subject
- Line 5: another name for the subject

Step 2

As a class, construct two sample cinquains to help students master the form. Allow students to work individually, with a partner, or in small groups to write their poems. Provide recycled paper for students to use to write and illustrate their poems.

Step 3

When the students are finished writing, ask them to attach their poems to tree branches using string and hole punchers. (You may provide these or ask the students to bring them to school.) Allow time for the students to present their cinquains to the entire class. You may also invite other classes or community members to view students' presentations.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES**Activity One: More Animal Poetry**

Ask students to collect and illustrate poems about animals. Use the following resources:

- Carle, Eric. *Animals, Animals*. New York: Puffin Books, 1989.
- Nature Kids Web site
- "A Small Green Riddle" Web site

Activity Two: Share Your Knowledge

Host a class presentation for the community sharing what students have learned about endangered species. Have them research endangered species in the state in which they live.

STANDARDS

McRel Standards <http://www.mcrel.com>

**Language Arts
Reading**

Standard 7. Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts

Level I (Grades K-2)

1. Uses reading skills and strategies to understand a variety of informational texts (e.g., written directions, signs, captions, warning labels, informational books)
2. Understands the main idea and supporting details of simple expository information
3. Summarizes information found in texts (e.g., retells in own words)
4. Relates new information to prior knowledge and experience

Writing

Standard 1. Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process

7. Writes in a variety of forms or genres (e.g., picture books, friendly letters, stories, poems, information pieces, invitations, personal experience narratives, messages, responses to literature)
8. Writes for different purposes (e.g., to entertain, inform, learn, communicate ideas)

Standard 4. Gathers and uses information for research purposes



LESSON PLAN

2. Uses a variety of sources to gather information (e.g., informational books, pictures, charts, indexes, videos, television programs, guest speakers, Internet, own observation)

Listening & Speaking

Standard 8. Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes

Level I (Grades K-2)

1. Makes contributions in class and group discussions (e.g., reports on ideas and personal knowledge about a topic, initiates conversations, connects ideas and experiences with those of others)

Viewing

Standard 9. Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

Level I (Grades K-2)

1. Understands the main idea or message in visual media (e.g., pictures, cartoons, weather reports on television, newspaper photographs, visual narratives)

Science

Standard 6. Understands relationships among organisms and their physical environment

Level I (Grades K-2)

2. Knows that living things are found almost everywhere in the world and that distinct environments support the life of different types of plants and animals

Thinking & Reasoning

Standard 3. Effectively uses mental processes that are based on identifying similarities and differences

Level I (Grades K-2)

1. Identifies the similarities and differences between persons, places, things, and events using concrete

Working With Others

Standard 1. Contributes to the overall effort of a group

Level IV (Grades K-12)

2. Works cooperatively within a group to complete tasks, achieve goals, and solve problems



GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Endangered Animal Name

Fact #1

Fact #2

Fact #3

Endangered Animal Name

Fact #1

Fact #2

Fact #3