

4-6

# Animals Teach and Inspire Us

---

TEACHER'S GUIDE



# ANIMALS TEACH AND INSPIRE US

We teach our animals many things, but have you ever thought about how much animals teach us? Animals can teach us patience, determination and love. They can inspire us to solve problems, consider others and be kinder people. Caring for and about animals also helps students develop responsibility and empathy, skills that can be applied to various aspects of their lives.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Present the poster to the class and discuss the following questions. Encourage students to share thoughtful answers and remind them to listen to their classmates.

- The poster says animals can teach us! Who else teaches you? *Teachers, parents, siblings, friends, people on tv and in movies, characters in books, etc.*
- What kinds of things do you learn from others?
- Have you ever cared for an animal? If so, what did you do to care for the animal? What is something you've learned by taking care of an animal?
- Looking at the poster, what do you see the guinea pig doing? Explain.
- What do you think the guinea pig can teach us? *The guinea pig is being present and taking time to 'smell the flowers/clover.'* Why is this an important lesson?
- Who else do you see on the poster? What can bees teach us?
- What are some other things we can learn from animals? Explain. *Responsibility, patience, kindness, bravery, care, love, etc.*
- How can you apply these teachings to your life? *Caring for animals, being a good friend, managing our emotions, solving a problem, resolving a conflict, achieving our goals, etc.*
- Do you think learning from animals can help us be better people? What qualities do they show that we can learn from?
- What are some things we can learn from the environment?



## ACTIVITIES

### 1. ANIMALS TEACH AND INSPIRE US - RESEARCH PROJECT

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will explain what lessons we can learn from animals

**MATERIALS:**

- Books, articles or the internet for research



- Poster paper or digital tools for presentations

## INSTRUCTIONS

Animals can teach us a variety of things! Individually, or in pairs, have students pick an animal to research. Students can pick a pet, farm or wild animal.

Have students research three behaviours and characteristics of the animal, focusing on how these qualities can inspire or teach people valuable lessons. Encourage students to use a variety of relevant sources when researching.




Ask students to create a short presentation on Google Slides or Canva to share their findings with the class. Remind students to cite their sources at the end of the presentation.

**EXTENSION:** After the presentations, discuss how the lessons learned from each animal can be applied in their own lives and communities.

## 2. ANIMAL PROBLEM SOLVERS - CREATIVE THINKING ACTIVITY

**OBJECTIVES:** Students will analyze how animals solve problems in their environments and how these solutions can inspire us to solve problems.

### MATERIALS:

- Nature's Tools! How Birds Use Them Video (4:12) 
- Busy Beavers Build Dam Ahead of Winter Video (4:41) 
- Amazing Octopus Changing Colour Transformations Video (2:08) 
- Pencil
- Paper
- Pencil crayons, markers, and other art supplies



### INSTRUCTIONS:

Animals can solve problems using their natural abilities. As a class, watch the BBC Nature's Tools! How Birds Use Them Video. Ask students:

- Did anything surprise you about the video? If so, what?
- What other animals solve problems in nature?

After students share their ideas, watch the BBC videos Busy Beavers Build Dam Ahead of Winter and Amazing Octopus Changing Colour Transformation.

Have students choose an animal and either write or draw a story (graphic novel) where the animal solves a unique problem using their natural abilities. Remind students to edit writing for spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Encourage students to share their stories with a partner or the class.

**Reflection:** Discuss how understanding animal problem-solving strategies could help us think differently about solving problems in our own lives.



### 3. ANIMAL OBSERVATION - EMPATHY-BUILDING ACTIVITY

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will observe animal behaviours and consider how they are related to their own behaviours.

**MATERIALS:**

- Curious Questions - Why Do Dogs Scratch the Grass After Pooping? Video (0:39) 
- Pencil crayons or markers

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Animals often do unusual things! As a class, watch the Curious Questions Video. Ask students:

- Did anything surprise you about the video? If so, what?
- What are other animal behaviours that you are curious about?

Individually or in groups, have students observe an animal (could be a pet, farm animal or wildlife) either in person or online. There are many animal behaviour videos or visit our website for animals cams. Have students record any interesting behaviours they notice (ex. cat scratching, dog wagging a tail).

Next, have students select one of the observed behaviours and record a hypothesis as to why they think the animal engages in the behaviour. After they make a hypothesis, have students research and explore reasons for the behaviour. Students can present their findings on a poster and share with the class.

**Extension:** Use this activity to talk about empathy - understanding the feelings and needs of others by observing how animals react and relate to their environment. Ask students how this skill can help them in their interactions with others.

**ADVISE STUDENTS:** While observing wildlife, it is critical to not disturb the animals. Remind students to be respectful by giving the animal space, being quiet, and observing from a distance. Never touch or feed wildlife as this can result in injury to both animals and people.



# CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

## GRADE FOUR CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

English Language Arts & Literature		
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	Oral Language: Listening and speaking form the foundation for literacy development and improve communication, collaboration, and respectful mutual understanding.	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	In what ways can listening and speaking skills clarify intent and build relationships?	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	Students examine and demonstrate how listening and speaking support connections and clarify understandings.	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Contribute respectfully to a variety of interactions that involve listening and speaking.	D
	Plan ideas and details in a logical manner, including introductions and conclusions.	1
	Present information that engages, informs, persuades, or entertains an audience.	1
	Integrate visual aids to enhance communication.	1
	Participate in presentations as a respectful audience member.	1,2
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	Writing: Ideas and information can be articulated accurately and imaginatively through the use of writing processes and an understanding of the author's craft.	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	How can development of writing processes and expression support effective communication?	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	Students construct and organize text to share perspectives and develop creative expression.	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Create written texts for a variety of audiences and purposes.	2
	Create written texts using a variety of text forms and structures.	2
	Edit writing for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.	2
	Incorporate images, charts, graphs, or other text features when publishing selected pieces to support a purpose or connect with an audience.	2
	Access information from a variety of sources to critically answer questions or expand knowledge.	1,3
	Choose and cite appropriate sources of information to inform research.	1,3

Physical Education and Wellness		
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	Character Development: Exploration of life opportunities and virtues develops resilience and personal talents and promotes lifelong learning.	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	How can a variety of life experiences influence resilience and perseverance?	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	Students interpret how resilience and perseverance can be influenced by a variety of life experiences.	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Describe strategies that support resilience.	D
	Examine how challenging situations can involve perseverance.	D
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	Safety: A lifetime of optimal well-being is supported by prioritizing health and safety.	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	How can taking responsibility impact safety?	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	Students analyze and explain responsibility and how it can impact personal and group safety.	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Examine how responsibility can impact safety in a variety of situations.	3





<b>Organizing Idea</b>	<b>Healthy Relationships: Personal well-being is supported through positive relationships built on communication, collaboration, empathy, and respect.</b>	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	<b>How can resolving conflict and healthy relationships be mutually supportive?</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Students reflect on resolution and explain connections to healthy relationships.</b>	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Describe strategies that can be used to support resolution to a problem, conflict, or challenge.	D

## Science

<b>Organizing Idea</b>	<b>Earth Systems: Understandings of the living world, Earth, and space are deepened by investigating natural systems and their interactions.</b>	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	<b>How does Earth sustain life?</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Students investigate the systems of Earth and reflect on how their interconnections sustain life.</b>	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Discuss ways that plants and animals use water to meet their basic needs.	2
	Identify plants and animals that exist in various bodies of water.	2
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	<b>Living Systems: Understandings of the living world, Earth, and space are deepened by investigating natural systems and their interactions.</b>	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	<b>In what ways do the structures of organisms support survival?</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Students analyze organisms and relate external structures to functions.</b>	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Demonstrate respect when interacting with plants and animals in local environments.	3



## GRADE FIVE CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

<b>Language Arts &amp; Literature</b>		
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	<b>Oral Language: Listening and speaking form the foundation for literacy development and improve communication, collaboration, and respectful mutual understanding.</b>	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	<b>How can the presentation of ideas and information be enhanced through oral communication?</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Students investigate how oral language can be designed to communicate ideas and information.</b>	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Select appropriate formats for oral communication based on audience and purpose.	1
	Present ideas and information in a logical manner to inform, persuade, or entertain.	1
	Contribute to discussions or dialogues by agreeing, disagreeing, and adding to or explaining ideas.	D
	Use respectful language when collaborating with others.	D
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	<b>Writing: Ideas and information can be articulated accurately and imaginatively through the use of writing processes and an understanding of the author's craft.</b>	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	<b>How does proficient writing enhance communication skills?</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Students enhance the accuracy and artistry of expression through creative and critical thinking processes.</b>	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Create written texts for a variety of audiences and purposes.	2
	Create written texts in a variety of forms and structures.	2
	Express ideas through multiple-paragraph works that include topic introductions, supporting evidence, and conclusions.	2
	Edit writing for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.	2
	Publish selected pieces, incorporating graphics, captions, charts, or other text features to support a purpose or connect with an audience.	2
	Create text that uses plot, characterization, dialogue, and figurative language to entertain an audience.	2
	Narrow research questions to determine a clear, well-defined topic.	3
	Develop a main idea or topic supported by facts, details, examples, and explanations.	1,3
	Select a variety of relevant sources to inform writing.	1
	Summarize and organize ideas gained from multiple sources using a variety of methods or tools.	1,3

<b>Physical Education and Wellness</b>		
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	<b>Character Development: Exploration of life opportunities and virtues develops resilience and personal talents and promotes lifelong learning.</b>	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	<b>How can a variety of life experiences influence resilience and perseverance?</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Students reflect and relate life experiences to perseverance and well-being.</b>	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Reflect on personal learning and development in a variety of experiences.	D
	Describe the effects of perseverance on well-being.	D
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	<b>Safety: A lifetime of optimal well-being is supported by prioritizing health and safety.</b>	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	<b>How can responsibility lead to a desired outcome?</b>	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Students analyze responsibility and consider the impact on well-being.</b>	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Reflect on how the results or consequences of personal actions and decisions can affect the well-being of self and others.	3



## GRADE SIX CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

<b>Language Arts &amp; Literature</b>		
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	Oral Language: Listening and speaking form the foundation for literacy development and improve communication, collaboration, and respectful mutual understanding.	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	What relationships can be made between skillful oration and communication content, style and delivery?	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	Students connect the quality and efficacy of oral communication to oral language skills.	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Develop and deliver presentations for specific purposes and audiences.	1,3
	Offer relevant information and logical reasoning to enhance collaborative dialogue.	D
	Consider varied perspectives or opinions when collaborating.	D
	Reflect on and share new, expanded, or adjusted learnings resulting from collaborative dialogue.	D,1
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	Writing: Ideas and information can be articulated accurately and imaginatively through the use of writing processes and an understanding of the author's craft.	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	How is precise writing influenced by ongoing craft and process development?	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	Students create texts that reflect personal voice and style through creative and critical thinking processes.	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Create written texts for a variety of audiences and purposes.	2
	Create written texts in a variety of forms and structures.	2
	Express personal ideas through multiple paragraphs for the purpose of engaging an audience.	2
	Edit writing for spelling, punctuation, and grammar.	2
	Publish selected writing, incorporating graphics, captions, charts, or other text features to express individuality.	2
	Write to inform, explain, describe, or report for a variety of purposes and audiences.	1,2,3
	Narrow research questions to determine a clear, well-defined topic.	1

<b>Physical Education and Wellness</b>		
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	Character Development: Exploration of life opportunities and virtues develops resilience and personal talents and promotes lifelong learning.	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	How can lifelong learning be supported?	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	Students connect strategies for well-being to life opportunities and lifelong learning.	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Relate strategies to achieving goals in a variety of contexts.	D
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	Safety: A lifetime of optimal well-being is supported by prioritizing health and safety.	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	In what ways might risk influence the outcome of an action?	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	Students examine risk and identify the factors that influence action.	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Describe consequences that may result from risk taking in various contexts.	3

<b>Science</b>		
<b>Organizing Idea</b>	Living Systems: Understandings of the living world, Earth, and space are deepened by investigating natural systems and their interactions.	
<b>Guiding Question</b>	In what ways are ecosystems complex?	
<b>Learning Outcome</b>	Students investigate the characteristics and components of and interactions within ecosystems.	
	<b>Skills &amp; Procedures</b>	
	Represent and connect the biotic and abiotic components of an ecosystem.	2
	Examine ways that plants and animals rely on each other to meet their needs.	2







Extra resources are available at [everylivingthing.ca/AnimalsTeach](https://www.everylivingthing.ca/AnimalsTeach)