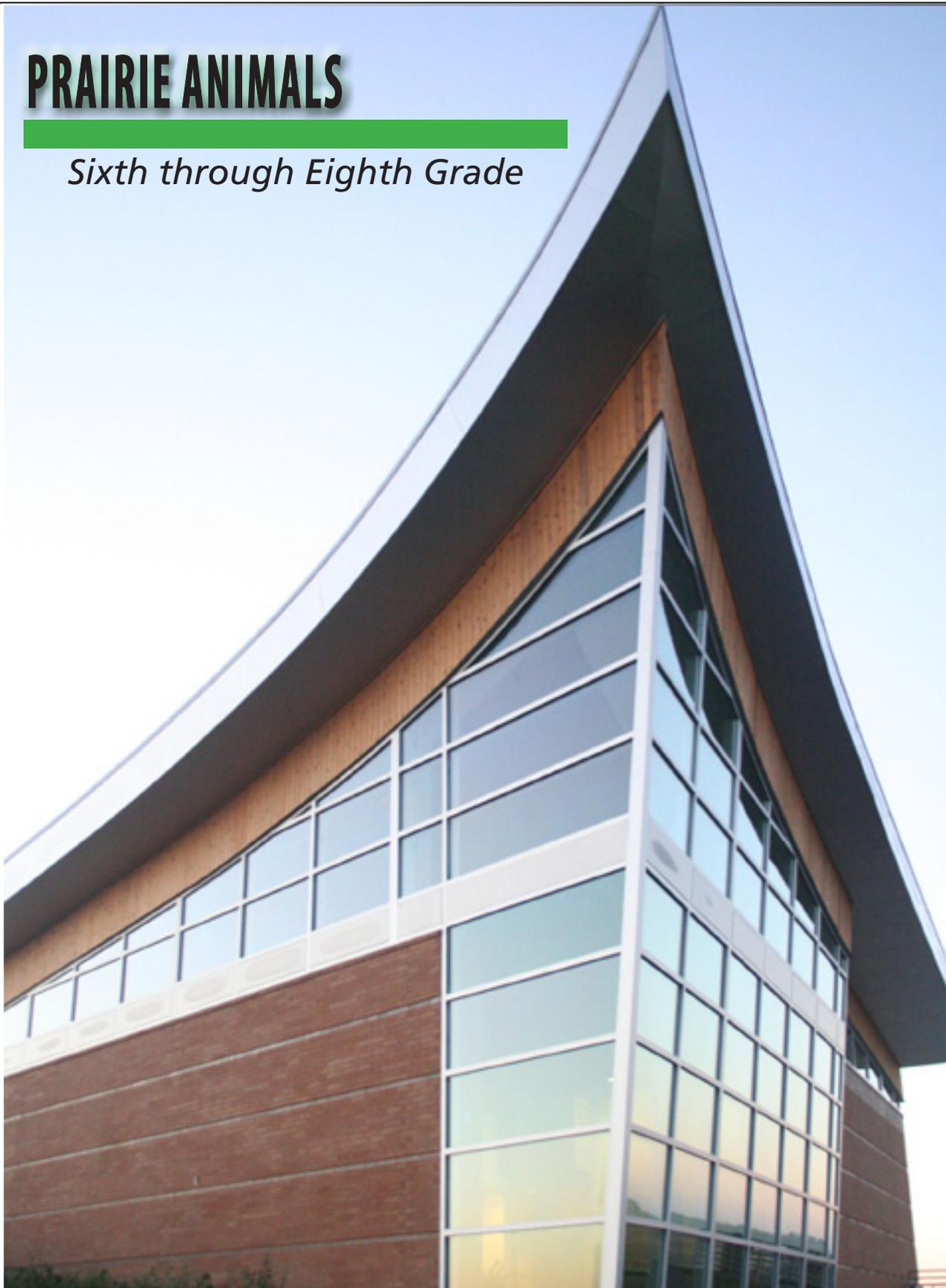


Free Land was the Cry!

PRAIRIE ANIMALS

Sixth through Eighth Grade



Homestead

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Homestead National Monument
of America, Nebraska



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Some of the ideas in this lesson may have been adapted from earlier, unacknowledged sources without our knowledge. If the reader believes this to be the case, please let us know, and appropriate corrections will be made. Thank you.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION



‘What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset.’

Crowfoot quote

The original animals of the tallgrass prairie were much more varied than can be seen today. The animals and the native plants created an interconnected ecosystem. Because of the loss of many native prairie habitats and overhunting in the 19th century, the biodiversity of animals viewed by the first settlers no longer exists.

It can still be debated whether some of the species we consider to be native to grasslands are recent adapters to the prairie or long time residents. In the forested areas, animals tend to travel alone except in the mating season. Herds of ani-

mals are really a phenomenon of the expansive prairies of the past as is the quick maneuverability and speed of some prairie dwelling animals. On the prairie, we find not only mammals, but a variety of birds, reptiles, and other species which adapted to life on the Great Plains.

Of all the species, the birds tend to be the most diverse and numerous. Here, in the Great Plains, is where the meadowlark, dickcissel, red-tailed hawk, prairie chicken, bobolink, sandhill crane, upland plover, sparrow hawk, swallow-tailed kit, bobwhite quail, great curlew, mourning dove, and many more make their homes. The mammals and reptiles of the prairie are the animals that we commonly associate with the western United States; bison, coyote, antelope, badger, elk, prairie dog, various skunks, otters, foxes, snakes, lizards, among many others. Some have survived and adapted to the changes on the grassland, but many have decreased in number, dependent on the prairie that started to vanish with the tilling of the land.

CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to identify physical, environmental, and behavioral characteristics of the Black-Tailed Prairie Dog.
- Students will develop research, organizational, and writing skills.
- Students will analyze and interpret primary documents.
- Students will be able to identify the needs of humans and nature.
- Students will understand the conflict that can exist between humans and nature.
- Students will analyze whether the needs of man or nature are more important.
- Students will identify the necessary native plants to create their ecosystem.
- Students will demonstrate planning, organizational, and cooperative skills.
- Students will be able to define adaptations in animals.
- Students will generalize that all animals are adapted to survive.

NATIONAL STANDARDS

NS.5-8.1 SCIENCE AS INQUIRY

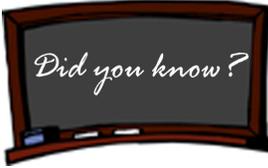
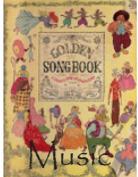
As a result of activities in grades 5-8, all students should develop

- Abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry
- Understandings about scientific inquiry.

NS5-8.3 LIFE SCIENCE

As a result of their activities in grades 5-8, all students should develop understanding

- Structure and function in living systems
- Reproduction and heredity
- Regulation and behavior
- Populations and ecosystems
- Diversity and adaptations of organisms.

SPECIAL ICONS	 Homestead Handout	<i>Enrichment Activities</i>	 Math	 Did you know?	 Music	 Language Arts
	Indicates a reproducible handout is included	 Indicates advanced lessons	Indicates an additional math lesson	Indicates a little known fact about the subject	Indicates an additional music or art activity	Indicates an additional language arts lesson

Pre-Visit Activity #1 (suggested

Did you know?



Before settlers moved west, the prairies were covered with herds of grazing animals, such as buffalo, elk, deer, and rabbits. These animals increased the growth in prairies by adding nitrogen to the soil through urine and feces, and creating open areas for plants that like to have the soil dug up. Prairie dogs dug huge underground tunnel systems which aerated the soil and allowed water to reach several feet below the surface.

<http://www.blueplanetbiomes.org/prairie.htm>

IN SEARCH OF PRAIRIE ANIMALS



How many times have you seen an unfamiliar animal and wondered what the name of that species was? Wouldn't it be nice to have a reference book that was available to identify the various species and assist in understanding its habitat and characteristics? Well now is the time to put an end to the questions you might have about the animals that call the

tallgrass prairie their home. In this webquest you will compile information on the animal species of the tallgrass prairie and create a field guide. This field guide will contain information on the animal's habitat and physical characteristics to aid in the identification of the species and/or the habitat where it may reside.

Click here to go to Webquest on Prairie Animals.
<http://www.zunal.com/webquest.php?w=65588>

IN SEARCH OF PRAIRIE ANIMALS

Pre-Visit Activity #1 (suggested)

The following information is what you will find on the Webquest process page. It is here that you will be able to access the needed information to complete the assignment. Follow these instructions to reach your destination. The Webquest links are listed below and a copy of the Prairie Animals Organizational Chart is available in the Additional Resources section in the event the Webquest is not available.

Students will be placed into groups of four. Within your groups you should assign the following responsibilities.

(A) Researcher - This individual should work with the recorder to acquire the information needed to complete the project. Be sure to document all resources.

(B) Recorder - Records the needed information on the organizational chart to be used in the field guide.

(C) Designer - Places information into a design format to be placed in the publication software. This person should be responsible for finding all images and the creation of graphics for the field guide; be sure to document your resources.

(D) Input specialist - Inputs the design format into the publication software.

The following steps should be going on simultaneously as the project progresses.

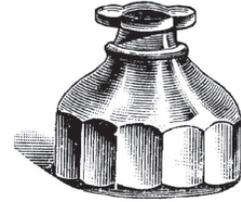
Step 1: Research - Find links about animals of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem. Access the organizational chart and begin recording the information that you find. You may add animals that you feel are interesting and you would like to learn more about and share in your field guide.

Step 2: Design - Locate graphics and images that can be used to aid in the identification and understanding of the animal species. Create layouts of the various pages that will be found in the field guide. Use the information provided by the research/recording team to place the text in places on the page where they provide the most ease of reading. Work with the publisher to develop the final layout of the field guide in the software.

Step 3: Creation of the Final Product: Create your field guide using a newspaper template in an publisher-type software.

Step 4: Submit your field guide for evaluation.

Enrichment Activities



At Homestead National Monument restoration of the prairie began in 1936 and continues today.

In order to have an ecosystem similar to the one encountered by pioneers, one animal would have to be re-introduced. Try to figure out which animal it is and why it needs to be re-introduced to make the prairie ecosystem complete.

Mule deer http://www.desertusa.com/feb97/du_muledeer.html

North American Prairie <http://www.blueplanetbiomes.org/prairie.htm>

Prairie Animals http://www.campsilos.org/mod1/teachers/r_index.shtml#animals

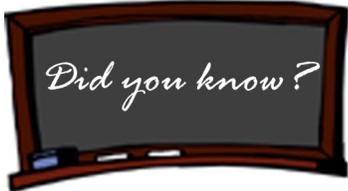
Nature Works-Animals <http://www.nhptv.org/natureworks/nw4.htm>

Illinois State Museum http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/prairie/htmls/eco_an.html

Animals on a Tallgrass Prairie Preserve <http://www.nps.gov/tapr/naturescience/animals-at-the-preserve.htm>

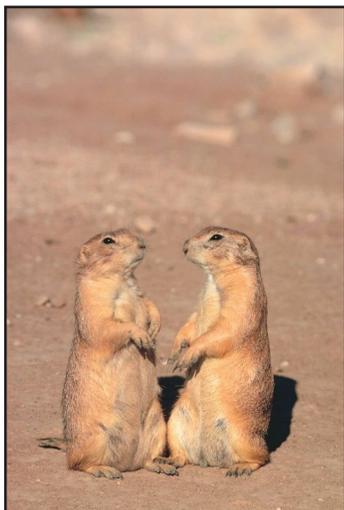


Pre-Visit Activity #2 (suggested)



Black-tailed prairie dogs, the best known of the five prairie dog species, live in larger communities called towns, which may contain many hundreds of animals. Typically they cover less than half a square mile (1.3 square kilometers), but some have been enormous. The largest recorded prairie dog town covered some 25,000 square miles (65,000 square kilometers). That Texas town was home to perhaps four hundred million prairie dogs.

<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/prairie-dog.html>



WONDERFUL WORLD OF PRAIRIE DOGS

The Black-Tailed Prairie Dog of the Great Plains

This lesson consists of four activities that provide students with the opportunity to increase their knowledge of the Black-Tailed Prairie Dog of the Great Plains.

Activity 1: Features of Black-Tailed Prairie Dogs

Use the following Website to complete the chart.

<http://www.nps.gov/wica/naturescience/blacktail-prairie-dog-cynomys-ludovicianus.htm>

1. How did the prairie dog get its name?
2. What does “petit chien” mean and who is the source of this term?
3. Listen to the audio of a prairie dog and in your own words describe the sound of the prairie dog.
4. Prairie dogs are considered to be social animals. How do their living arrangements support this view?
5. What is a coterie and how many prairie dogs typically make up a coterie?
6. What actions of the prairie dogs would show that they are of the same coterie?
7. What are some of the different calls that prairie dogs use to communicate?
8. What determines how deep a prairie dog burrow is?
9. What is the function of the mound that is built around the entrance to a burrow?
10. When is the breeding season for the prairie dog?
How many litters does a female prairie dog have per year?
11. When the new born prairie dogs (pups) emerge from the burrows, what happens to the yearlings (previous year’s young)?
12. What can happen if a prairie dog relocates too far away from the rest of the “town”?
13. What is meant by the term incomplete hibernation?
14. Name the common predators of the prairie dog.
15. How have the attempts to reduce prairie dog populations affected the Black-Footed Ferret?
16. Name two animals that frequently occupy abandoned prairie dog burrows.

*See Homestead Handouts for a
Reproducible Worksheet of questions.*

Activity 2: Prairie Dog in History

Use the link below to access an article on how some have viewed the prairie dog in the past. The article can also be found at the end of this unit.

http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/region_111/vol3-2e.htm

Students should write a paper detailing the following things:

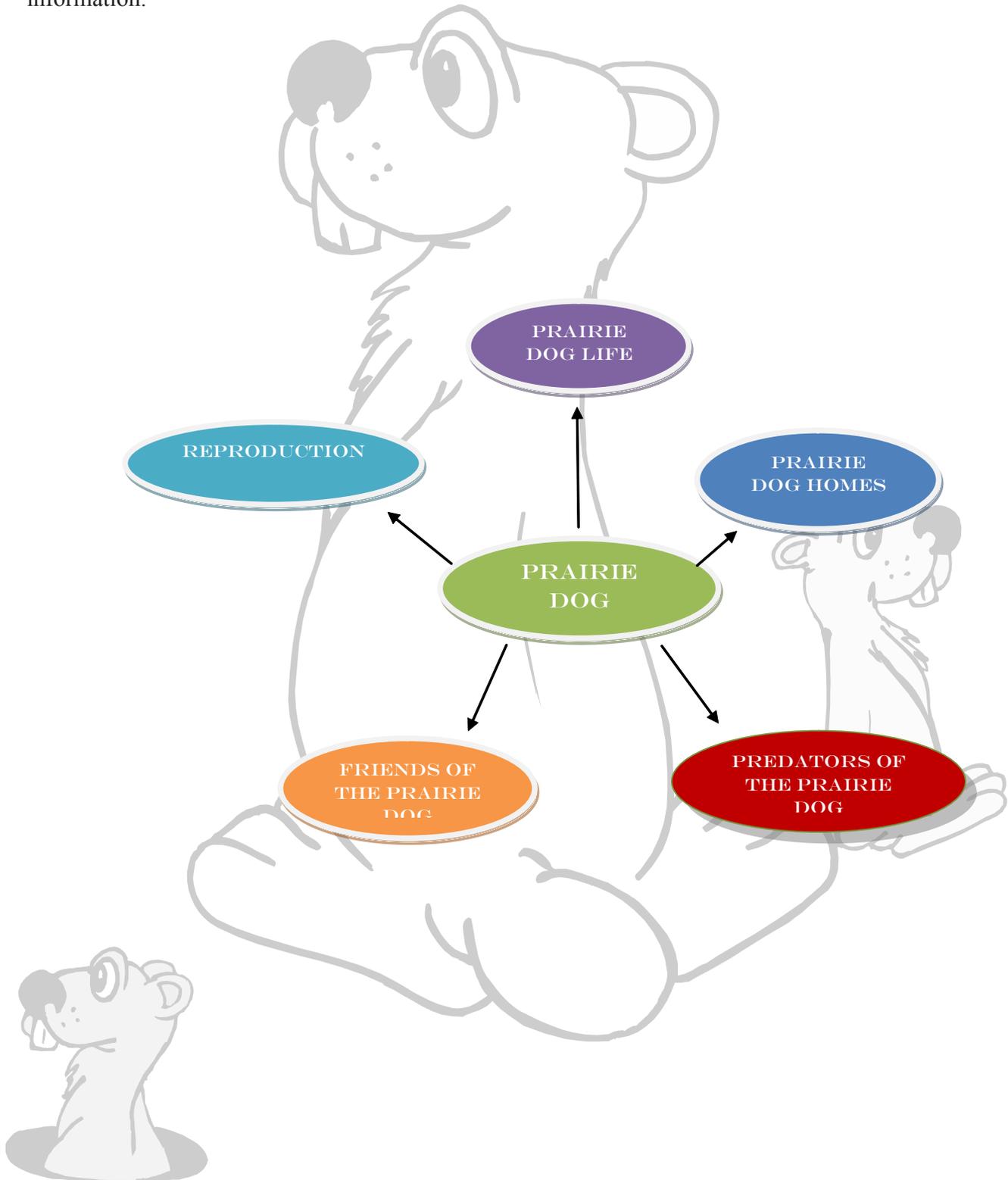
- How this author, in the 1940s, viewed prairie dogs.
- How prairie dogs live.
- Various features of a prairie dog burrow.
- Familiarize themselves with different uses of words not common to today.

**Pre-Visit
Activity #2
(suggested)**

WONDERFUL WORLD OF PRAIRIE DOGS

Activity 3: Organize your information.

Using the information acquired from the webpage on prairie dogs complete the web to organize your information.





Activity 4: My Prairie Dog Life

Using the information from your research and the organizational chart in Activities 1, 2, and 3 write a story that makes use of the major features of the prairie dog and its life experiences. Be creative in your writing! You could create an individual prairie dog, give it a name and describe its experiences in the town that it lived in. You could also assume the role of a friend or predator of the prairie dog and explain the observations you have of the prairie dog.

Themes to describe:

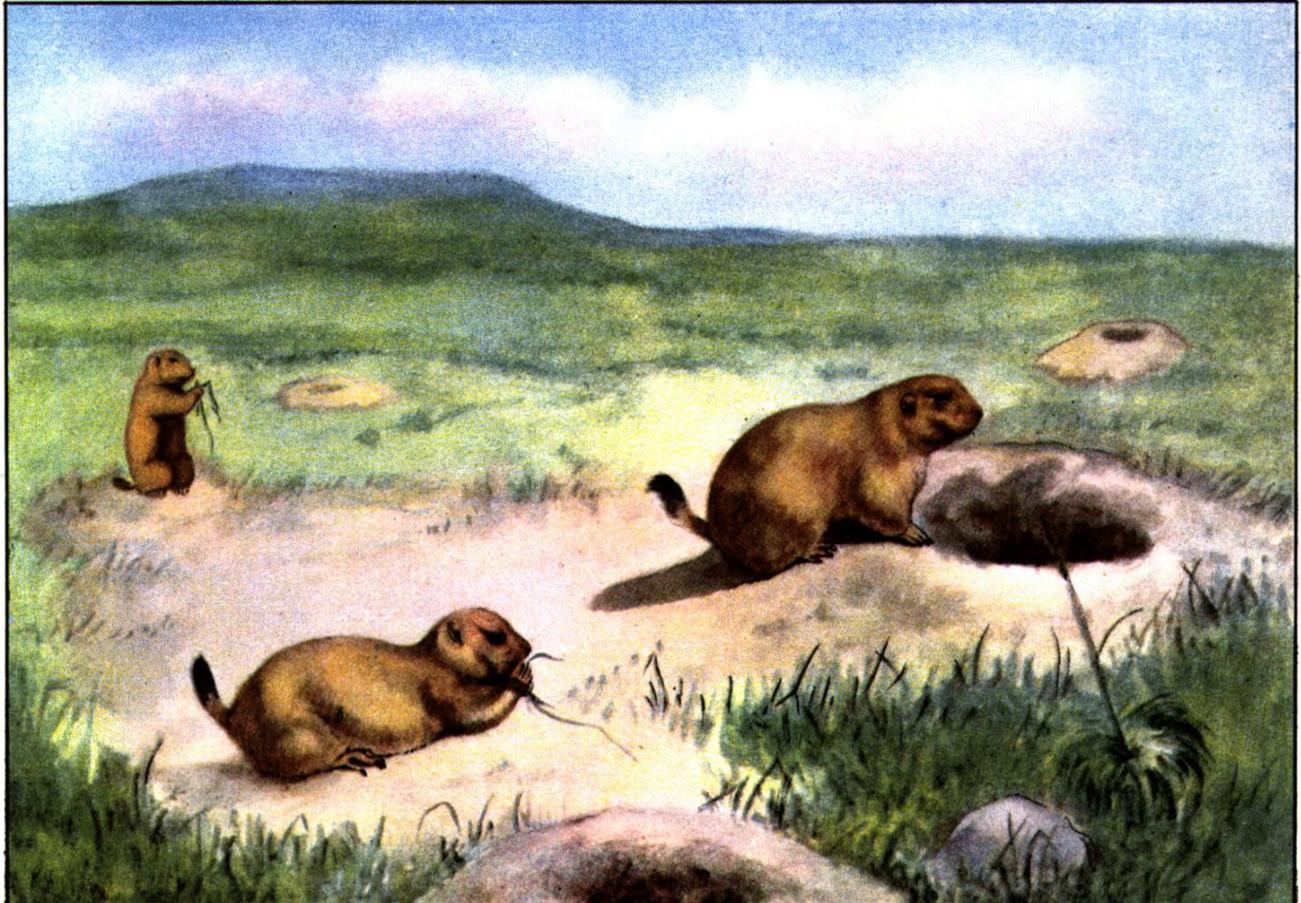
- Where do prairie dogs live?
- How do they interact with each other?
- What would the typical experiences of a prairie dog be?
- What are the key features of the prairie dogs life?

Length: The story needs to be a minimum of 350 words and not more than 500. See the Writing Rubric for “My Prairie Dog Life” on page 13 before getting started.

WONDERFUL WORLD OF PRAIRIE DOGS

The best stories have a strong theme,
a fascinating plot,
a fitting structure,
unforgettable characters,
a well-chosen setting, and
an appealing style.
Try for all of these.

Aaron Shepard



WONDERFUL WORLD OF PRAIRIE DOGS

Pre-Visit Activity #2 (suggested)

Writing Rubric for “My Prairie Dog Life”

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Focus on Assigned Topic	The entire story is related to the assigned topic and allows the reader to understand much more about the topic.	Most of the story is related to the assigned topic. The story wanders off at one point, but the reader can still learn something about the topic.	Some of the story is related to the assigned topic, but a reader does not learn much about the topic.	No attempt has been made to relate the story to the assigned topic.
Organization	The story is very well organized. One idea or scene follows another in a logical sequence with clear transitions.	The story is pretty well organized. One idea or scene may seem out of place. Clear transitions are used.	The story is a little hard to follow. The transitions are sometimes not clear.	Ideas and scenes seem to be randomly arranged.
Spelling and Punctuation	There are no spelling or punctuation errors in the final draft. Character and place names that the author invented are spelled consistently throughout.	There is one spelling or punctuation error in the final draft.	There are 2-3 spelling and punctuation errors in the final draft.	The final draft has more than 3 spelling and punctuation errors.
Accuracy of Facts	All facts presented in the story are accurate.	Almost all facts presented in the story are accurate.	Most facts presented in the story are accurate (at least 70%).	There are several factual errors in the story.
Creativity	The story contains many creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. The author has really used his imagination.	The story contains a few creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. The author has used his imagination.	The story contains a few creative details and/or descriptions, but they distract from the story. The author has tried to use his imagination.	There is little evidence of creativity in the story. The author does not seem to have used much imagination.
Title	Title is creative, sparks interest and is related to the story and topic.	Title is related to the story and topic.	Title is present, but does not appear to be related to the story and topic.	No title.

RANGER-LED EXPERIENCE



RANGER-LED EXPERIENCE

Many animals rely on the tallgrass prairie ecosystem to survive. A park ranger will help students explore the adaptations of animals on the tallgrass prairie by examining the hides and skulls of various animals.

Ask students what animals they think they would find on the prairie in the 1860's. Do they think these same animals are alive and on the prairie today? Why or why not?

Break students up into small groups and give each group a hide, skull, track and scat of an animal. In their groups, have students discuss the following items:

- Identify if the animal is a carnivore (meat eating), herbivore (plant eating) or omnivore (meat and plant eating).
- Ask students to identify (using the skull) how they determined what the animal ate and whether the animal was a predator or prey.
- Ask the students to include life spans, diet, habitat, offspring and other characteristics.

Have the group's report out to the rest of the class after their small group discussions.

Adapt to classroom use: Set up similar centers in the classroom for students to discover the animals on the tallgrass prairie. (Some items may be borrowed from local Game and Parks Commissions.)

Enrichment

Activities



Have students research an animal from the tallgrass prairie ecosystem using the same questions as before. Have students report their findings to the class by doing a media presentation of their choosing.



Homestead National Monument of America is proud to be a pioneer in distance learning technology.

Contact the Education Coordinator at (402) 223-3514 to schedule your virtual field trip on Prairie Animals.

Post-Visit Activity #1 (suggested)

MAN VS. NATURE

Time Needed

One class period.

Introductory Set

Discuss with students what effect man and the needs of humans can have on the existence of plants and animals. Have students brainstorm to create a list of events or instances where the needs of humans have come into conflict with the needs of nature. Examples may include the gulf oil spill, pollution in water sources, excessive hunting, and protecting certain species. Explain to students that they will be working to identify how the needs of humans and the needs of plants have conflicted and develop possible solutions to the conflict.

Procedure

Divide the class into equal sized groups and assign them one of the topics identified during the introductory set. Students are to ask the following questions and provide answers that will be shared with the class.

Question #1: What are the needs of the humans in this event?

Question #2: What are the needs of nature in this event?

Question #3: What is the conflict in this event?

Students should take their information and write it on poster paper or space on the board.

Each group should then be assigned one of the events prepared in the previous set. This group will look at the conflict and needs to develop possible solutions to the issue.

Enrichment Activities



Students will choose one of the events/topics presented in the discussion and write a reaction to the proposed solutions as well as the conflict. Students should discuss their personal position and be encouraged to use their own experiences as support.

Overview

This is a service-learning project allowing students to participate in the restoration or conservation of a tallgrass prairie.

Activity

Students will need to identify a location within their community or school grounds that could be utilized for this project. If an area currently has native plants, the conservation process could begin. If no existing native species are present, then students could reintroduce native plants to their plot.

The following are a list of resources that can be used in the conservation/preservation/restoration process.

Knox College – “Restoration: A How-To Guide”

<http://www.knox.edu/academics/academic-facilities/green-oaks/a-practical-restoration-method.html>

Tallgrass Prairie Restoration LLC.

<http://tallgrassrestoration.com/services.html>

The Nature Conservancy – information and links to prairie conservation.

http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/oklahoma/about/con_main.html

This site has general information about starting a prairie restoration project including the how to's and links to sites to help get you started.

<http://www.squidoo.com/prairierestoration>

Winterhaven Wildflowers & Native Plant Preserve

<http://www.winterhavenfarm.us/home>

CHARACTER EDUCATION

RESPECT

Respectful students treat people and possessions with consideration. They tolerate other's beliefs and accept individual differences. They do not treat people or possessions with violence, meanness or rudeness. They treat others the way they want to be treated.

5 Minute Focus

A 19 year old traveler on the Santa Fe Trail told how the men in the group chased a small herd of buffalo, both on foot and on horseback. They shot a male buffalo about two miles from their wagons. It took ten oxen to drag the dead animal to camp where they roasted the tender parts to eat and then dried the rest of the meat. The women made stew with the bones and meat scraps.

- What actions of the pioneers showed respect?
- What actions show that I respect animals?
- Why do we respect animals?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Homestead National Monument of America

National Monument

PRAIRIE ANIMALS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Species Name	Food Sources	Habitat Characteristics
Mule Deer		
White Tailed Deer		
Coyote		
Red Fox		
Striped Skunk		
Mink		
Raccoon		
Opossum		
Eastern Mole		
Eastern Cottontail		
Beaver		
Plains Pocket Gopher		
Muskrat		
Norway Rat		
Franklin Ground Squirrel		

Features of the Black-Tailed Prairie Dog

Name _____

Use the following website to complete the chart

<http://www.nps.gov/wica/naturescience/blacktail-prairie-dog-cynomys-ludovicianus.htm>

1. How did the prairie dog get its name?
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4. Prairie dogs are considered to be social animals.
How do their living arrangements support this view?
5. What is a coterie and how many prairie dogs typically make up a coterie?
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9. What is the function of the mound that is built around the entrance to a burrow?
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12. What can happen if a prairie dog relocates too far away from the rest of the “town”?
13. What is meant by the term incomplete hibernation?
14. Name the common predators of the prairie dog.
15. How have the attempts to reduce prairie dog populations affected the Black-Footed Ferret?
16. Name two animals that frequently occupy abandoned prairie dog burrows.



PRAIRIE DOGS

By Kennedy N. Clapp,
Member, Texas State Parks Board

Prairie dogs were numbered in the millions 40 years ago. Today, they are rightfully and rapidly approaching extinction on agricultural lands, under the government sponsored poisoning and gassing program. Economically, I offer no brief for the prairie dog. He is a pest, destructive to agriculture, and a menace to cattlemen, sometimes reducing potential grazing by as much as 80 percent. But there are other phases of him for which I plead his restricted preservation. He is as symbolic of the Old West as the cowboy. Both are fast disappearing and becoming difficult to find - the former, due to his misdeeds; the latter, from the evolution of cowponies to automobiles.

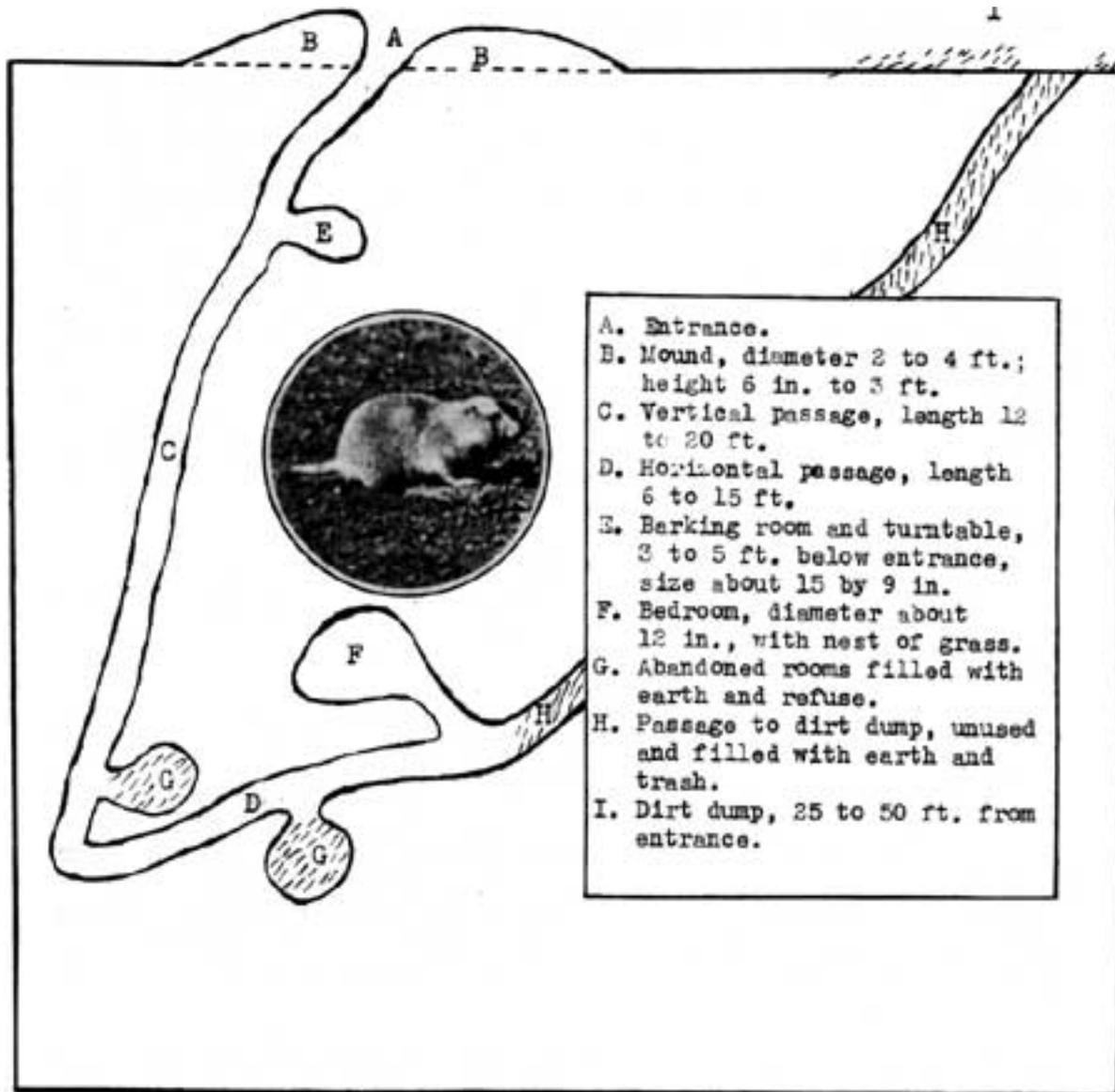
The prairie dog is an interesting little fellow to those who delve into his peculiar and sociable homelife or who domesticate him into a very affectionate and mischievous pet. Wild or tamed, he is a top-hand in promoting chuckles and those deep abdominal risibilities, vulgarly termed "belly-laffs." He is not a dog. The name is a misnomer, and is said to have been used first by members of the Lewis and Clark expedition, due to the barking cry. He is a rodent, a member of the squirrel family; and a near relative of the woodchuck or ground hog, that well known "forecaster" of spring. The adult is 12 to 15 inches in length, and weighs from 2 to 3 pounds. The color is greyish to reddish brown, with a short black-tipped tail. There is a white tailed subspecies in the Rocky Mountain region.

Their habitat formerly was the dry Great Plains, from Montana to Mexico. Their colonies varied in number from a few to millions. A dog-town of any size today is rare. In the 1901 Department of Agriculture Yearbook, Dr. C. H. Merriam wrote: "Colonies 20 to 30 miles in length are not rare, and in Texas one is known which measures about 250 miles one way by 100 to 150 miles the other, covering an area of about 25,000 square miles. It is certainly a conservative estimate to assume the average number of animals to be 25 per acre. On this assumption, the number of prairie dogs in the great Texas colony must be at least 400,000,000."

My home, in Lubbock, Texas, is about the center of the area formerly occupied by this "yipping" host. Today, there may be a scattered 5,000 dogs within a 100-mile radius. The only town in this vicinity not facing quick extermination is one in Mackenzie State Park in Lubbock. I hope that this small colony may be preserved. It is of great interest to sightseers, especially tourists from the south and the east.

Prairie dog homes are L-shaped burrows, 12 to 20 feet in depth vertically, and 6 to 15 feet horizontally. The accompanying diagram of a burrow is a composite of several drawings that have been made of excavated homes. All features shown in the diagram are not in every burrow. The entrance is banked with earth to keep out water. The size of the mound depends upon location and rainfall. The mound and hole

resemble a miniature volcano. From 3 to 6 feet below the entrance is a small room to which the animal retires when first frightened into his hole. There he may be heard barking and scolding. If he hears the intruder approaching too near, down he slips to the bottom. It is a place where he may halt, turn around and go back for a peep, or come out if the "all clear" signal is sounded by other dogs.



Prairie dog home.

The horizontal passage has an upward elevation with the nests connecting and generally above it. Occasionally, a nest is below; sometimes one is built off the vertical passage. Where the horizontal passage continues to the surface, it appears to be used only in construction for the easy disposal of earth, being partially or completely filled with dirt and trash. A single entrance is the rule. However, double ones are occasionally found, but seldom is the dirt dump passage one of them.

The little animals are wary. They allow no vegetation to grow higher than six inches, within 100 feet of their burrow, thus providing a clear view of approaching enemies. They seldom go farther than 100 feet from a hole. The approach of an intruder is signaled by a Yip! Yip! Yip! Instantly, every dog "freezes",

and is alert. A fourth yip from the alarmer, and all dogs scurry for their holes, sit up on the rim of their craters in readiness to dive to safety. If the foe approaches too closely, there is a babel of yips and all dive into their burrows. Prairie dogs that are shot when on the alert over their holes, seldom fail to make a death leap into their burrows.

In construction activities the dogs display ingenuity. If the earth is damp, it is made into balls for removal to the surface; if dry, it is carried out in armfuls. The nose and head are used to tamp the earth to firmness around the entrance hole and the inside of the crater. When there is a general repairing of mounds in the colony, we may anticipate rain.

They are vegetarians from circumstances only, as they are omnivorous in captivity. Their food is the plant life about them: grass, weed seeds, leaves, stems, and roots. Like desert rodents, they subsist without water, the necessary moisture being obtained from green food. The common belief that all towns have a hole dug to the depth of water is a fallacy. Drillings for oil have been made in towns with no water being found down to 1,000 feet.

The animals are semihibernating, climate determining the sleeping periods. In the Texas Panhandle, they appear daily after noon when the temperature is above freezing and the weather not inclement. They are seldom seen when the thermometer registers as low as 20 degrees. No winter storage of food has been noted. They acquire a heavy layer of fat on their bodies in the late summer and fall, which carries them through the winter. The young are generally four in number and appear in late spring. There are few bachelors and old maids, judging from the rapid increase in the Mackenzie State Park colony.

Their principal enemies are the rattlesnake, ferret, coyote, and badger. It is a myth that the rattlesnake and the "dog" dwell amicably together. They are mortal enemies, and each fears the other. If his snake-ship enters an inhabited burrow, Mr. and Mrs. Dog leave in haste, if they can escape. They emerge shrieking the bad news, and immediately start plugging the entrance. Neighboring dogs rush to their assistance, and the dirt "flies" from the vigorous scratching. Many noses pack the earth hard, and the snake is entombed. Old dogs have seldom been found in the stomachs of snakes that have been dissected. The snake apparently is fearful of being buried alive. He watches and enters holes when the parents are away, to catch young dogs in the nest. He seems to be aware of the danger, as a handful of earth dropped down the hole will bring him out in a hurry. There is no response to the same procedure when he is in a subterranean nest of the pack rat, for these latter rodents do not entomb him. Snakes frequently enter the rat nests and await the owner's return.

Burrowing owls live in abandoned burrows to save the trouble of digging their own homes. They are not averse to a meal of young dog, if they can catch one, but they are quickly torn to pieces by adult dogs, if caught in the burrow.

Of the many pets that my family has had, we rate our prairie dog, Peter, near the top. When he arrived competition was strong among the members of our backyard zoo, for the favor of my two young daughters. This zoo, collected by a Boy Scout troop, was a miscellany of birds, reptiles, and mammals, ranging from a wing-crippled crow to an untamable bobcat. Buff, a canine of uncertain ancestry, was supreme in my daughters' affections. Next came Kingy, a 3-foot kingsnake. Then in descending scale were Billy Coon, Flops Rabbit, Jim and Molly Whiterat, Quacky Mallard, and Goofus Armadillo. So Pete had a job to become one of the favored few, but he took the task in stride and soon was in the select circle.

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Focus on Assigned Topic	The entire story is related to the assigned topic and allows the reader to understand much more about the topic.	Most of the story is related to the assigned topic. The story wanders off at one point, but the reader can still learn something about the topic.	Some of the story is related to the assigned topic, but a reader does not learn much about the topic.	No attempt has been made to relate the story to the assigned topic.
Organization	The story is very well organized. One idea or scene follows another in a logical sequence with clear transitions.	The story is pretty well organized. One idea or scene may seem out of place. Clear transitions are used.	The story is a little hard to follow. The transitions are sometimes not clear.	Ideas and scenes seem to be randomly arranged.
Spelling and Punctuation	There are no spelling or punctuation errors in the final draft. Character and place names that the author invented are spelled consistently throughout.	There is one spelling or punctuation error in the final draft.	There are 2-3 spelling and punctuation errors in the final draft.	The final draft has more than 3 spelling and punctuation errors.
Accuracy of Facts	All facts presented in the story are accurate.	Almost all facts presented in the story are accurate.	Most facts presented in the story are accurate (at least 70%).	There are several factual errors in the story.
Creativity	The story contains many creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. The author has really used his imagination.	The story contains a few creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. The author has used his imagination.	The story contains a few creative details and/or descriptions, but they distract from the story. The author has tried to use his imagination.	There is little evidence of creativity in the story. The author does not seem to have used much imagination.
Title	Title is creative, sparks interest and is related to the story and topic.	Title is related to the story and topic.	Title is present, but does not appear to be related to the story and topic.	No title.

