

Swamp Feast

Background Information for Teachers

Welcome to a magical world where your students can meet some of the animals of the swamp that live in a secret castle. In this book we've taken two subjects that young kids love - the enchantment of a medieval castle and the wonder of the natural world - and combined them in a compelling story of festivity and danger. Two areas that seem so different are brought together through the workings of imagination. The castle is revealed to be a baldcypress tree in a Louisiana swamp, and the characters in the "castle" are animals typically found in this unique habitat.

Your students will have the opportunity to learn about life in the Middle Ages and at the same time study the life that exists in the mysterious swamp. They will meet knights and princesses, lowly peasant farmers, and ferocious dragons that are discovered to be some of the amazing animals that reside in a wetland community.

Your students will encounter the following characters and learn about how they live, what they eat, and some of their unique adaptations that allow them to survive in a wetland habitat:

- Peasant farmer - crawfish
- Brave armored knights - armadillos
- Steward - grey squirrel
- Cook - honey bee
- Lord and Lady - red-tailed hawks
- Weaver - Argiope spider
- Barber - opossum
- Minstrels - green tree frogs
- Troubadours - crows
- Prince and princess - barred owls
- Monarchs - butterflies
- Dragons - dragonflies
- Secret Guard - bats
- King - alligator

The story follows life in a castle and in a baldcypress swamp. Your students can glimpse the daily operation of a medieval castle and the people who worked and lived there. The story then transforms into the life of a south Louisiana wetland that surrounds a baldcypress tree.

So take a magical journey that will enrich and amaze your childrens' imaginations and introduce them to the wonderful world of wetlands.

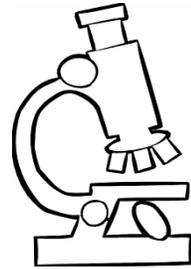
Time to Experiment: INTRODUCTION TO OUR WETLAND WORLD-

Materials: (you must provide materials unless otherwise noted)

Castle Book (provided)

Student Sheets about the characters in the book (provided)

Pencil, pen, or crayons for students to write or draw with



Procedure:

Read and follow the directions for the following activities:

1. Read "Baldcypress Tree"
2. Read "Crawfish"
3. Read "Armadillo"
4. Read "Medieval Feast"
5. Read "Honey Bee"
6. Read "Red-Tailed Hawk"
7. Read "Weaver Spider"
8. Read "Opossum"
9. Read "Tree Frog Songs"
10. Read "Crow Stories"
11. Read "Owl and Mouse Game"
12. Read "Butterfly Bracelet"
13. Read "Dragonfly Bracelet"
14. Read "Bat Sound Waves"
15. Read "Alligator - Big Lizard"

Conclusions:

Your students should be more familiar with the animals of the swamp after they complete the following experiments.

Name:

Date:

Baldcypress Tree:

Arbor Day - the celebration of tree planting is celebrated all over the world.

In Israel, for example, they celebrate Tu B' Shebat meaning "the fifteenth day of the Hebrew month Shebat," also known as the "New Year for Trees."

In ancient times, this day was celebrated by planting trees for the children born during the year.

A cedar tree was planted for each boy and a cypress tree for each girl.

Draw a tree that you would like to be:

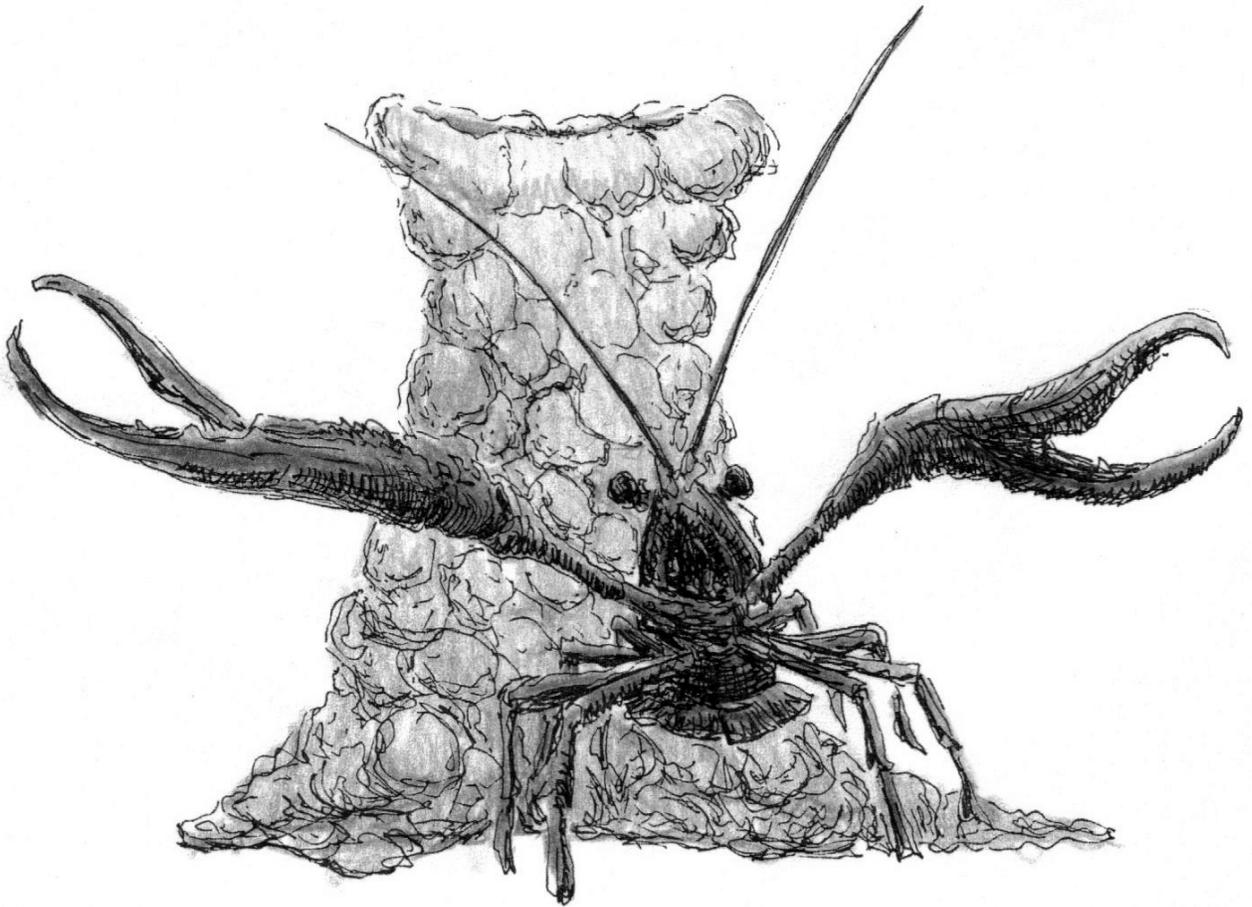
1. You'll need leaves.
2. You'll need bark on your trunk.
3. Are you going to have flowers and fruit?

Name:

Date:

Crawfish:

Color the Crawfish



Armadillos always have 4 babies at one time:

Game - Name 4 of a kind:

1. Name 4 colors
2. Name 4 numbers
3. Name 4 letters
4. Name 4 animals that live in the swamp
5. Name 4 insects/bugs
6. Name 4 parts of your body
7. Name 4 types of sports
8. Name 4 foods
9. Name 4 shapes
10. Name 4 friends

Name:

Date:

Medieval Party:

Steward Squirrel had to get the food ready for the party.
What do you like to eat that they would have eaten?

FEAST FOODS

Vegetables: carrots, lettuce, okra, onions, and spinach

Fruits: grapes, cherries, plums, and crab apples

Nuts: almonds

Meats: beef, some fresh fish, and a variety of chickens, partridges, peafowl, pigeons, pork, swans, peafowl, quail, partridge, storks, cranes, larks, geese, and ducks

Sealife: whales, porpoises, seals, beavers, herring, cod, oysters, mussels, scallops, crawfish, pike, carp, bream, perch, lamprey, and trout

Name:

Date:

Honey Bee:

Bees are insects. Insects are special animals.

They have:

1. 3 body parts (head, thorax, and abdomen)
2. 2 antenna
3. 6 legs
4. An exoskeleton
5. 2 wings

Directions:

1. Sung to the tune, "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes."
2. Sing new lyrics:
 - a. Head, Thorax, Abdomen, Abdomen
3. As you sing point to your
 - a. Head (Head), Thorax (Chest), Abdomen (Stomach)
4. Last verse sing
 - a. Antenna, eyes, and 6 legs, exoskeleton
 - b. We are all insects - insects!



Name:

Date:

Red-tailed Hawk Feather:

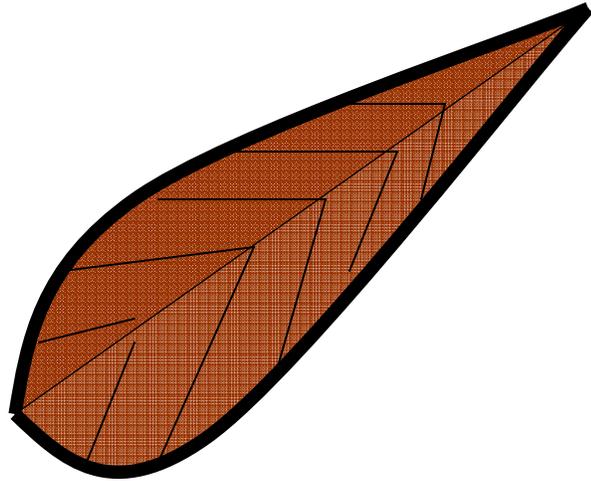
Red-tailed Hawk: To make a feather

Need:

1. Construction paper, red
2. Feather model
3. Scissors

Directions:

1. Cut out the feather model
2. Fringe the edges



Check off all the right answers.

What do you think birds use feathers for?

- To look good
- To keep warm and dry
- To fly
- All of them!

What color are feathers?

- All feathers on all birds are black
- All feathers have many colors on them
- Different feathers have different colors

Name:

Date:

Argiope Weaver Spider:

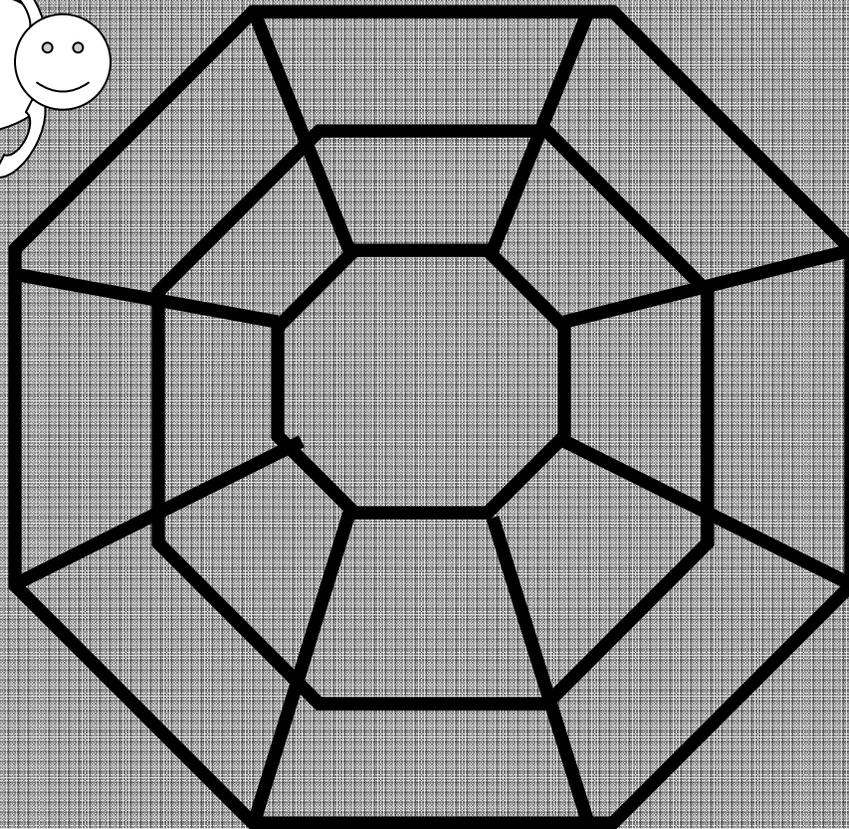
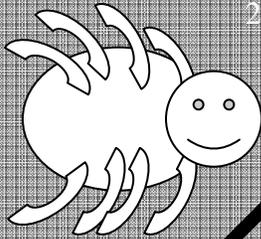
A spider weaves a web to catch insects to eat. Make your own web.

Need:

1. Wax paper and glue -OR- yarn and glue
2. Web and spider model [below]
3. Scissors

Directions:

1. Cut the wax paper and lay it over the model and put lines of glue over the model -OR- Cut yarn pieces to match the model and glue to paper model
2. Cut out the spider and attach to the model.

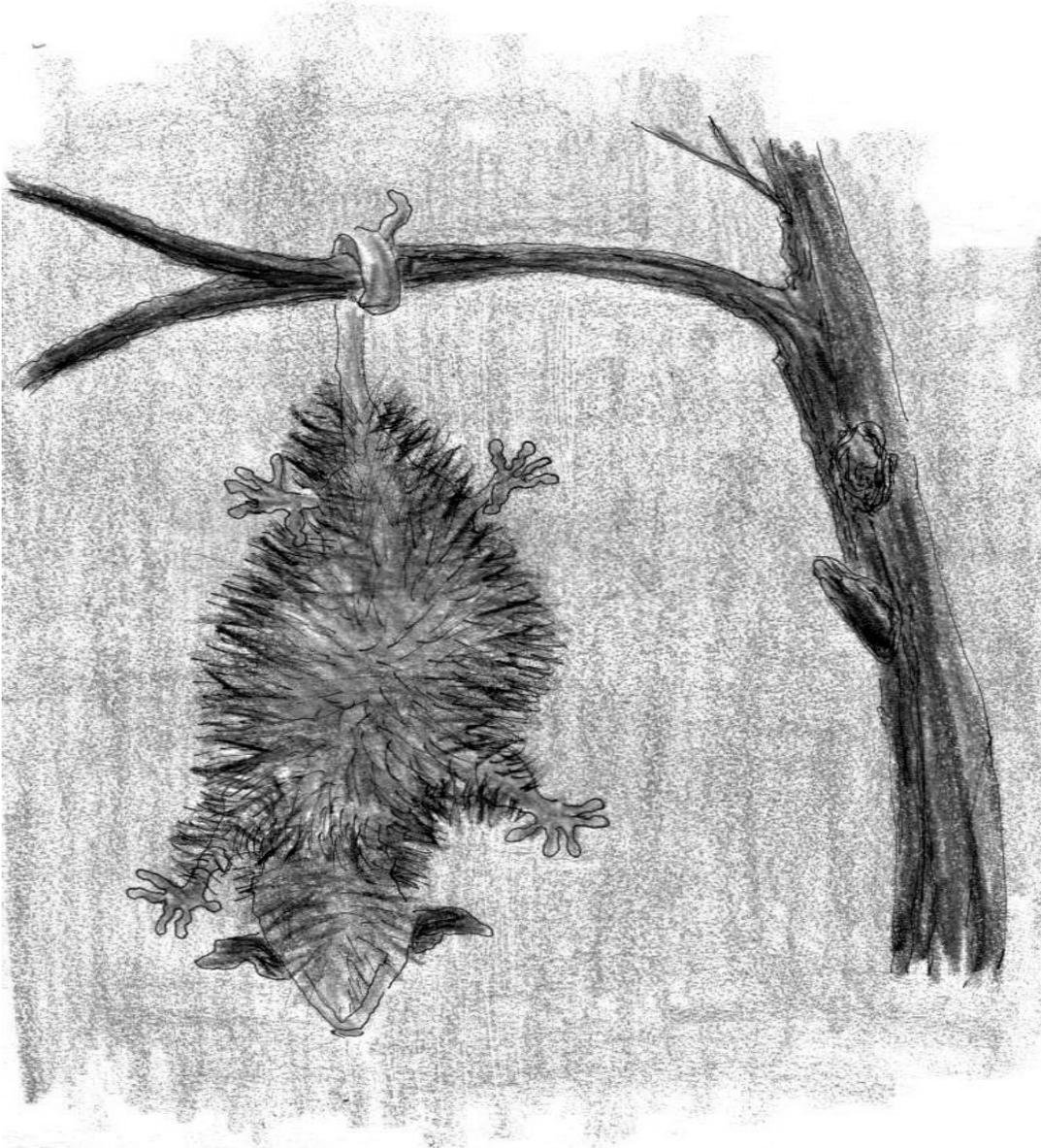


Name:

Date:

Opossum:

Color in and cut out an opossum puppet. Attach a chenille stem (with glue) where the tail should go, and after the glue dries, wrap around your finger and let the opossum hang from your finger.



Name:

Date:

Tree Frogs

Make up a song.

I sing a song

Name:

Date:

Crows:

Make up a story.

Once upon a time

Barred Owls:

Game - Owl and Mouse Game

This is a game that helps students understand predator-prey relationships, as well as adaptations for survival.

1. Have kids line up in a large circle (they will be trees).
2. Choose and blind-fold one student (Owl).
3. Choose another student to be the Mouse.
4. The Owl will hoot once, the Mouse will squeak, and the trees remain silent. Mouse squeaks every time Owl hoots.
5. The Owl will try to locate the Mouse by sound alone (very much like a real owl).
6. They should walk around inside the ring of "tree" students, the Mouse trying to avoid be eaten (tagged) by the Owl.
7. If the Owl gets too near a tree - the tree may say "tree," otherwise they shouldn't speak at all, so the Owl can hear the Mouse.
8. If the Owl hoots, only the Mouse should squeak, but the Mouse should squeak right away.
9. Play for about a minute or so, and if the Owl tags the Mouse it eats, if not it goes hungry.
10. Pick 2 other players, 1 to be the Owl and 1 to be the Mouse.
11. Play for a few rounds, then quit, or else everyone gets bored and antsy (agitated). You can always play more another day!

Name:

Date:

Butterfly:

Make a butterfly life cycle bracelet

Need:

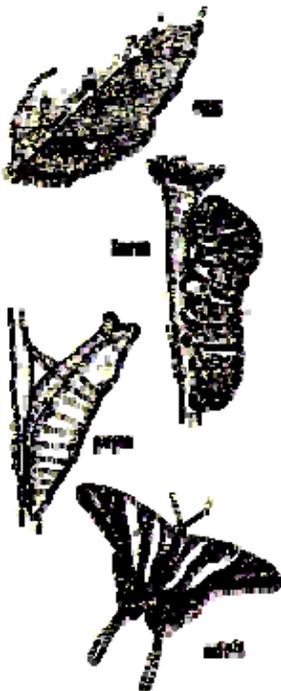
1. Scissors
2. Length of chenille stem (to fit loosely around student's wrist)
3. Hole puncher (single)
4. Crayons, colored pencils or pens

Directions:

1. Color in picture of butterfly life cycle or have your students make their own pictures
2. Color and cut out pictures
3. Hole punch through each one and attach to chenille stem bracelet.
4. Attach bracelet to wrist and wear!

Image credit

<http://mdc.mo.gov/nathis/insects/butterf/>



Name:

Date:

Dragonfly:

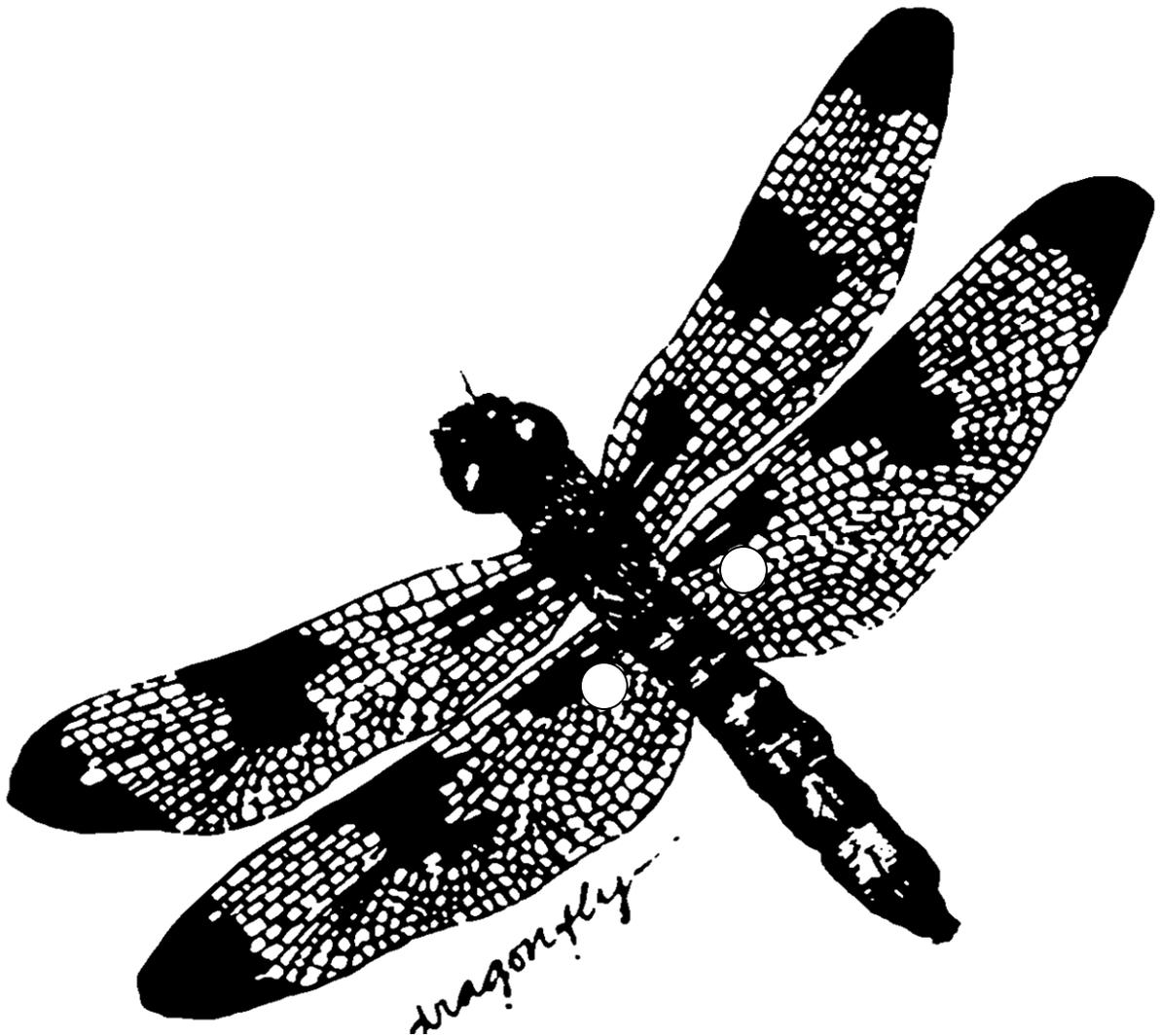
Make a dragonfly fly:

Need:

1. Scissors
2. Dragonfly model [provided]
3. Hole punch
4. Chenille stem

Directions:

1. Cut out the dragonfly model
2. Hole punch 2 sides
3. Strina a chenille stem through the holes.



Name:

Date:

Bats:

Make a bat fruit salad:

Need:

1. Fruits that are fertilized by bats - these fruits include bananas, mangos, figs, and guava fruit
2. Knife to cut up fruit
3. Bowl for mixing fruit, and bowls for serving fruits

-OR-

Make a bat fruit and peanut butter sandwich:

Need:

1. Fruits that are fertilized by bats - these fruits include bananas, mangos, figs, and guava fruit (or get these as jellies)
2. **Peanut Butter (BE CAREFUL OF ALLERGIES)**
3. Plastic butter knives to spread jellies and peanut butter on bread or crackers

Directions:

2. Wash and cut up fruits - or - spread fruit jellies
3. Have your students sample the fruits or have a peanut butter and bat fruit sandwich or cracker.
4. ENJOY!



Name:

Date:

Alligator:

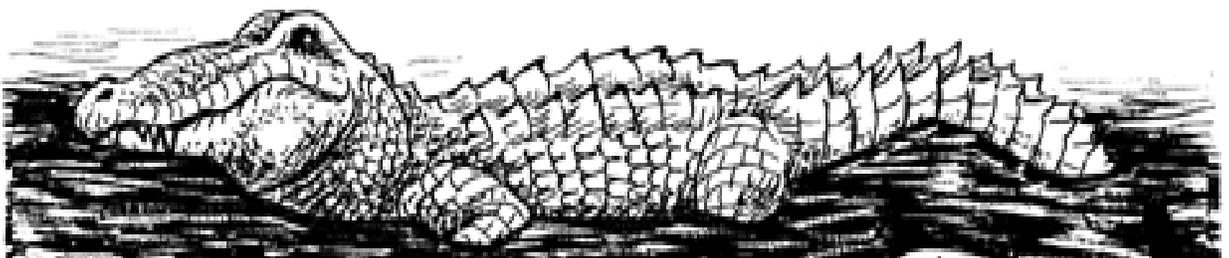
Make an Alligator Hat:

Need:

1. Green construction paper
2. Scissors
3. Stapler

Directions:

1. Measure each of your student's heads or have them do it themselves.
2. Match that measurement to the construction paper and cut out a band.
3. Color and cut out an alligator face or use the template provided.
4. Staple picture to band, and band to your student's head.



Benchmarks and Grade Level Expectations

Benchmarks K-2

Science as Inquiry

A. Abilities Necessary to do Scientific Inquiry

- SI-E-A1 asking appropriate questions about organisms and events in the environment.
- SI-E-A2 planning and/or designing and conducting a scientific investigation.
- SI-E-A3 communicating that observations are made with one's senses.
- SI-E-A6 communicating observations and experiments in oral and written formats.
- SI-E-A7 utilizing safety procedures during experiments.

B. Understanding Scientific Inquiry

- SI-E-B5 presenting the results of experiments.
- SI-E-B6 reviewing and asking questions about the results of investigations.

Life Science

A. Characteristics of Organisms

- LS-E-A1 identifying the needs of plants and animals, based on age-appropriate recorded observations
- LS-E-A3 locating and comparing major plant and animal structures and their functions
- LS-E-A4 recognizing that there is great diversity among organisms;

B. Life Cycles of Organisms

- LS-E-B1 observing and describing the life cycles of some plants and animals
- LS-E-B2 observing, comparing, and grouping plants and animals according to likenesses and/or difference
- LS-E-C2 describing how the features of some plants and animals enable them to live in specific habitats;

Language Arts: Reading

- ELA-1-E1 Gaining meaning from print and building vocabulary using a full range of strategies (e.g., self-monitoring and correcting, searching, cross-checking), evidenced by reading behaviors using phonemic awareness, phonics, sentence structure, and meaning
- ELA-1-E2 Using the conventions of print (e.g., left-to-right directionality, top-to-bottom, one-to-one matching, sentence framing)
- ELA-1-E3 Adjusting speed of reading (e.g., appropriate pacing, intonation, expression) to suit the difficulty of materials and the purpose for reading (e.g., enjoying, learning, problem solving)
- ELA-1-E5 Reading, comprehending, and responding to written, spoken, and visual texts in extended passages (e.g., range for fiction passages-450-1,000 words; range for nonfiction-450-850 words)
- ELA-1-E6 Interpreting (e.g., retelling, summarizing) texts to generate connections to real-life situations

Language Arts: Writing

- ELA-2-E3 Creating written texts using the writing process
- ELA-2-E4 Using narration, description, exposition, and persuasion to develop compositions (e.g., stories, letters, poems, logs)
- ELA-2-E5 Recognizing and applying literary devices (e.g., figurative language)
- ELA-2-E6 Writing as a response to texts and life experiences (e.g., journals, letters, lists)

Grade Level Expectations K-2

Science as Inquiry

Abilities Necessary to do Scientific Inquiry

K 1 2

- 1 1 1 Ask questions about objects and events in the environment
- 2 2 2 Pose questions that can be answered by using students' own observations, scientific knowledge, and testable scientific investigations
- 4 5 6 Use the five senses to describe observations
- 6 7 8 Select and use developmentally appropriate equipment and tools (e.g., magnifying lenses, microscopes, graduated cylinders) and units of measurement to observe and collect data
- 7 8 9 Express data in a variety of ways by constructing illustrations, graphs, charts, tables, concept maps, and oral and written explanations as appropriate
- 8 9 10 Use a variety of appropriate formats to describe procedures and to express ideas about demonstrations or experiments (e.g., drawings, journals, reports, presentations, exhibitions, portfolios)
- 9 10 11 Identify and use appropriate safety procedures and equipment when conducting investigations (e.g., gloves, goggles, hair ties)

Life Science

Characteristics of Organisms

K 1 2 3 4

- 22 28 Classify objects in a variety of settings as *living (biotic)* or *nonliving (abiotic)*

Physical Science

Properties of Objects and Materials

K 1 2 3 4

- 16 Observe and describe common properties of solids, liquids, and gases
- 17 Sort and classify objects by their state of matter
- 22 Investigate and explain conditions under which matter changes physical states: heating, freezing, evaporating, condensing, boiling

Earth and Space Science

Properties of Earth Materials

K 1 2 3 4

- 37 Illustrate how water changes from one form to another (e.g., freezing, melting, evaporating)
- 35 Examine soils to determine that they are often found in layers
- 39 Identify the characteristics of soil, according to color, texture, and components, including *living (biotic)* and *nonliving (abiotic)* substances
- 36 Observe and record the properties of rocks, minerals, and soils gathered from their surroundings (e.g., color, texture, odor)
- 45 Recognize and describe that rock is composed of different combinations of minerals
- 46 Describe earth processes that have affected selected physical features in students' neighborhoods (e.g., rusting, weathering, erosion)