**WONDERFULLY WILD UNIT**

**LESSON 4: Grades K-3**

**The Four L’s of WildlIFE**

**Curriculum Connections, Standards addressed:**

**Academic Goals:** 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 1.7, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 4.1, 1.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7

**Knowledge Goals:** Communication Arts: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; Science: 3, 4, 8; Social Studies: 5, 6, 7;

Fine Arts: 2

**Objective:** To teach students respectful and responsible approaches to appreciating creatures in the wild.

**Common Core-Aligned Activities:**

**SL.K-2.1—Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions.**

Encourage students to discuss the innate differences between wild and domestic animals; their needs; habitat; behavior.Since wild animals go ‘barefoot’, how can our treatment of parks and open space affect their welfare?

**Character Concepts:** Respect, Citizenship

**Respect:** Recognize how your behavior and activity can potentially frighten, harm or disturb wild animals in their natural habitats.

**Citizenship:** Do what you can to make the world around you…your school, playground, back yard and home a safe, clean place for wild animals and your pets.

**STEM initiatives: Thinking critically in the connections to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math**

**2-LS4-1:** Make a distinction between wild and domestic. Collect the data which can be made to make the comparisons. Discuss the findings. Discuss how people can affect the welfare of all other living creatures through their treatment of the earth. How will our behavior impact their lives?

**Materials Needed:**

* Pencils
* Crayons or markers
* Paper or notebook
* Poster board or large paper
* Magnifying glass or binoculars
* Optional….cell phone camera
* DOWNLOAD Handout: “The Four L’s”

**Method:** Signs of life are everywhere, from the city setting to the country hills. Thankfully, communities are striving to save green space as a benefit to the beauty of their city and a place to restore the soul. We can all agree that natural environments are an absolute necessity to counteract the bombardment of stimulus and stress that we face daily.

This exercise will help teach students to slow down, quiet down, pause, observe, reflect, appreciate and walk more gently on the earth. With opened senses (away from TV, ear buds with blasting music and video games) students will come to appreciate unique ecosystems necessary to sustain life and our responsibility as intricate members of the web of life.

Gather students for a walk to a local park or to explore the outdoor school grounds. Equip them with notebooks and pencils. Ask them to remember some ‘Ground rules’ for this operation:

* When walking, walk gently. Don’t stomp plants or small trees. They are trying to grow and may be home to several species of animals or insects.
* Use only soft, whisper tones so you will not frighten off small animals and critters.
* If you turn over a rock or log to observe the life under it or within it, gently place it back in the manner it was found.
* Leave the animals alone and in peace. Put yourself in their environment. How would it feel to be disturbed or displaced?

Adults may carry binoculars or magnifying glasses to aid students in taking a closer look. Photos can be taken, if desired. This trip is about observation only. Break the green space into sections and assign small groups to each section. Ask them to observe and note any signs of life they may see…(i.e., a feather, animal foot prints, fur, a hole, a nest, etc.)

Also take note of what might harm wildlife in this area: litter, chemicals (is the grass sprayed with fertilizers or weed killers?) tire marks, glass, etc. With adult guidance, remove all litter. What can hurt an ecosystem and why? What are our responsibilities to preserve land space so that others might live in peace and comfort? How does even our voice level affect them?

Upon returning to class, have each group talk about what they observed in their section of green space. List them on the chalkboard. How do all the observations blend together to create an ecosystem? What is possibly harming this space? What can we do to help the animals living in this space? Have students break into four groups to create wildlife posters depicting the four “L’s” of wildlife:

* **Look** at them
* **Learn** about them
* **Leave** them alone
* **Love** them!!

**Call to Action**: Create posters to depict messages about the 4-L’s of wildlife. Photographs, magazine photos, drawings, poems, ---any medium can be used to help students convey the four L’s of wildlife. The posters can be hung in the lobby or cafeteria of your school for all students to observe. Can they think of any additional messages to add? How about broadcast messages over the school intercom, articles for the school paper, or presentations to other classrooms or PTA meetings.

**Reading:** Visit our section entitled **Recommended Children’s Literature** for a comprehensive listing of animal-related books.

**Web sites**: Visit our section entitle **Recommended Web Links** for animal-related web sites.

**HEY TEACHERS! If your students want more fun, here are some additional hand-outs to download:**

Handout: “The One Hour Rule”

Handout: “Backyard Buddies”