

Subject: Science

Grade: First

Standard: #4 The Living Environment

Key Concept: Animals have attributes that distinguish one from the other.

Generalization: Stories sometimes give animals attributes they do not have.

Background:

The number of tiers in this lesson can be controlled by the number of choices the students are given. You may allow students free-choice in selecting a particular animal and a story about that animal, or you can limit the number of choices by pre-selecting the stories and have students choose from only those stories. Another way to form tiers is to select the animals and then allow students to select their own stories about only those animals. The lesson that follows uses this method.

Students choose a tier according to interest (cats, dogs, bears, frogs, fish, birds). They are then directed to find a book or story about their chosen animal. This should be literary in nature, such as Frog and Toad Together, NOT scientific, such as The Big Book of Frogs. However, a resource table with factual books such as the latter is necessary to complete the activity.

Students are directed to read their books and look carefully at the illustrations. If the child has difficulty reading a book, have them listen to it on tape and look at the pictures as the story unfolds.

This lesson is tiered in *content* according to *interest*.

Tier I: *Cats*

Tier II: *Dogs*

Tier III: *Bears*

Tier IV: *Frogs*

Tier V: *Fish*

Tier VI: *Birds*

Once they have read their story, all students should do the following activities with respect to their animal:

Describe the animal in your story. Be sure to tell as much as you can about the way the character looks and acts.

Name several things the story animal does that a real animal of that kind can't do.

Compare and contrast the story animal with a real animal of the same kind. Use books from the resource table and your science book. Make a Venn diagram to show your results.

Find a person who has a different animal than you have and share what you have learned. With your Sharing Partner, talk about why you think the authors of your stories made the animals do things differently than real animals do. Write your conclusion on a piece of paper to bring to the whole group discussion.

Assessment:

Teacher observation of groups, accurate descriptions of the real and story animal, correctly completed Venn diagram, and completed sentence with a partner may all be used as forms of assessment.

In the whole group discussion, have students share what they learned and share their Venn Diagrams. You may also want to form all-alike groups for sharing and/or mixed groups-perhaps with one member from each tier. This will depend on the sophistication of the class. Lead the class in a discussion regarding the characteristics of animals in a story with real animals. Have them discuss why authors may choose to make animals seem more human. Be sure they have a clear concept of the attributes of real vs literary animals.