

Guess What



Exploring the lifecycle of an animal through theater and creative writing.

Essential Question

How can tableau and scientific questioning be used to explore the life cycle of an animal and plant?

Overview

Students will analyze the life cycle by assuming the roles of various plants and animals in the cycle. Students will also use a guessing game and a tableau to dramatize their place in the life cycle. After the students share their tableau, they will write from the point of view of their plant/animal and discuss the changes they went through in the form of poetry.

Other Notes

Start vocabulary a week or a few days before the activity.

This activity can be done in one day or spread out over multiple days. For example the kids could make the headbands one day of class. Then they could make the list of questions the following class. Then they could present their tableaus on the third day of the activity.

Materials

- Construction paper
- Tape
- Note cards
- Paper
- Pencils

Vocabulary

- Life cycle
- Sequence
- Mammal
- Amphibian
- Insect
- Organisms
- Fungi
- Pencils

Step-by-step

Small Groups Create Tableau

1. Place students in small groups. The teacher will assign each group a life cycle of a plant or animal.

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2. Each student in the group will make a headband. (The instructions for making the headbands are on Page 3.) Then each student will draw on a notecard one part of his or her group's life cycle. The group together should have all stages. They will tape the notecard onto the headbands. Then they will create a list of clues about their life cycle for another group to examine. (An example of sample clues is on Page 4.) This list of clues when examined correctly should inform the reader about what life cycle is on the headbands. Direct the groups to asking thoughtful, detailed, and scientific questions.
3. The groups switch headbands and the list of questions. Each student puts on a headband. The kids cannot look at their cards nor can they tell their other group members what they are. They must use the clues provided to figure out what animal/plant life cycle they are.
4. Once the kids have an idea of their animal/plant they will get in line where they think they go in the life cycle.

For example, the kids with the life cycle of a butterfly should be in this order: egg, caterpillar, chrysalis, and butterfly.

Reflect

5. Ask students:
 - What do their classmates think they are portraying?
 - Emphasis on facial expression and body language.
 - What are they actually portraying?
 - How do they know this?
 - How did the creature/plant change from the beginning of the line to the end?

Students Write In – Role:

6. Students return to their seats. In their groups (for second grade only), students will write a free verse poem about the changes that their animal/plant went through.

For example, write about how the butterfly started as an egg and then became a butterfly.

3rd grade classes/advanced classes will write a rhyming poem individually.

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How to Make Headbands

Materials

- Construction Paper
- Scissors
- Tape
- Note Cards

STEP 1: Cut paper into strips hotdog ways. Each sheet should allow for 4 to 6 strips depending on the width.

STEP 2: Take two strips and tape them together on both sides.

STEP 3: Loop the ends around and tape them together on both sides.

STEP 4: Make a loop of tape and place on front of headband.

STEP 5: Attach notecard to the tape.

Assessment

Formative Assessment: Class discussion, group discussion, reflection questions, anecdotal notes when observing students working in small groups, class reflections/discussions, and tableau.

Summative Assessment: POV writing exercises. A rubric could also be used to evaluate students during the tableau exercise.

Resources/Other Sources

- <https://kidskonnnect.com/science/life-cycles/>
- <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/butterfly/lifecycle/>

Sample Questions

What do their classmates think they are portraying?

- Emphasis on facial expression and body language.
- What are they actually portraying?
- How do they know this?
- How did the creature/plant change from the beginning of the line to the end?

What happened between each stage?

What happens when the cycle gets to the end?

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Student Examples - Grade 2

Below - Level

First the butterfly starts as an egg. Then it hatches into a caterpillar. Then the caterpillar makes itself into a chrysalis. Inside the chrysalis it turns into a butterfly.

On - Level

*I was an egg
Then I began to grow
I became a caterpillar
With lots of legs
I wrapped myself tight
And changed again
Then I was a butterfly*

Above - Level

*First I was an egg
Then I had legs
I wrapped myself tight
With wings I took flight.*

Student Examples - Grade 3

Below - Level

*Butterflies start small
Then they grow to caterpillars
Eating a lot till they can't move
They make a cocoon
Inside they change
And grow wings*

On - Level

*From an egg that's small
To a caterpillar long and tall
A chrysalis forms
Butterflies are born*

Above - Level

*From an egg that's small
A chrysalis created
New wings to fly high*

How to modify it for different learning levels in the 2nd grade

- Below Level– Instead of writing free verse poems, the students will focus on detailed sentences. Students will focus on descriptive words and adjectives.
- On Level – The on-level students will write free verse poems with an emphasis on descriptive words.
- Above Average – These students will be writing rhyming poems.

How to modify it for different learning levels in the 3rd grade

- Below Level– The students will be focusing on free verse poetry.
- On Level– Students will focus on creating rhyming poems.
- Above Average– The above average students will be writing haikus.

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Apple Tree Lifecycle Clues

1. Tree: I am constant, never dead, and just dormant at times. I have enough room for everyone. A whole community of creatures lives with me. For you humans, I'll give you shade, beauty, and clean air.
2. Bud: How small am I? Soon a flower will bloom. You can't see it yet because I have it perfectly folded inside. Call me the origami master.
3. Flower: Do you have the urge to pick me? Please don't, not yet at least. Your sweetheart may love how I look in vase, but if you wait a little longer I promise you can take a bite.
4. Apple: Have you seen the doctor lately? If the answer is yes, then your doctor would have told you about me. If the answer is instead a no, then that means we are good friends already.
5. Seed: Do you want to see a magic trick? Simply save me up, bury me in the ground, and watch me grow and multiply.

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Georgia Performance Standards

Science

S2L1: Students will investigate the life cycles of different living organisms.

Theater

TAESK3: Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments

English/Language Arts

ELAGSE2RL1: Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

ELAGSE2RL4: Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

National Standards

2-LS2-1: Develop a simple model that mimics the function of an animal in dispersing seeds or pollinating plants.

2-LS4-1: Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.3: Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.2.4: Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song.

Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts.

Students imagine and clearly describe characters, their relationships, and their environments