

Save the Desert tortoise

The goal is to reduce the threats of the Desert Tortoise and for it to be removed from the endangered species list.

Grade Level: First Grade- level 3 inquiry

Science Concept: Endanger species/ Habitat

Relationship To California Science Standards:

2. Plants and animals meet their needs in different ways. As a basis for understanding this concept:

- a. *Students know* different plants and animals inhabit different kinds of environments and have external features that help them thrive in different kinds of places.

Learning Objective:

1) Students will use the research they have done to come up with a solution in either a written/ artistic form to get the tortoise off the endanger species list.

Evaluation Ideas:

1)Summative- Listen to groups as they speak about the research they are finding and solutions they are coming up with. A great way to check if students what found out certain research is to ask them to give the teacher a thumbs up or thumbs down regarding the research. This method will keep children on track and can help the teacher predict how much more time they need on the project.

2) Formative- There are two worksheets that test their information about the areas they are researching and it specifically focuses on vocabulary they need in order to understand the context.

Conceptual Background:

Lesson Implementation Plan: Students will research about the desert tortoise. In their research they will quickly learn that the tortoise is on the endanger list. There should be a prior lesson about what it means when an animal is endangered. The goal of this assignment is for the students to come up in groups with solutions to save the turtles from possibly becoming extinct.

Engage- Read the story titled, *Life in the Slow Lane; A Desert Tortoise Tale*. (Storad, C. J. (2005). *Life In The Slow Lane; A Desert Tortoise tale*. N.p.: Sunbelt Publications.)

This story will help the class understand that they should save the desert and those animals that live in it. An activity to have students do, while reading, is have them make figures or objects about the story with play-doh. This keeps children engaged; they become a more active listener and this keeps their hands busy and minds active. There is a great song that students can learn from the book. Plus, the book has a glossary at the end to help define terms they may not understand. Students may use this glossary in their research. Once you finished getting the children interested in tortoises explain that they are being slowly pushed out of their home environment. Ask them how they would feel if they were losing family members, space, their home, and food? (answers vary, but generally they respond with “sad”) Once, you caught their emotions tell them that it is their responsibility to come up with a solution to save the endanger tortoise.

Explore- Break the class up into groups of three to five students. Each student needs to help with research, but each student also needs to have a job. One job could be Encourager, Scribe, Materials, and Artist. Students need to find the fundamental facts about the desert tortoise. Once children have found information they need to figure out a way to make a fact sheet that will help them organize their information. When organized they need to work as a group to come up with a valid solution to save the dessert tortoise. While students are gathering facts, ask scaffolding questions that will further their thinking process. They need to image that they might be forced out of their home one-day like the tortoise and this will keep students engaged in the assignment.

Explain- Through collaboration students should come up with a solution to the problem. Once they have the solution they all need to agree on how they will present this solution to the class. Please provide suggestions, but let them know that they are not limited to the teacher's suggestions. (Poster, article, display, drawing and essay) Children need to prefect this product because this will be what is graded. This final product will display to the teacher that each group has carefully considered how to help the Desert Tortoise.

Elaborate- When the groups have finished the final product they need to come up with how they will present this to the class. Again, this can be any creative or standard way. (Song, theater, presentation, and dance) For the presentation the students should be provided a rubric on what they should incorporate, but they may add more to their presentation.

Evaluate- The evaluation is based on two parts. The first part is the final product, and the second part is the class presentation.

List of Materials (per group)

- ✓ Book- Life on the Slow Lane
- ✓ Posters
- ✓ Markers
- ✓ Glue
- ✓ Color paper
- ✓ Material that will foster creativity

Suggested Materials

- ✓ Real Turtle for observation (Jeremiah)

(The turtle is available to check out through SERC)