

Night Moves

Informative Writing About Nocturnal Animals

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Grade Level	1st – 2nd Grade	**Time Frame**	140 minutes
Subject	English/Language Arts, Science	**Duration**	3-4 class periods

Essential Question

How do we gather information for writing? How do animals survive in the dark?

Summary

In this lesson, students listen and engage with a fiction and nonfiction story about nocturnal animals. They then learn to put their ideas and facts into a graphic organizer, which they use to help them write a 3-5 sentence fact story about nocturnal animals.

Snapshot

Engage

Students are engaged by listening to you describe an encounter with a skunk in your garage. Next, they listen to a fictional story and use this source to begin to gather information for informational writing.

Explore

The class creates an Anchor Chart to list prior knowledge and facts learned about nocturnal animals. The book *Night Creatures* is read aloud to students.

Explain

The Word Splash Informative Writing Graphic Organizer is used to model informative writing as you work with students to co-write a story about opossums.

Extend

Students are now ready to create their own informative stories. Each student completes a Word Splash graphic organizer after choosing an animal from the book *Night Creatures.*

Evaluate

Students display their writings and “present” their learnings. The stories are collected and made into a classroom book about nocturnal animals.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (1st Grade)

1.LS1.1.2: Different animals use their body parts in different ways to see, hear, grasp objects, protect themselves, move from place to place, and seek, find, and take in food, water,and air.

Oklahoma Academic Standards for English Language Arts (Grade 1)

1.3.W.2: Informative: Students will begin to write facts about a subject in response to a text read aloud to demonstrate understanding with guidance and support.

Attachments

- Informative Writing Practice—Night Moves - Spanish.docx
- Informative Writing Practice—Night Moves - Spanish.pdf
- Informative Writing Practice—Night Moves.docx
- Informative Writing Practice—Night Moves.pdf
- Word Splash Exercise—Night Moves - Spanish.docx
- Word Splash Exercise—Night Moves - Spanish.pdf
- Word Splash Exercise—Night Moves.docx
- Word Splash Exercise—Night Moves.pdf
- Word Splash-Informative Writing Graphic Organizer—Night Moves - Spanish.docx
- Word Splash-Informative Writing Graphic Organizer—Night Moves - Spanish.pdf
- Word Splash-Informative Writing Graphic Organizer—Night Moves.docx
- Word Splash-Informative Writing Graphic Organizer—Night Moves.pdf

Materials

- A copy of the story *The Secret Life of the Skunk* by Laurence Pringle (click here for an online version)
- A copy of the story *Night Creatures* by Kathryn Stevens (click here for an online version)
- Anchor Chart "I Used to Think... But Now I Know"
- Markers
- Word Splash graphic organizer handout (attached; 1 per student)
- Informative Writing Practice handout packet (attached; 1 per student) or primary storybook paper

15 minutes

Engage

Students are engaged by listening to you describe an encounter with a skunk in your garage. Of course, this will be a highly animated, exaggerated encounter to get their attention. Because of this incident, you had the question, "*Why is that skunk in my garage instead of at home with his little skunk family in bed sleeping? It's too late for him to be out playing!*" To answer my question, I decided to find out about skunks.

Now, introduce and read aloud to students *The Secret Life of the Skunk* by Laurence Pringle. Encourage students to share any encounters they might have had with night creatures and guide the discussion, so it leads to talking about nocturnal animals.

25 minutes

Explore

Give students time to talk openly about the information they heard in the story with their Elbow Partners. They can also share other personal animal stories with the class during this time. As students share stories, the conversation will likely come up about nighttime animals, and someone may even use the word "nocturnal."

Next, create one large Anchor Chart titled **Nocturnal Animals** "I Used to Think...But Now I Know."

Under the column "I Used to Think," make a list of the facts and information students report that they know about nocturnal animals. This might be a short list, but it is also okay if the facts are inaccurate.

After the class has had time to share what they know about nighttime animals, introduce and read aloud the book *Night Creatures* by Kathryn Stevens. This book has a lot of vocabulary and essential information; you may want to read the whole book at this time or choose to read selected sections depending on how engaged students are.

Collaboratively, either during the reading or afterward, write the new information (facts) about nocturnal creatures that students learned in the "But Now I Know" column of the Anchor Chart.

Then, read aloud the "I Used to Think "column and put stars by any information confirmed as a fact and draw a line through any information that is not an accurate fact.

25 minutes

Explain

Explain to the class that we can take information that we have learned about a topic to create an informative story. We will use the information we have learned about nocturnal animals to help us write our own informative story about nocturnal animals.

Tell students that informative stories must have the following components:

- A topic sentence
- 3-4 facts about the topic
- A closing sentence

Say to students, "Everyone is going to write one of their own stories but let's start by writing one together. "

Display a copy of the Word Splash graphic organizer using a document camera or create a drawing of it on your whiteboard.

Then, fill in the graphic organizer together, starting with “Topic: Opossums.”

- **Topic sentence:** Have students help you create a topic sentence to write on the graphic organizer.
- **Key words:** Students can use the Anchor Chart or other sources to help them generate four words that pertain to opossums. Example words: *marsupials, nocturnal, mammals, tails, prey, forage, camouflage*
- **Writing the sentences:** Students help you create the sentences using the keywords to guide the content.
- **Closing sentence**: Students write a final sentence to summarize the story.

As you write, you will want to verbalize your thinking. This gives students a way to hear your thoughts about composing the sentences, including the proper capital letters, ending marks, and rereading the sentences to see if they make sense.

45 minutes

Extend

Students are now ready to create their own informative stories. Give each student a copy of the Word Splash Exercise-Night Moves. They should complete their organizer with information about an animal they choose from the story *Night Creatures.* Students can refer to the Anchor Chart for assistance.

If they need more information about their animal, students can use iPads, chrome books with appropriate district-approved search engines. Suggested site: https://www.kiddle.co/

When their graphic organizers are complete, students will edit with a peer and rewrite their information on storybook paper for final display and presentation.

Differentiation for Advanced Learners

More advanced writers may add additional information to their stories by adding a second paragraph focused on specific animal behaviors or animal characteristics.

You may also suggest drawing, painting, or making a sculpture out of play dough and then labeling the animal's structures or parts.

Students could also make an iMovie to create a short video presentation for morning announcements to share with their school about their new class book.

Storybird.com is an excellent tool for students to add illustrations and information to create an online story about nocturnal animals.

20 minutes

Evaluate

Students can display their writings and “present” learning through a whole class discussion or individual exit tickets. Then, collect all the stories and make them into a classroom book about nocturnal animals.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Elbow partners. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/116
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Anchor charts. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/58
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I used to think... but now I know. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/137
- Pringle, L., & Garchinsky, K. (2019). *The SECRET Life of the Skunk*. Boyd Mills Press, Highlights.
- Stevens, K. (2008). *Night Creatures*. Child's World.
- Storybird.com
- https://www.kiddle.co/