

Minnesota Writing Project

--- Demonstration Lesson Template ---

Title of lesson: Using Social Media to Debate the Reintroduction of Gray Wolves to Yellowstone National Park

Suggested grade/age: 10-12th grade

Approximate time needed to complete lesson: 1 week

Learning objective(s) and significance of lesson:

Learning Objectives:

Minnesota Academic Standards English Language K-12

Standards for Literacy in Science

Comprehension and Collaboration

1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

Media Literacy

7. Critically analyze information found in electronic, print, and mass media and use a variety of these sources.
8. Communicate using traditional or digital multimedia formats and digital writing and publishing for a specific purpose.

Brief summary/outline of lesson:

The Reintroduction of the Wolves Project comes at the end of a unit on Biodiversity. In this unit we discuss what biodiversity is and the importance of biodiversity to the health of an ecosystem. We have also discussed extinction and studied another top predator, the Siberian Tiger, which is on the verge of extinction. We have also studied The Endangered Species Act and how it is used to protect species whose numbers are so low that they are close to extinction. In this project students are asked to study the history, issues and public concern surrounding the reintroduction of wolves to Yellowstone National Park. I use a blog as a discussion platform for debating the reintroduction. I either ask or assign students to play the role of one of the stakeholders in the reintroduction. The final product is for the students to take a position and write a persuasive paper about whether or not they favor the reintroduction.

Related Resources:

Websites:

Greater Yellowstone Learning Center

<http://www.greateryellowstonescience.org/topics/biological/mammals/wolves/refs>

Wolf Wars Blog <http://wolfreintroduction.blogspot.com/?zx=20d3d9be9adc4e44>

Videos:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hd9wQm2LcH0>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zik3AraGmRM>

Handouts:

“Wolf Wars” National Geographic March 2010

“Yellowstone After the Wolves”

“Resource Brief Gray Wolves”

“Issues: Wolf Restoration”

PATS Form

For Packet

Against Packet

Persuasive Paper Rubric

Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:

The online role-play can be used for the discussion or debate of any controversial topic. In science there are many such topics such as; stem cell research, evolution, and climate change. The online role-play could lead to a final persuasive paper or some other form of writing. Another possible follow-up could be a mock round table where stakeholders need to compromise to come up with a management plan. This activity could also be a warm-up to a discussion between the differences between an argumentative and persuasive essay. This lesson lends itself well to a team teaching activity between science and language arts or science and social science.

For additional information, contact:

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