

**LESSON PLAN** by           This is a borrowed idea from Project WILD          

**Lesson:**           Stormy Weather          

**Length:**           15-20 mins          

**Age or Grade Intended:**           5<sup>th</sup> Grade          

**Academic Standard(s):**

*Science* 5.4.5 Explain how changes in an organism's habitat are sometimes beneficial and sometimes harmful.

**Performance Objectives:**

Given the lesson, the student will generalize that humans and wildlife share environments and experience some of the same phenomena.

Given the lesson, the student will give three reasons how changes in an organism's habitat are sometimes beneficial and sometimes harmful.

**Assessment:** Each student will write a story that compares the ways a student and a wild animal might experience a drought, snowstorm, flood, tornado, fire, or earthquake. In that story, they must include their three reasons how changes in an organism's habitat are sometimes beneficial and sometimes harmful.

**Advance Preparation by Teacher:** There is no advanced preparation or materials needed.

**Procedure:**

**Introduction/Motivation:** Provide the students with the following instructions: "Before we begin, I want you to decide who you will be during this activity. You may either be yourself or an animal. If you are an animal, you may be either a wild animal, a pet, or a farm animal. You do not have to do anything special if you choose to be an animal. You will just be picturing things in your mind from the POV of the animal you pick. Any questions? Let's see by a show of hands how many of you are animals. How many of you are going to be farm animals? Pets? Wild animals? Yourselves?" (Be sure that there is some variety).

**Step-by-Step Plan:**

1. "Now we are ready to begin. Get yourselves in a comfortable position. Don't worry about who is sitting next to you. All of you will have your eyes closed. Just be comfortable and do your best to picture the things I will describe. Now close your eyes, and picture this... It is a late winter's night. There is a stillness in the air...Bright stars twinkle in the cold, crisp, winter sky...Somehow, you can feel some changes coming in the weather. A gentle breeze begins to stir the leafless trees. A quiet snow begins to fall...The wind floats the snowflakes through the air. Around and around and down...The snow touches you...The wind grows stronger. You can hear the rustle of the branches. You feel the snow pelt you as it swirls faster through the sky. The snow falls heavier...The wind blows colder... Suddenly, a gust of wind kicks up and blows a huge, dead tree down to the ground. It crashes down beside you with a loud BOOM! and shakes the earth beneath your feet. The wind whips faster. You need to find shelter, a safe place...Now the snow makes slapping sounds as the wind hurls it against the swaying trees. Branches creak and crackle all around you. Twigs and branches snap off. They strike the ground below and are covered

by the deepening snow... There is whiteness all around you as the blizzard fills the sky... It snows... and it snows... and it snows... And then there is stillness... The storm has passed.”

- Visual/Spatial Intelligence (Gardner’s)
  - Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence (Gardner’s)
2. Wait a few seconds, and then tell the students to open their eyes. Ask what they saw and felt during the visualization. Not everyone will be comfortable with sharing, and that is alright. If a student does share, have them tell what they were during the snowstorm.
    - Knowledge (Bloom’s)
    - Interpersonal Intelligence (Gardner’s)
  3. After the students have shared their descriptions, discuss the idea that people, pets, and wildlife share a common environment. Whether people live in the cities, the country, the desert, or on a mountaintop, they are not the only living things in those environments. Animals live all around and events like a summer storm, a strong wind, and a light or heavy snowfall send every animal in search of some shelter or protection.
    - Knowledge (Bloom’s)
    - Comprehension (Bloom’s)

**Closure:**

4. Discuss reasons how changes in an organism’s habitat are sometimes beneficial and sometimes harmful.
  - Knowledge (Bloom’s)
  - Comprehension (Bloom’s)
5. Send the students back to their own seats (if they moved) and write a story that compares the ways they and a wild animal might experience a drought, snowstorm, flood, tornado, fire, or earthquake. In their story, they must include a least three reasons how changes in an organism’s habitat are sometimes beneficial and sometimes harmful.
  - Application (Bloom’s)

**Adaptations/Enrichment:** The lesson can be enriched by having the students draw pictures of what they experienced during the visualization or by dramatizing the actions they (animal or human) took during the storm.

**Self-Reflection:** What worked and what didn’t work? Was there enough to my introduction? Did the students have enough background information about animal and people behavior? What did they learn? What would I change? What would I keep?