Name:

Grade 3 Date:



Based on the Writing for Understanding Approach, Vermont Writing Collaborative

My Class Research Project on

Animals in Groups

Research Question:

How does living in a group help animals survive? (focus on wolves)

*Note: Sample responses are included for teacher reference, actual student responses will vary.*

**Research Project Overview**

**Research Question:** How does living in a group help wolves?

**The “Rule of Three”: A Plan for Gradual Release of Responsibility**

**ENGAGEMENT:** Students listen to the book *Animals That Live in Groups* by Kelsi Turner Tjernagel to learn how living in groups can help animals survive.

**INSTRUCTION** **Project #1**.: After reading the anchor text aloud, the class focuses on the whole book for a first read. After the first read students re-read and do a close reading of certain sections of the text that address the focusing question. Together, the class does research, takes notes and writes a class report on how living in groups helps wolves to obtain food and defend themselves.

**GUIDED PRACTICE Project #2:** After the class research report described above on wolves, the class works in small groups to research a different wild animal. The teacher provides instruction as needed, but the small groups of students work more independently and support each other as a group. The class divides into four study groups: wild dogs, chimpanzees, lions, and dolphins and whales. Using the whole text provided and an additional resource, each group researches their animal and uses evidence from the text to take group notes that answer the focusing question/research question provided above. Each student in the group then writes an individual essay about the group’s animal.

**INDEPENDENT RESEARCH Project #3:** The third writing research component is totally independent. Each student individually chooses a different animal to study from the books and resources available, works through the same research packet, adds one additional source to their own research, and completes a research paper completely independently.

**STANDARDS ADDRESSED**

**NGSS Standard:**

**LS2.D: Social Interactions and Group Behavior**

**Being part of a group helps animals obtain food, defend themselves,** and cope with changes. Groups may serve different functions and vary dramatically in size.

**CCSS Writing Standards:**

**W.3.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

1. Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.
2. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
3. Use linking words and phrases (e.g., *also*, *another*, *and*, *more*, *but*) to connect ideas within categories of information.
4. Provide a concluding statement or section.

**W.3.7** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

**W.3.8** Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

**Supporting CCSS Reading Standards:**

RI.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

RI.3.3 Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

RI.3.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3 topic or subject area.

RI.3.5. Use text features and search tools (e.g, key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.

RI.3.10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 2-3 text complexity band independently and proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

**TEXTS**

**Introductory Text (context/engagement*):*** *Animals that Live in* *Groups* by Kelsi Turner Tjernagel

**Anchor Text (full class model):** *Wolf Packs* by Richard and Louise Spilsbury

**Possible Student Texts (for small group and/or individual research):**

*Ant Colonies* by Richard and Louise Spilsbury

*Dog Packs* by Richard and Louise Spilsbury

*Chimpanzee Troops* by Richard and Louise Spilsbury

*Dolphin and Whale Pods* by Richard and Louise Spilsbury

*Lion Prides* by Richard and Louise Spilsbury

“African Wild Dog”: <http://www.outtoafrica.nl/animals/engafricanwilddog.html?zenden=2&subsoort_id=4&bestemming_id=1>

“African Wild Dog”: <http://www.ducksters.com/animals/african_wild_dog.php>

“All About Apes”: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/apes/chimp/>

“Animal Fact Guide”: http://www.animalfactguide.com/animal-facts/lion/

“The Lion”: <http://www.ducksters.com/animals/lion.php>

“Dolphins”: http://www.ducksters.com/animals/dolphin.php

“Killer Whale”: http://www.kidsplanet.org/factsheets/orca.html

**SAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES**

Below are sample student responses similar to those expected of students at the end of this sequence. Actual responses will vary. ***This section is for teacher reference only. DO NOT SHARE WITH STUDENTS***.

**CLASS RESEARCH PROJECT** (Wolves)

SAMPLE GRAPHIC ORGANIZER FOR FULL CLASS ESSAY WRITING

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evidence***How do wolves work together to obtain food?* | **Elaboration***How is this helpful for wolves?* |
| Hunt large animals – deer, elk, moose | More than one can take down a large animal |
| Alpha wolf picks one and the pack chases – young, old, injured prey | Prey can’t run as fast and is outnumbered |
| Young wolves watch older wolves hunting | When old enough to hunt they know what to do |
| Pack brings back food for pups | Pups need more meat than parents can provide |
| **Evidence***How do wolves work together to defend the pack?* | **Elaboration***How is this helpful for wolves?* |
| Chase off large animals like bears – steal food, kill pups | Pack can sometimes scare a bear away |
| If bear attacks, wolves fight | Pack can defend itself from a bear together but not alone |
| Howl together  | Howling together makes enemies think there are more wolves – will leave them alone |
| Babysit pups to protect them | Pups are safe from predators |

SAMPLE STUDENT ESSAY FOR FULL GROUP ESSAY\*

Living in a group helps animals to survive. Wolves are one type of animal that live in a group. A group of wolves is called a pack. Wolf packs are made up of 5 to 12 wolves that are usually related to each other. Wolf packs have two wolves that are in charge called the alpha male and the alpha female. They rule the pack. Living in a pack is beneficial in many ways, but two of the most important ways are that it helps wolves to obtain food and to defend themselves.

To obtain food, wolf packs hunt together for large animals like deer, elk and moose. Once the pack finds a herd of animals, the alpha wolf, the male in charge, chooses young, old, or injured animals for the pack to chase. Together the pack chases that animal until it gives in. Sometimes they have to chase it for up to 3 miles. This helps wolves because they would never be able to successfully hunt a big animal themselves, so they get more food by hunting in a pack.

To defend themselves and their pack, wolves have to fight together. Other animals usually don’t attack adult wolves, but some try to attack the wolf pups and also try to take the pack’s food. First, packs try to chase off large animals that are bothering them. If that doesn’t work, they work together to attack the intruder, and even a grizzly bear doesn’t stand a chance. This is helpful to wolves because one wolf would never be able to fight off a grizzly bear by itself, so the pack has to work together to be successful.

In order to get food and defend themselves, wolf packs use teamwork. Being a wolf is tough, but when they work together, the job is a little easier.

\* Note to teacher: The sample response is what you might expect from a mid-range student. Student responses will have varying amounts of evidence. This sample does not include all the evidence, and as students become more adept at this kind of writing, they may be able to include more.

Sources:

*Wolf Packs*, by Richard and Louise Spilsbury

“Living With Wolves”: https://livingwithwolves.org/how-wolves-hunt/

“Wolf”: <http://animals.howstuffworks.com/mammals/wolf-info1.htm>

**SMALL GROUP RESEARCH PROJECT**

SAMPLE GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS FOR EACH BOOK BELOW

**Group #1: Wild Dogs**

**Graphic Organizer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evidence***How do wild dogs work together to obtain food?* | **Elaboration***How is this helpful for wild dogs?* |
| Hunt in teams for large prey | By taking turns chasing prey they can exhaust the animal and catch it |
| Pairs chase prey toward the pack | Prey can’t escape when they are chased into the pack |
| Hunters bring back food for mothers and pups | Mothers and pups would not be able to eat if others didn’t bring them food |
| Bring down 80% of prey | Couldn’t do this if hunting alone |
| **Evidence***How do wild dogs work together to defend the pack?* | **Elaboration***How is this helpful for wild dogs?* |
| Work together to chase off enemies like lions | One dog alone would not be able to chase off a lion  |
| Injured animals cared for by rest of pack | More dogs survive  |
| Sources:1. *Dog Packs* by Richard and Louise Spilsbury2. African Wild Dog, <http://www.outtoafrica.nl/animals/engafricanwilddog.html?zenden=2&subsoort_id=4&bestemming_id=1>3. African Wild Dog, http://www.ducksters.com/animals/african\_wild\_dog.php |

**Group #2: Chimpanzees**

**Graphic Organizer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evidence***How do* ***c****himpanzees work together to obtain food?* | **Elaboration***How is this helpful for chimpanzees?* |
| Form teams to hunt small animals | Some chimps block the prey’s escape while others catch it |
| Males work together to choose territory that has lots of food and mark the borders of territory | Territories have enough food for the whole troop |
| When one chimp finds food he calls to others | They all have enough to eat |
| **Evidence***How do chimpanzees work together to defend the troop?* | **Elaboration***How is this helpful for chimpanzees?* |
| Patrol the territory | Keeps rest of troop safe from intruders |
| Work together to fight intruders | Working as a team means they have a better chance of fighting off intruders |
| Signal troop when see predators | Troop has time to escape |
| Danger call heard for 2 miles | Enemy is still far away so time to escape |
| Sources:1. *Chimpanzee Troops* by Richard and Louise Spilsbury
2. “All About Apes,” : http://www.enchantedlearning.com/subjects/apes/chimp/
 |

**Group #3: Lions**

**Graphic Organizer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evidence*****How do lions work together to obtain food?*** | **Elaboration*****How is this helpful for lions?*** |
| Form teams of 2 or 3 lionesses to hunt larger animals – either chase it or surround it and attack | With more lionesses hunting together, they can attack bigger prey |
| Weaker, faster females push the prey to the stronger females who take the animal down | Working together helps them to be more successful in their hunt |
| Males work together to choose territory that has lots of food and mark the borders of territory  | Territories have enough food for the whole troop |
| **Evidence*****How do lions work together to defend the pride?*** | **Elaboration*****How is this helpful for lions?*** |
| Males protect the borders by patrolling or guarding it to keep others out | All of the lions are protected from intruders |
| Males protect the borders by patrolling or guarding it to keep others out | All of the lions are protected from intruders |
| Females have to hunt even when they have small babies – have cubs at the same time | Other lions protect the little ones while the moms are hunting |
| Females have the cubs at the same time so that they can work together to keep the babies safe | Cubs in a group are twice as likely to survive as when they are by themselves with their mother |
| Males roar loudly to keep other lions away | Everyone in the pride stays safe |
| Babies and injured lions are protected by the rest | The pride survives |
| Sources:1. *Lion Prides* by Richard and Louise Spilsbury
2. “Animal Fact Guide”: http://www.animalfactguide.com/animal-facts/lion/
3. “The Lion”: http://www.ducksters.com/animals/lion.php
 |

**Group #4: Dolphin and Whale Pods**

**Graphic Organizer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evidence*****How do dolphins and whales work together to obtain food?*** | **Elaboration*****How is this helpful for dolphins and whales?*** |
| Old, large whales or dolphins know where to find food  | Need food to survive |
| Dolphins work together to “herd” the fish into shallow water to eat them one by one – orcas do the same thing with sea lions | Working together helps them to be more successful in their hunt |
| Males work together to choose territory that has lots of food  | There is enough food for everyone |
| **Evidence*****How do dolphins and whales work together to defend the pod?*** | **Elaboration*****How is this helpful for dolphins and whales?*** |
| Big dolphins and whales protect everyone by fighting off any predators | All of the dolphins and whales are protected from intruders |
| After females have their babies, the other females help them to push the baby to the surface to breathe and even babysit the young calves | Without the other mothers helping, the new young would die |
| Sometimes a whale or dolphin will try to escape a predator by swimming closer to the shore and gets caught – the others stay by the stranded one to protect it | They work together to keep each other safe |
| Bigger whales and dolphins will defend young, sick, or injured members of the pod | Everyone in the pod stays safe |
| Pods of animals send messages (sounds) to warn everyone of danger and they can escape | The pod survives |
| Sources:1. *Dolphin and Whale Pods* by Richard and Louise Spilsbury
2. “Dolphins”: http://www.ducksters.com/animals/dolphin.php
3. “Killer Whale”: http://www.kidsplanet.org/factsheets/orca.html
 |

Becoming an Expert

**Class Research Packet**

*Building Knowledge and Understanding through Research*



|  |
| --- |
| **Becoming an Expert** |
| Date Completed |  Steps |
|  | Where Am I Going? | Text Structure |
|  | First Read Part 1 | Close Read Part 1 |
|  | First Read Part 2 | Close Read Part 2 |
|  | The Fab Five | Rolling Knowledge Journal |
|  | Reading for Evidence |
|  | Recording Evidence |
|  | Additional Evidence | Focus Statement |
|  | Working with Evidence |

Research Question: How does living in a group help wolves?

**Where Am I Going?**

Work with your group to answer the questions below.

**?**

What is your research question?

*How does living in a group help wolves?*

Skim your source. In one or two sentences describe what this text is mostly about.

*It’s about wolf packs and the things that the packs do together.*

How will this source help you answer your research question?

*It has words and pictures that tell how wolf packs help each other to survive.*

Use the copyright information for your text to complete the section below.

Title: *Wolf Packs*

Author: *Richard and Louise Spilsbury*

Type of text: nonfiction book article website excerpt other

Publisher: The *Rosen Publishing Group*

Publication date: *2013*

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**Text Structure**

With a partner, answer these questions about the structure of your text.

Let’s take a look at how your source is put together.

1. Take a look at the Contents page. After looking at this list, what do you think the author wants you to learn about wolves?

*We can learn how they hunt, what they eat, information about their babies, how they communicate, how they work together, and how they survive.*

1. If you wanted to learn something about wolves “Talking” what page would you turn to? *p.18*

Turn to that page. What information has the author included there? *It tells that wolves talk to each other by growling, howling, barking, squeaking, and whimpering. It also tells how wolves use their tails and ears to communicate.*

1. Turn to page 11. What can you learn about a wolf by reading the “Super Skills” on that page? *We can learn that wolves can run 37 miles per hour.*
2. Turn to pages 20 and 21. What information is included in the red boxes on those pages? *It tells that wolves tuck their noses between their legs to keep warm in winter, and that one wolf keeps watch while the other wolves sleep.*

How do these support what the author has written about wolves that are “Off Duty”? *Wolves spend more time resting in winter because there is less prey and they have to keep warm when they rest. Wolves use a lot of energy so they need a lot of rest. It’s important for one wolf to keep watch so the others can rest.*

1. What can you learn from the glossary on page 30? How would this information help you understand the book? *We can learn new words and how to pronounce them and what they mean. This helps us to understand the information because if we don’t know what something means we can look it up here.*
2. Turn to the Index on page 32. If you wanted to learn about a wolf’s teeth, what page would you turn to? *page 26*

How would looking at a text’s index help you when you are researching a topic? *If we wanted to look up certain information we could look in the index to see what page it is on.*

Note to teacher: students may not yet have experience using alphabetical order, so this question may need to be done with more guidance.

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**First Read Part 1**

With your group, read the first part of the text aloud.

Use one of the options below to read pages 4 – 15 of the text aloud. Check a box to show the option you chose.

Ideas for a First Read:

* Take turns reading, have each person read a page or paragraph.
* Choose one or two people to read aloud. The rest of the group reads along silently while listening.
* Listen to a recording of your book, reading along silently while you listen.
* Another idea:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Close Read Part 1**

With a partner, reread parts of your book for deeper understanding.

Work together to follow the directions in each box.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Reread pages 4 and 5.  | What is a group of wolves called?*A pack*On these pages, the authors have included information about wolf packs. List three things that you learned about packs from reading these pages.1. *Most wolves live in groups called packs.*2. *There are 5-12 wolves in a pack.*3. *Packs of wolves can catch animals that are 10 times bigger than they are.* |
| Reread pages 10 and 11.  | Look up the term “prey” in the glossary. What does it mean? *An animal that is eaten by other animals.*How do wolves work together to catch their prey? *They get as close as they can and then they rush forward together.* |
| Reread pages 14 and 15. | Look up the term “recruits” in the glossary. Write the definition here.*New members*Why did the author call these pups new recruits?*When wolf pups are born they become new members of the pack.* |

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**First Read Part 2**

With your group, read the second part of the text aloud.

Use one of the options below to read pages 16 – 29 of the text aloud. Check a box to show the option you chose.

Ideas for a First Read:

* Take turns reading, have each person read a page or paragraph.
* Choose one or two people to read aloud. The rest of the group reads along silently while listening.
* Listen to a recording of your book, reading along silently while you listen.
* Another idea:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Close Read Part 2**

With a partner, reread parts of your book for deeper understanding.

Work together to follow the directions in each box.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Reread pages 16 and 17.  | Tell three ways that the pack helps the pups.1. *They take turns watching them while the other wolves hunt.*2. *They teach them how to hunt.*3. *They bring them food.* |
| Reread pages 22 and 23. | The author tells us ways that the pack learns how to be a “team” together. What are two things that the pack members do together that make them more of a team?*1.They howl together before a hunting trip.**2.They play together.* |
| Reread pages 26 and 27. | Look again at the first two sentences on page 26. How does the author use these two sentences together to show the meaning of the word “defend”?*The author uses the word “defend” in the first sentence, and then in the second sentence it says that they “fight to protect” so defend means “fight to protect”.*How do wolves work together to defend their pack?*They try to chase off enemies first and if that doesn’t work they attack them together.* |

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**The “Fab Five”**

With a partner, identify 5 important words from the text.

From your central text, chose 5 words that are important to understanding the central idea of the text.

Next use your 5 words to write about the most important idea of the text. Write one sentence for each word that helps to show the meaning of the word.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Important Word** | **Sentence about the Central Idea** |
| 1. *pack* | *Wolves live in packs so that they can help each other.* |
| 2. *hunt* | *Wolf packs hunt together so they can bring down bigger animals than if each wolf hunted alone.* |
| 3. *defend* | *Wolf packs work together to defend their territory from enemies.* |
| 4. *alpha* | *The alpha wolf is the male in charge of the pack.* |
| 5. *prey* | *Wolf packs hunt together and the alpha wolf identifies the prey that they will attack.*  |

****

**Rolling Knowledge Journal**

Keep track of all you’re learning!

1. After you read *each* resource, stop and think about what the big learning was. What did you learn that was new *and important* about the topic from *this* resource? Write, draw, or list what you learned from the text about (topic).
2. Then write, draw, or list how this new resource added to what you learned from the last resource(s). Add pages if needed.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Write, Draw, or List** |
| **Title** | **New and important learning about the topic** | **How does this resource add to what I learned already?** |
| *Wolf Packs* | *Most wolves live in a group called a pack, and the pack does almost everything together (live, hunt, rest).* |  |
| *Living With Wolves* | Young wolves go on hunt to watch how it’s done | When old enough to join hunt they know what to do |
| *Wolf* | Pack members bring back food for pups | Pups eat more meat than parents can provide |
| *Wolves* | Howl together | Scare off enemies by making them think there are lots of wolves |



**Reading for Evidence**

Work as a group to gather and share information that will help you answer your research question.

Follow these steps to complete the graphic organizer together:

1. First, break into groups. Half of the groups will work on section 1 and half of the groups will work on section 2. Assign each group a part of the text to reread and search. Record the assignments below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Section (page numbers) | People responsible |
|  Pages 4 – 15Find information about wolves working together to find food and to defend themselves  |  |
| Pages 16 – 29Find information about wolves working together to find food and to defend themselves |  |

1. As a group, look at the graphic organizer. Discuss: What is your Research Question? What kinds of information will go in each column?
2. Now reread the part of the text you were assigned. When you find a part of the text that will help you answer your research question **mark it with a sticky note.**

 If the information is about the pack finding food, mark it with an “F”. If the information is about the pack defending itself, mark it with a “D.”

1. Repeat this process until all the important information from this section has been marked.



**Recording Evidence**

Share what you have found with your group to complete the graphic organizer.

Focusing Question: *How does living in a group help wolves?*

1. Meet with the full group again. Take turns sharing one piece of information you found. Talk about what words or phrases to write on the graphic organizer, then fill in the appropriate row on your own organizer. You will need notes on all the information found by the group for your final project.
2. Repeat this process until all the information from this source has been recorded on your graphic organizer.

***How does living in a group help wolves?***

Put one piece of evidence in each box.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evidence***How do wolves work together to obtain food?* | **Elaboration***How is this helpful for wolves?* |
| Hunt large animals – deer, elk, moose | More than one can take down a large animal |
| Alpha wolf picks one and the pack chases – young, old, injured prey | Prey can’t run as fast and is outnumbered |
| Young wolves watch older wolves hunting | When old enough to hunt they know what to do |
| Pack brings back food for pups | Pups need more meat than parents can provide |
| **Evidence***How do wolves work together to defend the pack?* | **Elaboration***How is this helpful for wolves?* |
| Chase off large animals like bears – steal food, kill pups | Pack can sometimes scare a bear away |
| If bear attacks, wolves fight | Pack can bring down a bear together but not alone |
| Howl together  | Howling together makes enemies think there are more wolves – will leave them alone |
| Babysit pups to protect them | Pups are safe from predators |



**Additional Evidence**

On your own or with a partner, add additional information to the graphic organizer.

Read one or more additional sources. Mark information that will help you answer the research question with sticky notes. Add it to your own graphic organizer. Use a different colored pencil for each source, so you will remember where your information came from.

Using the same colored pencils, list your additional sources below.

Title: Wolf

Authors:

Publisher/URL: <http://animals.howstuffworks.com/mammals/wolf-info1.htm>

Title: Wolves

Authors:

Publisher/URL: <https://animalcorner.co.uk/animals/wolves/>

**Optional – Challenging Text**

Title: Living With Wolves

Author:

Publisher/URL: https://livingwithwolves.org/how-wolves-hunt/



**THE FOCUS STATEMENT!**

Sum up what you have learned.

What is the “big idea”?

Look carefully at all of the evidence you have gathered. What is the “big idea” your evidence shows? Try to state what you have learned in just a sentence or two. Your teacher and classmates will help you.

Focus Statement: *Living in a pack helps wolves to defend themselves and to get food.*



**Working with Evidence**

Work with your group to better understand the information you have gathered.

To prepare for the activity:

From your notes, choose two pieces of evidence about obtaining food and two pieces of evidence about defending the pack. Make a set of four cards using pictures and/or words to show what each of the notes mean. Your teacher will lead you in the following activity.

MUST (a full-class activity)

**M**ingle, **U**nderstand, **S**hare and **T**rade:

To begin the activity, mingle with your classmates. Find a partner and explain one of your note cards to your partner. Listen carefully as s/he explains a notecard to you. Be sure to include how your explanation shows how the information helps the pack.

When your teacher rings the bell, trade cards, so that each person gives a card and gets a card.

Mingle again, finding a new partner and repeat the process. Do this until you have a new set of cards.

Look at your new cards, and reflect. How did talking about your research and listening to your classmates deepen your understanding of how living in a pack helps wolves?



**Now you are ready to write!**

Use your Writing Resource Packet to write an informative explanatory piece. Put the date next to each step when you complete it

**Sharing Your Expertise Record Sheet**

|  |
| --- |
| *Use this record sheet with your Writing Resource Packet to deepen your understanding and communicate what you have learned.* |
| Date | Steps |
|  | Learn from the Model | Write an Introduction |
|  | Write Proof Paragraph 1 |
|  | Write Proof Paragraph 2 |
|  | Write a Conclusion |
|  | Revise and Edit | Add a Visual |
|  | Share and Celebrate! |



 **Sharing Your Expertise**

**Writing Resource Packet**

 *Deepening Your Understanding and Communicating What You Have Learned*

**Save this packet**, you will use it as a resource each time you

write about **how living in a group helps wolves.**

As you finish each step, record the date on the Sharing Your Expertise Record Sheet.

|  |
| --- |
| **Writing Resource Packet**You will follow these Steps to Write an Informative/Explanatory Piece |
| Learn from a Model |
| Write an Introduction |
| Write Proof Paragraph 1 |
| Write Proof Paragraph 2 |
| Write a Conclusion |
| Revise and Edit |
| Add a Visual |
| Share and Celebrate! |



**Analyze a Model**

Read the model. Then follow the directions to analyze the piece.

*Color code the model below, using Painted Essay colors to show the introduction, focus statement, proof paragraphs and conclusion.*

Living in a group helps animals to survive. Meerkats are one type of animal that live in a group. A group of meerkats is called a mob. Meerkat mobs are made up of 5 to 30 meerkats that are usually related to each other. Living in a mob is beneficial in many ways, but two of the most important ways are that it helps them to get food and to defend themselves.

To get food, a meerkat mob spreads out and each meerkat uses its sense of smell to find insects, scorpions, rodents, and small lizards. If one meerkat finds a larger animal, other meerkats help to catch, kill, and eat it. This is helpful because it allows meerkats to catch larger animals than they could catch alone.

To defend themselves, meerkats take turns watching out for danger. One or two meerkats stand guard on a mound of dirt or go up a tree while the other meerkats eat. After about an hour other meerkats take over guard duty. If a guard meerkat spots danger it makes a loud, barking sound so the other meerkats run back to their burrows. This is helpful because the meerkats can eat without worrying about being unexpectedly attacked.

In order to get food and defend themselves, meerkat mobs use teamwork. Meerkats are preyed on by many larger animals, but when they work together, they keep each other safe.





**Write!**

On your own, write, revise and edit the **introduction** for your informative/explanatory essay.

 *The first paragraph of your essay is called the INTRODUCTION. The job of the introduction is to give some background information, or context, so that the reader can understand the piece. In your introduction, provide context by explaining what a group of wolves is called and that wolves live in this group.*

 *The introduction ends in a FOCUS STATEMENT. The FOCUS STATEMENT tells the main idea of your piece. In this model, the focus statement is one sentence containing two points that the writer will explore.*

***Analyze***

Read the model introduction below. Lightly shade the context red and the focus statement green (stem), yellow (point one) and blue (point two).

Living in a group helps animals to survive. Meerkats are one type of animal that live in a group. A group of meerkats is called a mob. Meerkat mobs are made up of 5 to 30 meerkats that are usually related to each other. Living in a mob is beneficial in many ways, but two of the most important ways are that it helps them to get food and to defend themselves.

***Talk***

With a partner talk about what you are going to write in your introduction about **wolves**. Check to be sure you each have clear context and a clear focus statement.

***Write***

On a piece of lined paper, write the introduction for your piece.

***Revise and Edit***

When you have finished, revise and edit your paragraph so that your writing is clear and correct.





**Write!**

On your own, write, revise and edit **proof paragraph one** of your informative/explanatory essay.

*The next paragraph is called PROOF PARAGRAPH 1. Its job is to give evidence and reasons to support the first point of your focus. In this essay, your first point is that living in groups helps wolves to find food. Use the evidence from the “food” part of your graphic organizer to write this paragraph.*

***Analyze***

Read the model proof paragraph about meerkats below. Underline the topic and concluding sentences. Lightly shade the evidence from the text and the elaboration yellow.

Meerkat mobs work together to get food. First, the mob spreads out and each meerkat uses its sense of smell to find insects, scorpions, rodents, and small lizards. If one meerkat finds a larger animal, other meerkats help to catch, kill, and eat it. This is helpful because it allows meerkats to catch larger animals than they could catch alone.

***Talk***

Choose three pieces of evidence from your graphic organizer to use in your writing. With a partner, point to each piece you have chosen and talk about what you are going to write.

***Write***

Reread what you have already written. Then, underneath the introduction, write the first proof paragraph for your piece about **wolves**.

***Revise and Edit***

When you have finished, revise and edit your paragraph so that your writing is clear and correct.





**Write!**

On your own, write, revise and edit **proof paragraph two** of your informative/explanatory essay.

*The next paragraph is called PROOF PARAGRAPH 2. Its job is to give evidence and reasons to support the second point of your focus. In this essay, your second point is that living in groups helps wolves to defend the pack. Use the evidence from the “defend” part of your graphic organizer to write this paragraph.*

***Analyze***

Read the model proof paragraph about meerkats below. Underline the topic and concluding sentences. Lightly shade the evidence from the text and the elaboration blue.

Another way that living in a group helps meerkats is when they take turns watching out for danger. One or two meerkats stand guard on a mound of dirt or go up a tree while the other meerkats eat. After about an hour other meerkats take over guard duty. If a guard meerkat spots danger it makes a loud, barking sound so the other meerkats run back to their burrows. This is helpful because the meerkats can eat without worrying about being unexpectedly attacked.

***Talk***

Choose three pieces of evidence from your graphic organizer to use in your writing. With a partner, point to each piece you have chosen and talk about what you are going to write.

***Write***

Reread what you have already written. Then, underneath the first proof paragraph, write the second proof paragraph for your piece about **wolves**.

***Revise and Edit***

When you have finished, revise and edit your paragraph so that your writing is clear and correct.





**Write!**

On your own, write, revise and edit the **conclusion** for your informative/explanatory essay.

*The final paragraph is called a CONCLUSION. Its job is to wrap up the piece.*

*In your conclusion, you will repeat your focus, but you should also add a sentence or two of reflection on how living in groups makes life easier for the animal.*

***Analyze***

Read the model conclusion about meerkats below. Find and underline the restated focus. Find and put a box around the “So what?” statement that answers the question, “How does working together help keep the meerkats safe from larger animals?”

In order to get food and defend themselves, meerkat mobs use teamwork. Meerkats are preyed on by many larger animals, but when they work together, they keep each other safe.

***Talk***

With a partner talk about what you are going to write. Check to be sure you have clearly restated the focus.

***Write***

Reread what you have already written. Then, on a piece of lined paper, write the conclusion for your piece about **wolves**.

***Revise and Edit***

When you have finished, revise and edit your paragraph so that your writing is clear and correct.

At the end of your piece, list the sources you used in your research.

Be sure to include the title or website address and the author.



**Final Revision and Editing**

Use the checklist below to put the final touches on your paper.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Characteristics of an Effective Informative/Explanatory Writing Piece** | **Got it!** |
| My piece shows the knowledge and understanding gained through my research.  |  |  |  |
| I have an introduction that gives the reader some needed information about the topic. |  |  |  |
| I state my focus clearly and my writing stays focused. |  |  |  |
| My information is grouped in paragraphs. |  |  |  |
| Evidence from the text helps the reader to clearly understand my focus. |  |  |  |
| I use linking words to connect ideas. |  |  |  |
| I use facts, definitions and details from the text to explain my ideas. |  |  |  |
| I use illustrations to help the reader understand information and ideas. (optional) |  |  |  |
| I use science words to show that I am knowledgeable about this topic.  |  |  |  |
| I have a conclusion that restates the focus of the piece and answers the question, “So what?”. |  |  |  |
| I use more than one source and list my sources. |  |  |  |
| Spelling, capitalization and punctuation is correct. |  |  |  |



**Add a Visual!**

(Optional) Choose from the ideas below.

You may want to add:

* A labeled drawing of a wolf pack obtaining food or defending the pack.
* A poster of other interesting facts about wolves.
* A poster of important vocabulary words related to wolves.

**Share and Celebrate!**

Congratulations! You are an expert (and a scholar!).

Your teacher will share plans for sharing and celebration!

If you want to learn even more, check out these resources on page 31 of your book.

