The Animal Inside Me

Creating a family album with the animals that relate to our inner selves.

First Grade

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A comprehensive unit that:

- Aligns with many Common Core Learning Standards

- Encompasses multiple science and literacy learning opportunities

- Provides valuable hands-on, performance-based learning projects

- Stresses the importance of visual learning

- Develops life-long oral and written communication skills

- Offers differentiated learning opportunities

- Engages students in learning

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Instructor Guidelines

Thank you for purchasing *The Animal Inside Me* for your first grade class! We are confident that your students will enjoy learning science, language arts and oral presentation skills within an engaging unit on animals. We want to give you a few suggestions on how to best utilize this kit:

TheAnimalInsideMe.PDF – This document contains all of the documentation for this comprehensive kit. It is in PDF form to keep it properly formatted and uneditable. Keep an intact copy of this as the reference document for the unit.

Teacher Materials – These pages are provided as a Word document so that you can edit them to meet your own requirements. We have designed this unit with the expectation that teachers will revise it somewhat to make it their own and to meet the individual needs of their classes.

- **Vocabulary** – Feel free to add or delete words and to tweak the definitions if desired.
- **Essential Questions and Big ideas** – These are supposed to get the creative juices flowing! Brainstorm with the class to come up with other essential questions and big ideas, and then involve the class in great critical thinking opportunities. Remember, it is important for them to see the big picture and understand how humans and animals share similar characteristics.
- **Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)** – Isn't it exciting to see how many standards you can cover in one lesson?
- **Instructor Details** – These pages give specific suggestions for the individual projects. Feel free to tailor them to meet your needs.
- **Writing Rubrics** - These rubrics have been designed using the same terminology and requirements as the student checklist, which has the same terminology as the Common Core Learning Standards. By using these valuable assessment tools, you are providing your students with the opportunity to assess themselves as they are working and for both the students and their parents to understand the grades that you award them at the end.

Student Handouts - This document was compiled with the expectation of you printing and handing these pages out to the students. They are also in Word document format so that you can edit them to meet your needs.

- **Vocabulary without Definitions** – This is for the students to use if you want them to look up the definitions.
- **Performance Task** – You can edit this task to fine tune it with regard to your students and community.
- **Student Checklists** – The project checklists are less detailed than the writing checklists. Feel free to add other requirements that you feel are important to the project checklists. The writing assignments have more detailed checklists that use the terminology from the CCLS. The writing rubric uses the same terminology as the CCLS and the checklist, so if you edit the writing assessment piece, be careful to keep them aligned with the appropriate standard.

Project Templates – The templates that you will need for the projects are in a separate folder. Before beginning that project, make sure the template is available to the students on their computers or network drive.

Tutorial Videos – The tutorial videos are accessible from our website. Use the password that you were given to download this kit to access the links to the project videos. The videos will teach the students step-by-step how to make the projects. Pause the video as needed to allow them to work, contemplate, organize and save their work. Manipulating graphics is a very creative form of self-expression. These projects will prove that the students understand the material they have learned and give them an opportunity to teach back in an effective visual format. Let the students have the time to work, make mistakes, correct their mistakes, and revise their layouts so that they can complete a project that they can show with pride.

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Introduction

Children love using computers, and what better way to motivate them? With the use of Graphics-Toolbox and this First Grade curriculum kit, the students can develop their skills, meet the Common Core Standards and enhance their knowledge of animals in an imaginative way.

Each of us has our own distinct mannerisms. If we look closely and study them, we can see that animals may mirror our behaviors and we may mirror theirs!

By making connections with the world around them, students can internalize the learning, leaving an everlasting impression. While using this unit, your students will be having fun thinking about the animal world around them.

After finishing the unit, your students may continue to see the world through the diverse behaviors and mannerisms of the animal kingdom. They will meet the Common Core Standards without even realizing they were being taught. The students will impress you when they say, "You know, I was thinking that my Uncle Joe is like a beaver because he builds homes." How's that for critical thinking?

We hope that you and your students learn as much from using this unit as we did from developing it! Please contact us with your feedback. We are continuing to expand our library of Common Core Learning Units, and we are interested in your comments on this kit and your suggestions for future topics. Happy learning!

Sincerely,

Justine Jacobson

Summary / Purpose

"Wow! I never noticed that before!" is what your students will be saying at the end of this unit. When studying animals in connection with a closer look at our own behaviors, the students can make long-lasting connections while using critical thinking skills along the way. Animals, although unique to their own groupings, have many characteristics, behaviors and mannerisms similar to our own. With the use of a Venn diagram, the students will make observations of their own behaviors and compare them with animal characteristics and behaviors. This will develop a curiosity that will lead them to make further connections with the animals they have learned about. What a great way to summarize your study of animals!

As the unit unfolds and the students characterize their family members as animals too, you, as your student's teacher, have a great opportunity to use this lesson to get to know your students better and learn about their family dynamics. For instance, if the father is like a gorilla and the mother like a lamb, you will gain some insight into the student's home life. Use this opportunity to encourage students to open up and talk to you and gain their trust.

Overall, most of the **Common Core English Language Arts Standards for First Grade: Reading Informational Text, Writing, Speaking & Listening & Language** are covered in this unit. As you engage your students in learning, you can be confident that you are aligning your curriculum with the standards that are expected of all first graders across our nation.

Expectations

The Animal Inside Me is a rigorous project-based literacy unit that will appeal to all of your first grade students. They will quickly become engaged in the lesson because it focuses on two of their favorite subjects: animals and themselves!

You can expect your first graders to….
- Identify/name adjectives and descriptive phases
- Observe their own characteristics and behaviors
- Write descriptive words/phrases
- Recall and retell animal facts
- Compare behaviors/mannerisms of people and animals
- Create a Venn diagram correctly
- Write complete descriptive sentences
- Speak/share work with classmates
- Expand vocabulary and language skills
- Create unique material

By integrating *The Animal Inside Me* into your curriculum, you are integrating relevant technology into their learning, raising the bar on your expectations for your students, and preparing them to be competitive in school and their future careers. The hands-on projects will help the students learn the material in a deeper way, and they will be able to express their own personal creativity in the execution of those projects. You are also helping them to learn to assess their level of knowledge and performance by using the checklists and rubrics that are included with the unit. And by giving them the opportunity to learn the material in a more intimate and thorough way, you are helping them achieve 4's on those rubrics!

Unit Projects

1. My Silhouette Bookmark
2. Venn Diagram
3. Animal Fact Cards
4. The Animal Inside Me
5. My Family of Animals
6. Oral Presentation (Share Time)
7. Who am I? Bulletin Board

Required Software

- Graphics-Toolbox
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft PowerPoint

Suggested Materials

- Silhouette Bookmarks - White card stock

Provided Templates

- Venn diagram template in both Word and graphic formats

Available Videos

- Creating My Silhouette Bookmark
- Creating the Venn Diagram
- Creating Animal Fact Cards
- Creating the Animal Inside Me Silhouette

Common Core State Standards[1] Covered in

The Animal Inside Me

English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Informational Text » Grade 1

Key Ideas and Details

RI.1.1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

RI.1.2. Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

Craft and Structure

RI.1.4. Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.

RI.1.6. Distinguish between information provided by pictures or other illustrations and information provided by the words in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RI.1.7. Use the illustrations and details in a text to describe its key ideas.

RI.1.8. Identify the reasons an author gives to support points in a text.

RI.1.9. Identify basic similarities in and differences between two texts on the same topic (e.g., in illustrations, descriptions, or procedures).

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RI.1.10. With prompting and support, read informational texts appropriately complex for Grade 1.

English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Foundational Skills » Grade 1

Print Concepts

RF.1.1. Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
- Recognize the distinguishing features of a sentence (e.g., first word, capitalization, ending punctuation).

Fluency

RF.1.4. Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
- Read grade-level text with purpose and understanding.
- Read grade-level text orally with accuracy, appropriate rate, and expression.
- Use context to confirm or self-correct word recognition and understanding, rereading as necessary.

English Language Arts Standards » Writing » Grade 1
Text Types and Purposes
W.1.1. Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or name the book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply a reason for the opinion, and provide some sense of closure.

W.1.2. Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

W.1.3. Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

Production and Distribution of Writing
W.1.5. With guidance and support from adults, focus on a topic, respond to questions and suggestions from peers, and add details to strengthen writing as needed.

W.1.6. With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of digital tools to produce and publish writing, including in collaboration with peers.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge
W.1.7. Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., explore a number of "how-to" books on a given topic and use them to write a sequence of instructions).

W.1.8. With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

English Language Arts Standards » Speaking & Listening » Grade 1
Comprehension and Collaboration
SL.1.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about Grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- SL.1.1a Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
- SL.1.1b Build on others' talk in conversations by responding to the comments of others through multiple exchanges.
- SL.1.1c Ask questions to clear up any confusion about the topics and texts under discussion.

SL.1.2. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

SL.1.3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
SL.1.4. Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.

SL.1.5. Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.

SL.1.6. Produce complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation.

English Language Arts Standards » Language » Grade 1
Conventions of Standard English
L.1.1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Print all upper- and lowercase letters.
- Use common, proper, and possessive nouns.
- Use singular and plural nouns with matching verbs in basic sentences (e.g., He hops; We hop).
- Use personal, possessive, and indefinite pronouns (e.g., I, me, my; they, them, their, anyone, everything).
- Use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future (e.g., Yesterday I walked home; Today I walk home; Tomorrow I will walk home).
- Use frequently occurring adjectives.
- Use frequently occurring conjunctions (e.g., and, but, or, so, because).
- Use determiners (e.g., articles, demonstratives).
- Use frequently occurring prepositions (e.g., during, beyond, toward).
- Produce and expand complete simple and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences in response to prompts.

L.1.2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Capitalize dates and names of people.
- Use end punctuation for sentences.
- Use commas in dates and to separate single words in a series.

- Use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words.
- Spell untaught words phonetically, drawing on phonemic awareness and spelling conventions.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

L.1.5. With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- Define words by category and by one or more key attributes (e.g., a duck is a bird that swims; a tiger is a large cat with stripes).
- Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at home that are cozy).

L.1.6. Use words and phrases acquired through conversations, reading and being read to, and responding to texts, including using frequently occurring conjunctions to signal simple relationships (e.g., *because*).

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