



SCHOOLYARD WILDLIFE STUDY
LIVING WINTER
POST-VISIT LESSON PLAN

Objectives:

Students will investigate how temperature changes in an environment impact generalized species (ie. schoolyard wildlife such as squirrels, pigeons, seagulls). Students will also investigate the adaptations of schoolyard wildlife to colder temperatures.

Materials:

- Research resources (ie. Internet, encyclopedias, books)
- “Schoolyard Wildlife Study” worksheets
- Outdoor thermometer
- Clipboards (if available)

Lesson:

1. Discuss the difference between specialized species (animals restricted in their habitats due to specific requirements) and generalized species (are more universal due to more general requirements).
2. Discuss the wildlife that students have seen in the schoolyard. Make a list of these animals. Choose the most common schoolyard wildlife through the winter.
3. Brainstorm the challenges that winter poses for this chosen animal (ie. Cold temperature, less food, frozen water, fewer shelters, hungrier predators).
4. Ask the students what time of day they would be more likely to see this animal. Ask the students if the animal would be more active on colder or warmer days.
5. Pose a question to the class: Are squirrels more active in the afternoon or morning? Or: at which temperatures are squirrels most active?

Activity:

1. In small groups, students research the habitat, diet, life history and range of the chosen schoolyard animal.
2. Either working in teams, partners or individuals, students write out the question, their hypothesis and the procedure of the experiment.
3. Each day students use their worksheets to record the date, circle AM or PM, record the temperature, number of animals seen and the location (ie. “In the



tree” or “under the slide”.

4. Students analyze their observations and create a graphic representation of their data.

Closure:

Students communicate their findings to the class through oral presentations, bristol board posters, graphs, etc.

Ask students about other studies they could do to learn more about the winter adaptations of schoolyard wildlife.



Name: _____

Schoolyard Wildlife Study

Animal being observed: _____

Question: _____

Hypothesis: _____

Procedure: _____

Observations:

Date	Time		Temperature	Number observed	Location
	AM	PM			
	AM	PM			
	AM	PM			
	AM	PM			
	AM	PM			
	AM	PM			
	AM	PM			
	AM	PM			
	AM	PM			
	AM	PM			
	AM	PM			

Conclusions:

