

LESSON PLAN: RACCOON STUDY

Date:	Class:	Unit:
--------------	---------------	--------------

LESSON TOPIC:	Raccoon Study with <i>Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe</i>
AIM:	In <i>Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe</i> , the main character Cricket decides to live in a treehouse in the woods. She returns one afternoon to find her father's book and her food supply destroyed by raccoons. Students can use the novel as a starting point for learning more about raccoons.
OBJECTIVES:	Students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify raccoons.2. Provide information about a raccoon's appearance, diet, habitat, behavior, and offspring.3. Recognize the behavior of raccoons in <i>Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe</i>.4. Explain why perceptions of raccoons sometimes change depending on the circumstances.
GET STARTED/ DO-NOW:	Using a projector, show the students a picture of a raccoon. Ask each student to choose one word to describe these animals. Possible answers may include: cute, soft, furry, clever, etc. Write the words down as the students say them.
MINI-LESSON:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. As a class, come up with a list of facts they know about raccoons.2. Introduce raccoons to the class by watching some of the videos on this page: http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/group/mammals/raccoon/3. As a class, discuss what the students learned about a raccoon's appearance, habitat, behavior, and offspring. Add these additional facts to the list on the board.
MAIN ACTIVITY:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. In <i>Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe</i>, Cricket returns to the treehouse to find it's been raided by raccoons. She describes the scene in Chapter 13. Instruct the students to read Chapter 13 again.2. Ask each student to again choose one word to describe raccoons based on the passage. Write this list beside the first one. Have their word choices changed? Why or why not?

LESSON PLAN: RACCOON STUDY

Date:

Class:

Unit:

4. Ask the students what types of foods they think raccoons will eat besides those discussed in the novel. Write them down. Check the answers as a class by visiting each of these sites:

- <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/raccoon-nation-raccoon-fact-sheet/7553/>
- <https://wdfw.wa.gov/living/raccoons.html>
- <https://www.livescience.com/52655-raccoons.html>

Add any additional food items the students may have missed.

5. In the novel, Cricket found out how destructive raccoons can be if they are searching for food. In urban areas, raccoons are often seen in trash cans and where food scraps are plentiful. But in the wild, raccoons have other ways of finding food.

Watch these two short videos by National Geographic:

1. "Raccoon" - <https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/raccoon>
 2. "Life as a Raccoon" - <https://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/raccoon>
6. Let the students know they will take turns hunting like a raccoon as the man did in the second video. First, instruct the students to tape up the fingers on one of their hands with masking tape.

Have each student come to the front of the class one at a time. As they come, hold out the Food Bag. The Food Bag is an opaque bag (such as a brown paper bag or gift bag) with more food items in it than the number of students in the class.

Tell the student what item they will be looking for in the bag. For example, you might say "apple" or "candy bar".

Students will then reach in with just their taped hands. They must feel around inside of that bag without looking until they think they've found the correct item.

Students then lift the item they chose out of the bag, and the class sees if they were right.

LESSON PLAN: RACCOON STUDY

Date:	Class:	Unit:
--------------	---------------	--------------

CLOSING ACTIVITY:	Based on what they know now, have the students use single words to describe raccoons one last time. Have their opinions about raccoons changed? Why or why not?
EXTENSIONS:	<p>Create a poster encouraging residents or campers to keep their trash secure so it doesn't attract raccoons.</p> <p>Research and write a report about raccoons. Focus on information not included in the lesson.</p>
CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:	Students take a short quiz about the information covered in the lesson.
MATERIALS:	<p><i>Smack Dab in the Middle of Maybe</i> by Jo Hackl</p> <p>Computer and projector for class discussion</p> <p>Masking Tape</p> <p>Food Bag with more food items than students in the class. Items may include fruit, bread, candy, etc.</p>
TECHNOLOGY:	Internet as a resource for videos.
COMMON CORE STANDARDS:	<p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.1</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.2</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.8</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.9</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.6-8.1</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6-7.1</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.6-7.2</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1.C, 6.1.D</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.2</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1.D</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.2</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6-8.8</p>