

Return of the Wolves  
Lessons from the Wilderness  
Integrated ELA/Science Lesson  
K-2

In this series of activities, students will read/listen to a fiction picture book about wolves interacting with humans, an informational text about wolves caring for their pups, and a slide show specifically about wolves on Isle Royale and human interventions to maintain the population.

The themes include the interactions between parents/caregivers and their young - both in the animal world and for humans - in both Wolf in the Snow and Wolf Pups Join the Pack. There is also the opportunity to explore mutualistic interactions between humans and animals both in Wolf in the Snow and in the Return of the Wolves slides, and to consider how people study and learn about wild animals in order to help them.

After each text, students will respond by recording their learning using the appendices provided (or a science or reading journal).

Standards:

Common Core ELA Standards:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.3 Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.9

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

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

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

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

NGSS Science Standards

[1-LS1-2 Read texts and use media to determine patterns in behavior of parents and offspring that help offspring survive.](#)

Science and Engineering Practices:

- Read grade-appropriate texts and/or use media to obtain scientific and/or technical information to determine patterns in and/or evidence about the natural and designed world(s).
- Ask questions based on observations to find more information about the natural and/or designed world(s).
- Ask and/or identify questions that can be answered by an investigation.
- Communicate information or design ideas and/or solutions with others in oral and/or written forms using models, drawings, writing, or numbers that provide detail about scientific ideas, practices, and/or design ideas.

Learning Targets:

- Students will be able to describe similarities in how wolf packs and human families care for their young.
- Students will be able to describe similarities in how wolves and people depend on their families to survive.
- Students will be able to generate a driving question and a simple plan, including technology or tools, to investigate wolves on Isle Royale.

Materials:

Wolf in the Snow by Matthew Cordell or [Read Aloud Video Version](#)

- Teacher resources for this read aloud:
  - [Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site Teacher Guide](#)
  - [Task cards from The Curriculum Corner](#)
  - [Anderson Press Teaching Notes](#)

Videos for students to research their questions about wolf behaviors:

- [Wolves by Kate Riggs read aloud video](#)
- [Meet the Animals Episode 6](#)
- [Discovery Education Kids Wolf Rescue](#)

Wolf Pups Join the Pack by Neil Duncan or [Read Aloud Video Version](#)

Return of the Wolves slideshow from the National Parks of Lake Superior Foundation

My Wolf Fact (Appendix A)

Wolf Families and Human Families (Appendix B)

My Wolf Question (Appendix C)

Crayons/markers/pencils

Part A

Engage	<p>Ask students to think about experiences they've had with snow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● What do you most like about snow?</li><li>● What have you done in the snow? (Sledding, building snowmen, snow forts, snowball fights, skiing, hiking?)</li><li>● How long can you stay out in the snow?</li><li>● What happens if you stay out too long?</li><li>● How does it feel to come inside after playing in the snow?</li></ul>
Explore and Explain	<p>Read <u>Wolf in the Snow</u> or show the read-aloud video. Go slowly, and ask students what they notice. Include guiding questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● How does the girl feel when she's in her home? Why does she feel that way?</li><li>● How does the girl feel when she's trying to walk home in the snowstorm?</li><li>● How does the wolf pup feel when it is separated from its parents and pack?</li><li>● How does the girl help the wolf pup?</li><li>● How does the wolf pack help the girl?</li><li>● Can wolf pups survive on their own? What care do they need from their pack family?</li><li>● Can young girls survive on their own? What care do they need from their family?</li><li>● How can people help wild animals?</li><li>● How can wild animals help people?</li></ul>
Elaborate	<p>Ask students to think about what else they'd like to know about wolves.</p> <p>Students offer their questions in a whole-group discussion.</p>

	<p>Record student questions on chart paper.</p> <p>Remind students that <u>Wolf in the Snow</u> is a fiction book. The author was trying to show us some truths about families, and about how people and animals can help each other. To answer other questions about wolves, we may use informational books or videos.</p> <p>Consider one or more of these short videos to help students find answers to their questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">Wolves by Kate Riggs read aloud video</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Meet the Animals Episode 6</a></li> <li>● <a href="#">Discovery Education Kids Wolf Rescue</a></li> </ul>
Evaluate	<p>Students select one fact they learned about wolves and draw or write about it. (Appendix A) Students share their facts with the class.</p>

Part B

Engage	<p>Remind students of the <u>Wolf in the Snow</u> story. In the story, the adult wolves cared for the wolf pup. Use guiding questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Could the wolf pup survive in the snow on its own? How do you know?</li> <li>● Could the girl survive in the snowstorm on her own? How do you know?</li> <li>● What do wolf parents do to take care of their pups?</li> <li>● What do human parents do to take care of their children?</li> </ul>
Explore	<p>Read <u>Wolf Pups Join the Pack</u> by Neil Duncan or watch the <a href="#">read aloud video</a>. Ask students to think about what wolves do to take care of their pups. What do the pups do to show they need something? How is this like or unlike human families?</p>
Explain	<p>Ask students to consider the different approaches between <u>Wolf in the Snow</u> and <u>Wolf Pups Join the Pack</u>. Which was fiction? Which is informational? How can you tell?</p> <p>Ask students what they noticed about the behaviors of the wolf parents and pups in <u>Wolf Pups Join the Pack</u>.</p> <p>Record student answers on chart paper.</p>
Elaborate	<p>Review student observations and ask students to identify those behaviors that are similar to human caregivers and children. Note those with a check or star.</p>

Evaluate	<p>Students select behaviors for a wolf family and a human family and draw or write about them in Appendix B.</p> <p>Consider compiling student responses into a class book describing how humans and wolves both care for their young.</p>

Part C

Engage	<p>Remind students of the <u>Wolf in the Snow</u> story. In the story, the girl helps the wolf pup, and the wolf pup's family helps the girl. Do wolves and people help each other in real life?</p> <p>Ask students to predict whether that's possible, and if so, what makes them think it's possible? Can they think of examples?</p> <p>One example is the efforts of the National Park Service to bring more wolves to Isle Royale, after most of the wolves there died off. This helps the wolf population sustain itself on the island; many of the wolves that are being relocated are facing a lack of food in their old habitat. Wolves on Isle Royale are safe from human hunting as well. The wolves keep the moose population in check; this in turn protects the forest from being over-foraged.</p>
Explore and Explain	<p>Read the Return of the Wolves slideshow to students. Include guiding questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Why do wolves need to live in packs?</li> <li>● How are packs similar to human families?</li> <li>● How are people helping wolves on Isle Royale?</li> <li>● How are wolves helping people? (Wolves control the moose population - otherwise moose would eat too many trees and destroy the forest.)</li> <li>● What do you think the book <u>Wolf in the Snow</u> and the Return of the Wolves slides tell you about the importance of family and of the home?</li> <li>● What do you think the book <u>Wolf in the Snow</u> and the Return of the Wolves slides tell us about human relationships with animals and nature; how can humans help nature, and how can nature help humans?</li> <li>● How do scientists study the wolves on Isle Royale?</li> <li>● If you were a wolf scientist, what wolf questions would you like to investigate?</li> <li>● How would you plan to do your investigation? What technology could you use?</li> </ul>

Elaborate	<p>Students identify a question they'd like to investigate if they were a wolf scientist on Isle Royale.</p> <p>Students include an illustration or short written description of how they would carry out their investigation and gather evidence, using Appendix C.</p>
Evaluate	<p>Students share their investigation question and plan with the class.</p>

### Sources:

“Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site Booksintheclassroom.com.” *Free Teachers Guide for Wolf in the Snow by Matthew Cordell for Preschool through Second Grade*, <http://www.carolhurst.com/titles/wolfinthesnow.html>.

Cordell, Matthew. *Wolf in the Snow*. Andersen Press, 2019.

“Discovery Education Kids - Wolf Rescue 2016.” *YouTube*, YouTube, 29 Mar. 2016, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DvLQRh\\_m79I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DvLQRh_m79I).

Duncan, Neil. *Wolf Pups Join the Pack*. Sterling Children's Books, 2017.

LittleFoxKids. “Meet the Animals 6 | Gray Wolf | Wild Animals | Little Fox | Animated Stories for Kids.” *YouTube*, YouTube, 22 Dec. 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bVx4vY1-0cM>.

Riggs, Kate. *Wolves*. Creative Education, Creative Paperbacks, 2020.

*Teaching Notes - Andersen Press*. [https://www.andersenpress.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Matthew-Cordell-books\\_CLPE-teaching-resource.pdf](https://www.andersenpress.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Matthew-Cordell-books_CLPE-teaching-resource.pdf).

*Wolf in the Snow - Thecurriculumcorner.com*.

<https://www.thecurriculumcorner.com/thecurriculumcorner123/wp-content/pdf/reading/bookstudy/wolf%20in%20the%20snow.pdf>.

“Wolf in the Snow.” *YouTube*, YouTube, 21 Jan. 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIXeEN0nGYc>.

“Wolf Pups Join the Pack | Neil Duncan | Read Aloud.” *YouTube*, YouTube, 30 June 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoeNmEOXXpU>.

“Wolves | Animal Book for Kids Read Aloud.” *YouTube*, YouTube, 4 Feb. 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CifgAvrgtNs>.

### Teacher Resources:

[Wolf Pack Coloring Page](#)

[KidZone Wolf Activities](#)

Appendix A

## My Wolf Fact

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for writing a fact about a wolf. The box is centered on the page and occupies most of the lower half of the document.

Appendix B

Wolf Family



Human Family



Appendix C

My wolf research question:



I would try to investigate my question by:

