

Where the Locals Hang Out

Pre-Program Activity

Grades 6-8



Objective: Students will present facts about an animal based on information collected from credible resources.

Sunshine State Standards:

- **SC.6.L.15.1** Analyze and describe how and why organisms are classified according to shared characteristics with emphasis on the Linnaean system combined with the concept of Domains.
- **LA.6.6.2.2** The student will collect, evaluate and summarize information using a variety of techniques from multiple sources (e.g., encyclopedias, websites, experts) that includes paraphrasing to convey ideas and details from the source, main idea(s) and relevant details.
- **SC.7.L.17.2** Compare and contrast the relationships among organisms such as mutualism, predation, parasitism, competition, and commensalism.
- **LA.7.6.2.2** The student will assess, organize and check the validity and reliability of information in text, using a variety of techniques by examining several sources of information, including both primary and secondary sources.
- **SC.8.N.4.1** Explain that science is one of the processes that can be used to inform decision making at the community, state, national, and international levels.
- **LA.8.6.2.2** The student will assess, organize, synthesize, and evaluate the validity and reliability of information in text, using a variety of techniques by examining several sources of information, including both primary and secondary sources.

Overview: Students gather information from various sources and decide which are the most credible. They then use the information to develop a presentation about the animal.

Materials:

- Internet and/or library access
- Copies of [Animal Information Chart](#)
- Pencils and highlighters

Procedure:

- Divide students into small groups and assign each one of the following animals:
 - American Alligator
 - American Crocodile
 - Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake
 - Cottonmouth
 - American Bullfrog
 - Great Horned Owl
 - Bobcat
 - Gray Fox
 - Florida Black Bear
 - West Indian Manatee
- Hand out the information charts and explain to the class that they will be using them to gather information about their animal. Tell students that for this activity, they can gather information from *any* source, including websites, books, TV shows, teachers, etc.

- Give students time to research their animal and complete their charts by writing down their source in the first box and then filling in as much information as they can find using that source.
- Once everyone has finished collecting information, have a class discussion about what gives a source credibility. Point out that much of the information available to us, especially information found on the internet, represents one person's ideas rather than researched facts. Make sure students understand the importance of checking a source's publishing date, purpose, author credentials, etc.
- Have students get back together with their group and discuss any discrepancies they see in the information on their charts. Ask them to decide which of their sources they should trust and highlight the information they think is most accurate.
- Have each group use their information to create a poster or PowerPoint presentation about their animal. Have them include a list of their sources and a paragraph explaining why they chose to trust those sources.
- Allow each group to present their information to the class.