



Nurture the Wonder

Preschool Inquiry Lesson Plan

Aussie Life - Alike and Different

Lesson Summary: This is a preschool inquiry lesson that utilizes exhibits found within Australian Adventure at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. The lesson pairs observations and experiences that students had at Australian Adventure with classroom materials and inquiry skills to capture the curiosity of young learners to understand the natural world around them.

Goals and Objectives: Students will use observational skills to explore Australian Adventure exhibits, record data on Australian lifestyle, and use critical thinking skills to come up with predictions and further inquiry investigations.

Cleveland Metropolitan School District Scope & Sequence:

Pre-kindergarten

Strand: Science Inquiry and Application

Topic: Inquiry

- Explore objects, materials and events in the environment.
- Make careful observations.
- Engage in simple investigations.
- Describe, compare, sort, classify, and order.
- Share findings, ideas and explanations (may be correct or incorrect) through a variety of methods (e.g., pictures, words, dramatization).
- Record observations using words, pictures, charts, graphs, etc.
- Make Predictions
- Make inferences, generalizations and explanations based on evidence.
- Pose questions about the physical and natural environment.

Strand: Life Science

Topic: Explorations of living things

- With modeling and support, identify and explore the relationship between living things and their environments (e.g., habitats, food, eating habits, etc.)

Strand: Geography

Topic: Human Systems

- Identify similarities and differences of personal, family, and cultural characteristics, and those of others.

Materials:

- Aussie Life Venn Diagram
- Vocabulary list
- Crayons or pencils

Comparative Question: In what ways is a kid's life in Australia alike or different than a kid's life in the United States?

Questioning and Predicting

Pre Field Experience Procedures:

- In the classroom before coming to Cleveland Metroparks Zoo ask children if they have ever heard of a place called Australia. If possible show students a map and pictures of different places in Australia.
- Have students think about common things that they do and see everyday where we live (what we wear, food we eat, things we drink, items in our house, what their backyards look like, where they play, animals they see, etc.) Brainstorm together as a class and create a list of these everyday things.
- Spend some time sharing words from the American/Australian Vocabulary List.
 - If desired, you can make sentences using the words from the American side, then re-write and read the sentence using the Australian words instead. Ask children to react to some of the differences in the words/language.
- Explain to the class that they will be looking for some of similarities and differences in the Australian lifestyle (language, food, etc.) when they visit Australian Adventure at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo.

- Share the comparative question that they will be investigating during the field experience (In what ways is a kid's life in Australia alike or different than a kid's life in the United States?)
- Ask each student to share their prediction to that question, listing some things that they think might be alike or different (ex, they might already guess language/words are a little different from the vocabulary activity). Record their responses if possible.
- Remind students that they will be doing an investigation at the Zoo to discover some possible answers to that question.

Observing and Investigating

Visit Australian Adventure at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo:

- If possible, break students up into smaller groups with an adult leader.
- Hand out the Aussie Life Venn Diagram sheet for students to collect data when you arrive at Australian Adventure.
 - Adult leaders might want to only use and collect data on one master record sheet, or each child can have their own.
- Explain directions for the inquiry investigation that will help the students discover answers to the comparative question.
 - Let students freely explore the exhibits at Australian Adventure. Take time to look at pictures and read aloud/explain exhibit signs to them – focusing on the lifestyle/cultural differences between American and Australian life.
 - In the Reinberger Homestead let students explore different items around the homestead house (food, household items, etc.)
 - While discovering many different things in Australian Adventure, allow students to name/list them and an adult leader can record them in the Venn diagram. Also have the student's list things that are the same as what we have/do in the America. Record those responses in the appropriate place in the Venn diagram.

Communicating

Post Field Experience Procedures:

- As a class, review results recorded on the Aussie Life Venn Diagram. Have a discussion about what was different and what was the same.
 - Make a list of all the things that were alike and all the things that were different. Which list had more?