

Our Everglades, Our Water

Lesson Plan: PreK – Grade 3

Materials:

- Computer or tablet
- “Our Everglades, Our Water Worksheet PreK- Grade 3” with or without midlines for handwriting
- Internet connection
- Audubon Florida “Explore the Everglades” coloring book
- Crayons or markers

Essential Questions:

What makes a good home for animals in the Everglades?

How do different animals depend on water?

Standards:

SC.K.L.14.3 Observe plants and animals, describe how they are alike and how they are different in the way they look and in the things they do.

SC.1.L.17.1 Through observation, recognize that all plants and animals, including humans, need the basic necessities of air, water, food, and space.

SC.1.E.6.2 Describe the need for water and how to be safe around water.

SC.2.L.17.2 Recognize and explain that living things are found all over Earth, but each is only able to live in habitats that meet its basic needs.

SC.3.N.1.1 Raise questions about the natural world, investigate them individually and in teams through free exploration and systematic investigations, and generate appropriate explanations based on those explorations.

Part One: Wildlife and Water

1. Share with students that the Everglades is a large natural area, which stretches across a large part of South Florida. Ask if any students have ever been to or heard about the Everglades and encourage them to share their responses.
2. Show students the map of the Everglades (can be projected or given as a handout) in the Audubon Florida “Explore the Everglades” coloring book to illustrate the expanse of the ecosystem. Then, read the description of the Everglades in the coloring book.
3. Explain that many animals depend on the water in the Everglades and that today, they’ll be learning about some of those animals. Ask them: What do you think makes a good home for animals in the Everglades?
4. Play the National Geographic video, [“Meet the Residents of Everglades National Park”](#)
5. Share that different animals live in different areas of the Everglades, and that today, they’ll be learning more about four animals– snail kites, alligators, panthers, and roseate spoonbills – that live there. Two of these animals, alligators and panthers, are in the video. Two of them, roseate spoonbills and snail kites, are not.
6. Project the Audubon Florida “Explore the Everglades” coloring book pages one by one on the screen and read the information about the animals that depend on the Everglades for water, or, if printed, ask students to look at the page for each animal while you read aloud.
7. Pass out the Audubon Florida “Explore the Everglades” coloring book as a whole book, or share individual pages. You might ask students to pick their favorite animal and color it, or color them all.
8. Ask students to think about and share why the animal they chose needs water.
 - Snail kites need water because they eat snails that live in water. It is the only food they eat.
 - Alligators need water to swim and to eat fish.
 - Panthers need water to drink.
 - Roseate Spoonbills need water because they fish for food with their long beaks.

Materials:

- Model Aquifer
 - Plastic container
 - Pebbles
 - Soil
 - Sand
 - Leaves
 - Water
- “Our Everglades, Our Water” worksheet
- Pencil
- Crayons or markers

Essential Questions:

Where does our water come from?

What is the relationship between the Everglades and our water?

How does water play a role in our daily lives?

Standards:

SC.K.N.1.4 Observe and create a visual representation of an object which includes its major features.

SC.1.L.17.1 Through observation, recognize that all plants and animals, including humans, need the basic necessities of air, water, food, and space.

SC.1.E.6.2 Describe the need for water and how to be safe around water.

SC.2.E.6.1 Recognize that Earth is made up of rocks. Rocks come in many sizes and shapes.

SC.3.N.3.3 Recognize that all models are approximations of natural phenomena; as such, they do not perfectly account for all observations.

Part Two: People and Water

1. Ask students to recall what they learned about Everglades animals and water and share their answers.
2. Share that just like animals depend on water in the Everglades, we do too, even though most people in South Florida don't live in the Everglades.
 - a. If students ask if there are people who live in the Everglades, share that Miccosukee and Seminole people do.
3. Build a simple [model aquifer](#) to model for students how water that is above the ground seeps underground into open spaces between rocks.
 - a. Students can also build small model aquifers on their own or help build the aquifers. An even simpler model aquifer can be made with a clear plastic cup and pebbles.
4. Pour water into the model aquifer and ask students to describe what happens.
5. Explain that this is how we get our drinking water. Water that is above ground, like the water in the Everglades, soaks into the ground like water soaks up a sponge. Then, we build wells to pump the water out so that we can have it for our homes and businesses. The Everglades provides water to one out of every three people in Florida – that's almost 8 million people.
6. Ask students to think about how they depend on water in their life.
 - a. Answers might be: drinking water, washing dishes, brushing teeth, watering lawns or gardens, flushing toilets, taking baths/showers.
7. Pass out the “Our Everglades, Our Water Worksheet PreK- Grade 3”. Ask students to write the name of and draw a picture of their favorite Everglades animal. Then, help them write how they or the other people in their household depend on the Everglades for water as well.