Lesson Plan on Effective Research Practice in SC Discus with *Carnivores* by Aaron Reynolds

For Grades 3-5
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Introduction

This lesson was designed to teach fourth-grade students how to effectively use the resources on SC Discus to complete research for an upcoming life science unit. It can be easily adapted for other topics and grade levels.

Lesson Number/Duration: 1 lesson/60 minutes *(Note: this lesson could be shortened or lengthened depending on the needs of the class)*

Lesson Goal:

Teaching Effective Research Strategies:

- Using database resources to do research
- Note-taking and paraphrasing practice - find what you need to know and write down that info; give source credit/citation

Big Ideas and Guiding Questions:

- **How do animals' bodies and behaviors help them survive?** *To protect themselves from predators, animals use different defense mechanisms.*
- **How can writers use knowledge from their research to inform and entertain?** *Writers use scientific knowledge and research to inform and entertain.*

Standards:

AASL IVA3: I can make critical choices about what information sources to use.

Life Science Performance Expectation:
- **4-LS1-1: Construct an argument that plants and animals have internal and external structures that function to support survival, growth, behavior, and reproduction.**

KWEL chart and note-taking page adapted from EL Education Language Arts Curriculum, Grade 4: Module 2: Unit 1: Lesson 1, Building Background Knowledge: What are Animal Defense Mechanisms (ADM)?

○ **LS1.A: Structure and Function: Plants and animals have both internal and external structures that serve various functions in growth, survival, behavior, a**nd reproduction. (**4-LS1-1**)

Materials Needed:

- Projector/Screen
- *Carnivores* by Aaron Reynolds
- Copies of student handout (pgs. 4-5)
- Computer or other devices for students

Lesson Outline:

1. Begin the lesson by reading the 2015-2016 SC Book Award Nominee *Carnivores* by Aaron Reynolds and talk about the three characters, the Great White Shark, the Lion, and the Timber Wolf.
2. Explain that students will be researching these three predators using the Discus resources to determine which is the best predator of the three.
3. Go over the handout - discuss good note-taking, paraphrasing, and writing down sources.
4. Help students get to Discus Kids. Briefly model how to navigate to and use any and/or all of the following resources for their research:
   ○ Britannica Elementary/Animal Kingdom (also Britannica Escolar Online)
   ○ DK Eyewitness eBooks
   ○ Explora for Elementary Schools
   ○ Kids InfoBits
   ○ Learn360

Note: I used Brittanica Elementary/Animal Kingdom and Explora during the modeling. Students had to begin with these two resources and were encouraged to try out the other databases afterward to see if they included useful information that would help them answer the research questions.

5. Have a student read the activity instruction for the group and answer any clarifying questions.
6. Let students work independently or in small groups to complete this activity. Give them around 20 minutes to research and write their answers down, including the source they found the information.
7. Give students 5 minutes to complete page 2 of the activity handout.
8. Back in a group, have each student or group share which predator they chose as the best. Ask them to share out a reason why they chose this predator from their research.

KWEL chart and note-taking page adapted from EL Education Language Arts Curriculum, Grade 4: Module 2: Unit 1: Lesson 1, Building Background Knowledge: What are Animal Defense Mechanisms (ADM)?

9. Debrief the activity by leading a discussion about the resources the students used, and which one they thought worked best for them. Make sure to point out the importance and effectiveness of using a research database rather than the open web during research.

Effective Research Practice with *Carnivores*: KWEL Chart

Instructions: Complete the KWHL chart below using one of the SC Discus database resources we have discussed in our lesson.

Guiding questions: Which of the main three characters from the book *Carnivores* is the best predator, the Great White Shark, the Lion, or the Timber Wolf? What type of habitat do they live in, and how would that help them? What traits do they have to help them hunt and catch their prey?

K: I think I know …	**W**: I want to know …	**E**: Evidence, and **L**: I Learned …	*Source:*

KWEL chart and note-taking page adapted from EL Education Language Arts Curriculum, Grade 4: Module 2: Unit 1: Lesson 1, Building Background Knowledge: What are Animal Defense Mechanisms (ADM)?

K: I think I know …	W: I want to know …	E: Evidence, and L: I Learned …	Source:

Effective Research Practice with *Carnivores*: Reflection and Debrief

Based on your research, which of the three predators do you think is the best? _____

Write <u>three</u> reasons to support your choice below:

1. _____

   _____

2. _____

   _____

3. _____

   _____

KWEL chart and note-taking page adapted from EL Education Language Arts Curriculum, Grade 4: Module 2: Unit 1: Lesson 1, Building Background Knowledge: What are Animal Defense Mechanisms (ADM)?