

Beavers

Synopsis

K, 1st—6th, upper



Summary

Beavers change the world! Change a classmate into a living example of beaver adaptations before hitting the trail to check out habitat and look for signs of past and present beaver activity. Learn to read the signs that beavers leave behind.

MN Academic Standards

supported during HNC program. More standards can be supported with pre- and post-lesson activities.

Science

- 0.1.1.2.1 ~ observe and describe nature
- 1.4.2.1.1 ~ animal survival needs
- 1.4.2.1.2 ~ habitats provide needs
- 3.4.1.1.1 ~ growth, survival, reproduce
- 3.4.3.2.1 ~ generational traits
- 5.4.1.1.1 ~ structure, function, survival
- 5.4.2.1.1 ~ MN natural systems

Authenticity

Students are able to observe actual beaver signs of life within their natural habitat.

Goals & Objectives

This program will:

- Become familiar with the North American beaver's life and adaptations
- Develop an understanding of a beaver's habitat needs and preferences
- Understand how beaver activity affects the environment

Students will be able to:

- Differentiate between a beaver lodge and dam, and recall the role each plays in a beaver's life
- Explain several physical adaptations of a beaver
- Identify signs of beaver activity

Activities

In the classroom:

- Beaver dress up—one student is transformed into a beaver, dressing the student in a beaver costume piece by piece. Adaptations are highlighted.

In the field:

- Hike the trails searching for old or new beaver activity.
- Look for old and new beaver chews, identify tree species chewed, and determine why beavers would have been active in specific areas.
- Look at beaver pelt, skull, and/or diagram of a beaver lodge.
- Have a friendly competition to see who can replicate a beaver chew using carrots (be aware of student allergies).
- Play a game that reflects beaver survival.

Indoor options in case of bad weather

- Explore the relationship between beavers and local human cultural history
- Examine current issues with beavers
- Look at a beaver skin, track, and skull
- Create a model or diagram of a beaver lodge
- Play Beaver Scramble (parachute game)
- Read a research article on beavers and talk about its implications
- Use props to visualize the length/shape/size of average or biggest beaver dam.