



*Revised 4/17/20  
Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge*

## **Where do Prairie Animals Live?**

**Kindergarten**

**45 Minutes**

**Spring**

### **Summary**

During a guided discussion, a field leader uses a T-chart to help the students compare prairie animals' homes and needs to their own homes and needs. This comparison enables students to realize that their own needs for food, shelter, space, air, and water are similar to prairie animals and all living things. Following the discussion, students search for and observe a common prairie animal in their habitat. Children use simple journals to record their discoveries about animal homes and later share them with the class.

### **Next Generation Science and Iowa Core Standards**

#### **Next Generation Science**

- **K-LS1-1**
  - Use observations to describe patterns of what plants and animals (including humans) need to survive.
- **K-ESS2-2**
  - Construct an argument supported by evidence for how plants and animals (including humans) can change the environment to meet their needs.

#### **Literacy**

##### **Reading and Literature**

- **RL.K.10**
  - Actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.

##### **Speaking and Listening**

- **SL.K.1**



*Revised 4/17/20  
Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge*

- Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- **SL.K.2**
  - Confirm understanding of a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media by asking and answering questions about key details and requesting clarification if something is not understood.
- **SL.K.6**
  - Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

## **Materials and Resources**

- Dry erase board & marker
- Student nature journals & pencils
- Examples of prairie animal homes
- Examples of food, water, shelter and space

## **Presentation**

Explain to students that today, they will be learning about one of your favorite animals. Draw some birds on the board. Ask if the students can guess what it is. Birds! Write the word “bird” on the white board and have the students read the word with you to practice pronunciation. What do birds need to survive? How are their needs similar and different to other animals?

## **Directions**

1. Draw a t-chart on the board and label on side “Animal Needs” and label the other side “Human Needs.”
2. Gauge students’ background knowledge by asking, “What do we need to survive?” Record answers under “Human Needs.” Remind students that while some things might be nice, they might not be needed to survive. Show examples of what we need to survive if students need help. Next, ask students “What do animals need to survive?” Record their answers under “Animal Needs.” Help students reach the conclusion that animals needs are not very different than our own needs.



*Revised 4/17/20  
Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge*

3. Explain to students that the place where animals find all the things they need to survive is their habitat, or home. Write “habitat” on the board and ask students to practice the pronunciation with you.
4. Explain to the students that in a few minutes they will be going outside to find and explore animal habitats. They will be looking to see if they can answer the question “Where do prairie animals live?”
5. Have students set up their journals according to the example on the following page. Remind that good journal entries use words, illustrations, and numbers.
6. Assign groups to adult leaders and pass out clipboards, pencils and papers to the adults. Depending on chaperones, try to make the adult to child ratio as small as possible. Make eye contact with the adult chaperones and teachers. Explain to them that they will each get a small group of students. When the class gets outside, they should talk to their students and ask them if they are seeing any animal homes. If they find an animal home, sit by it and talk about what animal might live there and where they find their basic needs.
7. Once the groups are divided, have all the groups form a single file line to get ready to head outside. Make sure that the students have all their materials. Remind students that naturalists are happy outside, explorers, adventurers, respectful, and quiet. They ask questions, use words, numbers and pictures, and share their discoveries.
8. After hiking for a few minutes, direct adult chaperones to split up with their groups and see if they can find an animal home. Make sure that groups are close to one another. Rotate among the groups to assist in the investigation.
9. After about 10 minutes, ask students and adult chaperones to come together. Line up to head back inside. Instruct students that while they are walking to go back inside, they should think about the discoveries they made and get ready to share them with the other naturalists.



*Revised 4/17/20  
Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge*

- 10.** Once inside, walk around the room and look at the students' data sheets. Ask students what discoveries they made about animal homes. What did the home they found look like? What was it made of? Do they know where their animal may have found water, food, shelter, space or air? What surprised them about their home? Record their answers on the board.
  
- 11.** At the end of the lesson, ask students by looking at the information on the board about animal home, can they tell you one thing they discovered today that they didn't know before?



Revised 4/17/20  
Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge

## Resources

### Journal Example

Date  
Location  
Time

#### Animal Homes



The brown ant hill had 3 ants walking on it.



I saw three blue eggs in a nest.