



On the Wild Side

North American Model

Time Frame: 2-3 hours

Grade: High School

Overview:

Different wildlife species generate different emotions in people. Animals that are not as cute and cuddly can have a hard time getting public support for their conservation and management. As a result, organizations have to get creative to educate people about these animals. In this lesson, students will select and study a mammal from the Arizona Game and Fish Department’s Bone Box Resource Trunk in order to “give a voice” to the animal. Their final product will be a video narrative modeled after the popular BBC *Walk on the Wild Side* program.

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Essential Questions

- How can human activities harm and benefit wildlife?
- How do we communicate science?

Objectives

- Identify at least three management practices that have resulted in the increase or reduction of animal ranges in the United States.
- Search for and identify reliable and relevant websites to explain the historic and current range of a wildlife population.
- Write an engaging script to accompany a pre-recorded video.

Arizona Department of Education Standards

ELA Common Core

- W.HS.3b
- W.HS.3d
- WHST.HS.4a

High School

Science

- S3.C1.PO1
- S3.C1.PO5
- S4.C3.PO1
- S4.C3.PO2
- S4.C4.PO4

Materials and Resources

- AZGFD Bone Box Resource Trunk materials:
 - Field Notes
 - Wildlife Views video segments
 - *America’s Wildlife* DVD
 - Mammalian Predators in Arizona
- Online access to sample videos of the BBC series *Walk on the Wild Side*
- Computers or laptops (one per group)
- Internet access

Teacher Preparation

- Preview the *America’s Wildlife* DVD. Determine if you will watch the video as a class or allow groups to watch it separately.
- Prepare the computers. At a minimum, all computers should have one of the wildlife views video segments. This can be copied from the Bone Box Resource DVD or downloaded from <http://www.azgfd.gov/bonebox>.
- Search the Internet for sample footage of BBC series *Walk on the Wild Side*. Preview the videos and find ones appropriate for the classroom.

Background Information:

The history of wildlife management in the United States is a unique one, complete with missteps and successes. We can look back on the past, and determine what actions and principles have resulted in the best success. Today, we recognize seven general principles that are still used by wildlife managers to guide policies and actions. They are:

- Wildlife is held in the public trust.
- Commerce in wildlife is regulated.
- Hunting and angling laws are created through a public process.
- Everyone has the opportunity to hunt and fish.
- Hunters and anglers fund conservation.
- Wildlife is an international resource.
- Science is the basis for wildlife policy.

Together, these seven concepts form what is called the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. This model is credited with being one of the most successful wildlife conservation stories in the world. For more information about the North American Model, check out the “America’s Wildlife: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow” curriculum that can be found in the Bone Box Resource Trunk and on the Arizona Game and Fish Department’s Focus Wild Arizona education program website: <http://www.azgfd.gov/focuswild>.

In this lesson, students will have the opportunity to explore the North American Model as it pertains to a specific wildlife species. Then, they will create a humorous, yet educational video that tells the story of conservation through the eyes of this animal. They will attempt to create a viral video that can help spread the message of conservation to

audiences that have previously showed little to no interest in the survival of that species.

Viral videos are video recordings that use social media sites and other Internet websites and tools to become popular. They spread when people share the video link with their friends through email, Facebook, etc. They are often amateur videos. However, many companies have discovered they can use the concept to create an interest in their product or message with very little money. They have even been used for political campaigns.

Procedures:

1. Ask students why some animals, such as bald eagles, generate a lot of public support for conservation and protection, yet others like the Yaqui catfish do not get the same interest. Lead a discussion that focuses on human perceptions toward wildlife and how bigger, “cuter” species often get more attention. People often want to donate time or money to help animals that they can connect with on a personal level. It can be hard to do that for a slimy fish or scaly lizard!
2. Explain that one way to deal with this public apathy is to educate people about these less “cuddly” animals – to present them in a unique and memorable way.
3. Present the following challenge to the students: “The Arizona Game and Fish Department is interested in creating a set of viral videos that could be used to generate public support for wildlife species. You have been hired as the consultant responsible for researching and developing these videos.”
4. Inform the students that the videos are to be modeled after a BBC series called *Walk on the Wild Side* in which a group of comedians added humorous dialogue to engaging nature footage.

5. Show some of the *Walk on the Wild Side* videos available on the Internet.
6. Divide the class into groups of 2-3 students. Assign each group one of the animals from the Bone Box Resource Trunk.
7. Inform students that the Arizona Game and Fish Department has already provided them with video footage of their animal. They simply need to research the animal and develop a script. For their presentation, they will read the script live while the video plays.
8. Explain that while the main purpose of the BBC series was comedy, their videos should focus on content. Humor, however, can be an effective tool to teach that content and is especially important in viral video marketing. It just can't replace the content.
9. Assign each group a computer and give them some time to view their video segment. They should begin brainstorming ideas.
10. After a few minutes, inform them that they are going to watch a movie focused on the history of wildlife conservation in North America. They should pay attention to how history has impacted their animal and find ways to incorporate this information into their script.
11. Watch *America's Wildlife* as a class or allow the groups to watch it on their own.
12. Once the video is completed, have students begin researching their animal in more

detail. They can use the materials in the Bone Box Resource Trunk or any additional resources they may discover on the Internet or in the library. Some question to focus their research include:

- a. What was the range of this species when the Declaration of Independence was signed? What is the range today?
 - b. What are a few of the causes for the change in range over time?
 - c. What management practices have been used to conserve this species and its habitat?
 - d. What plants and animals share the habitat with this species? Have they experienced similar changes?
13. Once the research is complete, provide time for the students to create a script. They should be able to introduce some interesting facts about the animal's biology while describing its management history and challenges. It should be written in an entertaining way that makes it appear as if the animal itself is telling the story.
 14. Provide students with time to practice presenting the script with the video running.
 15. Begin presentations. Dim the lights and show each video without sound to the class. As their animal video plays, students should act out their script.



Differentiated Instruction:

Extensions:

- Rather than presenting live, students can use digital recorders and video editing software to add their voices to the movie clips. Free web-based tools, such as **www.screencast-o-matic.com**, may be useful. Students can then post videos to YouTube or other sharing sites. Be sure to send the links of these videos to our education program at **focuswild@azgfd.gov**.
- Explore the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation in more depth. Lessons 1 and 2 of the “America’s Wildlife: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow” curriculum provide additional ideas to utilize the video while Lesson 3 explores the history in detail.
- Have students read and analyze the “New Noah’s Ark” scientific papers by Ernest Small. These focus on human perceptions of endangered species. They can be found on the Bone Box Resource DVD and are available online at **http://www.azgfd.gov/bonebox**.

Modifications:

- Eliminate the additional research. Students can use the information from the Bone Box Resource Trunk fact sheets and the *American’s Wildlife* movie.
- Rather than presenting live, allow students to record their voice-over in a room by themselves and then play it for the class.



Reflection:

Use the space below to reflect on the success of the lesson. What worked? What didn’t? What changes would you make? These notes can be used to help the next time you teach the lesson. In addition, the Department would appreciate any feedback. Please send your comments to **focuswild@azgfd.gov**. We’d love to see student samples of the videos and scripts, as well!