

READING CIRCLE - WOLVES

PROGRAMMING NOTES

This program shows children how wolf stories can be very different from each other. Aboriginal people respect the skill and strength of the wolf, admiring the wolf's courage and the way they work together in a pack. In many European stories, the wolf is a tricky, cruel and bloodthirsty animal. This type of characterization of the wolf is found in many fables such as *Little Red Riding Hood* and the *Three Little Pigs*. From your own collection select both fiction and non-fiction books that relate to this theme and display them on a table. Encourage children to borrow them when the program is over.

TO BEGIN THE PROGRAM

Begin the program by playing the ***Voices of Algonquin Park*** tape. Ask the children to identify the sound (wolves and wolf pups in Algonquin Park). Today's stories are all about wolves. Chat a bit more about wolves and stories about wolves. Here are some facts and points you might make:

- A wolf is in the same family as the dog. In appearance they closely resemble a husky or malamute dog, except that they are larger with longer legs and bigger feet.
- At one time, wolves could be found in many parts of the world
- Wolves travel in groups "the pack" and live in the company of family members.
- Members of the pack share in the caring of pups as they grow
- Most packs have 6 or 7 members but some may include as many as 15 wolves
- A wolf's sense of smell is 100 times more sensitive than a human's.
- There are many stories from all over the world about Wolves. Which ones do you know?

You can decide in which order you would like to read the books. In keeping with the Reading Circle concept, as described in the *Reading Circle Program Guide*, consider starting with an aboriginal story. The kit includes a copy of ***Wolf Tales: Native American***



Children's Stories Mary Powell. (editor) Ancient City Press. 1992. This book provides a collection of traditional stories from various native sources.

Each time you present a new book, begin with information on the author and illustrator. Encourage discussion that helps the children to understand how the stories are different or the same, and provide them with opportunities to share how they feel about the books.

THE STORIES

The Reading Circle Program provides children with an opportunity to explore stories. Encouraging discussion after reading a story lets children hear from each other about what the story means, talk about what they didn't understand, share what they liked or didn't like and how the story relates to other stories they've heard or read. You may use a talking stone or stick.

Leading the book discussion is about making it the children's discussion. Sample questions to begin the discussion are provided, but it's more important to get children to ask their own questions. This might not happen initially but the goal is to have the children shape the content of the discussion, and to be interactive, with help from you. You can help by:

- Rephrasing a child's response. This lets them know you're listening and also introduces other words that have the same meaning
- Offer examples from the story that supports a comment and encourage the children to do the same
- Praising their ideas, and encourage alternative responses.

Dream Wolf By Paul Goble. Aladdin Paperbacks, 1997.

This is the story of Tiblo and his little sister Tanksi who slip away one day when they are out berry-picking with the women and other children. They have fun exploring the hills, but when it gets dark they realized they are lost and can't find their way home.

Book Talk.

How does the wolf treat the children?



How do the people react to the wolf when the children return?
What does the story tell us about the relationship between the people and the wolf?
Do you know other stories about wolves helping people?

Talk to the children about the respect First Nations people have for the wolf and how people have things in common with the wolf. You could follow this story by reading, or asking the children to read, the two poems by Elise Maclay found in this guide. The book by Elise Maclay is included in the kit and the children will be fascinated by the art.

Wolf Island. By Celia Godkin. Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 2000.

This story, while not actually a true story, is based on an actual event and what is known about wolves. It tells what happens to a family of wolves when they leave an island and to the animals that live on the island after the wolves have left.

Book Talk

How is this story different from the other stories about wolves?
What things change after the wolves leave the island?
Why was the second winter so difficult for the animals on the island?
Why were the wolves hungry that winter?
How did the return of the wolves affect the animals on the island?
From the story, what did you learn about how animals are connected to each other?

The Three Little Pigs. Retold and Illustrated by Barry Moser. Little, Brown and Company. 2001

Or

The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs By Jon Scieszka, illustrated by Lane Smith. Scholastic, 1989.

This story of the Three Little Pigs has been told for many years and some of the children might already know it. Ask the children if they can tell you the story. If they are familiar with



the story, read **The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!** If you read the original story make sure you encourage them to join in the chorus lines.

Book Talk

How would you describe the wolf in this story? Why do you think that?

Why do you think only one pig can outsmart the wolf? What makes him different from the other pigs?

What do you think of the Wolf's version of the story?



POEMS

Wolves of the Crow By Elise Maclay

Run with me. Wolf Brother,
Teach me to be like a wolf,
Faster than fear, stronger than cold.
To read the wind, to find the way.
Teach me to be as valuable to my tribe
As you are to yours.
My people, the two-legged ones,
Have bulldozed your dens to make highways
and supermarkets
But long ago, we ran together, spoke the same
language.
If we can remember,
If we have the will,
Our spirits can be brothers still.

The Sentinel By Elise Maclay

Stay with me, Wolf Brother,
As I watch over my village.
Lend me your sharp eyes.
Help me to remember that I am part of all I see:
Every animal and bird
Every rock, every tree.
We are all part of the beautiful circle of life
Created by the Great Spirit.

From ***The Forest Has Eyes*** Bev Doolittle and Elise Maclay. Shelton,
Connecticut:Greenwich Workshop Press. 1998. (This book is in the Wolves Kit)
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Workshop Press, www.greenwichworkshop.com



EXTENDING THE PROGRAM

ACTIVITIES

1. **An Endanger Species.**

http://www.speciesatrisk.gc.ca/search/speciesDetails_e.cfm?SpeciesID=608 The Eastern Wolf lives in parts of Ontario and Quebec. The number of wolves is estimated to be 2,000 and the COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) has designated it an at risk species. Measures to protect and recover the grey wolf species have been implemented under the Species at Risk Act (SARA). Although the species has disappeared from the more populated, southern portions of its range, and although some local populations are being hunted at unsustainable levels, the species' overall abundance seems to have remained relatively stable over the past decade. Mortality caused by human activity, such as hunting and trapping; road kills; industrial, agricultural and residential developments; as well as the abundance of prey, are the main limiting factors for Eastern Wolves. Have a discussion about why wolves need protection in Ontario, threats to the wolf population, and what can be done to save the wolves.

2. **Wolf track book mark**

Make bookmarks decorated with wolf tracks or stam ps.

3. **Paw print identification Activity Sheet.**

Explore the various tracks by considering:

Which animals have four toes on the back and front feet? (the members of the dog family)

What makes the small marks in front of the toes? (claws) Would cats make these marks? (No because they retract their claws)

Which animals have five toes on the front and four toes on the back? (rodents)



Which animal has a two-toe foot print? What other type of large animal might have a similar track (moose)?

4. **Paint or Colouring Activity**

Have the children design their own cover, or recreate an illustration for one of the books.

5. **Wolf facts research.**

Work with the children to make a list of their 10 favourite wolf facts and post it in the library.



OTHER STORIES

You can easily create a second program on the theme of Wolves by selecting other related titles, for example books that are a variations on the original story of the *Three Little Pigs*. In contemporary stories based on the fable of the ***Three Little Pigs***, the wolf is cast in a different role. It's fun to introduce children to these alternative stories. If you do a second program with this alternate story, you could begin by asking the children to tell you the original story of the ***Three Little Pigs***.

We are Wolves. By Molly Grooms and Lucia Guarnotta. NorthWord Press, 2002.

The Forest Has Eyes. By Elise Maclay, illustrated by Bev Doolittle. Greenwich Workshop Press. 1998.

The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig. By Eugene Trivizas and Helen Oxenbury. Heinemann, 1993.

Wolf Tales. Native American Children's Stories. Edited by Mary Powell, illustrated by Deborah Reade. Ancient City Press, 1992.

Brother Wolf A Seneca Tale. Harriet Peck Taylor. Doubles & McIntyre. 1996.

Wolf Pack : Tracking Wolves in the Wild. By Sylvia A. Johnson and Alice Aamodt. Lerne, 1985.

