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School: École secondaire Odysée

Grade range: 6th – 9th grade

Subject: English

Topic: Bearded dragon habitat

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**Objective: Through research, discussions and observation, students will create the ideal habitat for an adult bearded dragon.**



Overall expectations:

- Generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience, conducting research as required.
- Write texts in a variety of forms and for various media, applying their knowledge of the elements and techniques associated with each form.

Specific expectations:

- conduct research, when it is required (e.g., for essays, articles, research reports), in the following way:
  - o determine the focus of their research, and develop a plan for gathering relevant information (e.g., identify the categories and potential sources of the information needed);
  - o locate, select, and evaluate the material gathered according to their plan;
  - o record important ideas and information by summarizing and/or paraphrasing them, making appropriate records of all sources to avoid plagiarism;
  - o use graphic organizers to sort information and examples into categories;
- write a three-paragraph research report related to a text or theme under study:
  - o following the prescribed formats for presentation and for citing and document sources;
  - o with a clear introduction;
  - o with a fully developed body paragraph that effectively summarizes and/or paraphrases information gathered from sources;
  - o with a definitive conclusion;

Introduction:

Teacher asks the class: “what does a captive bearded dragon need to live a full, happy life”? Through observation of the bearded dragon habitat in the classroom, students should be able to determine the basic necessities. The teacher can lead a discussion and students can share their observations (a bearded dragon needs food, a place to live, lights, etc.).

Next, the teacher announces that as a bearded dragon grows into adulthood, he/she will need more room to be comfortable. Therefore, students will need to work together to create the ideal habitat for the growing bearded dragon.

*\*\*To keep this project realistic and authentic, the teacher may impose a materials list or a budget that students need to respect and at the end of the project, they can build it!*

## **Lesson 1: how to properly research a topic**

Before students even begin their research, it is important to teach them how to properly conduct some research on the internet. Students today are very tech savvy, but they struggle to identify proper and improper information on the internet. I recommend discussing what makes a website credible, how to effectively research a topic and how to avoid plagiarism.

## **Lesson 2: Designating sub-groups and gathering information**

Divide students into 5 groups. Explain that each group will be responsible for one aspect of a bearded dragon's habitat. Each group is divided as follows – lighting, temperatures and accessories; food and nutrients; habitat sizes, shapes and materials; species, lifespan and size; patterns and brumation.

Each group will work together to research their assigned topic. During the first stages of research, they may write down their findings in point form.

## **Lesson 3 – formulating a paragraph**

Once each group has collected enough information, they must work together to form a paragraph that summarizes their research. Once they have formulated a paragraph, they must proof-read and edit it.

## **Lesson 4 – Sharing their finding with the other sub-groups**

Once every group has created a paragraph that contains all the necessary information on their topic, the teacher forms new groups of 5. *Each new group now contains one person from each original sub-group. Each student now takes the time to present their research to the other members of their group.* Students combine their information together to create a three-paragraph research report. Students must revise and proof-read the edited research report before handing it in.

## **Go the extra mile!**

For a truly authentic project, teachers can give each group some time to create and design a drawing / plan of the habitat while following the guidelines that were given at the beginning of the project such as material choices and budget. For example, the teacher could decide that the habitat would have to be constructed from recycled / second-hand materials. Ambitious students can then build their habitat!

**This lesson plan is based on a project that was completed by a small group of 8<sup>th</sup> graders this school year. With the help of the shop teacher and myself, they transformed an old dresser into a bigger and more suitable habitat for our adult bearded dragon (pictured above)!**