

Animal Poetry

Study Units

[Iowa's Wildlife Habitats](#); [Wildlife Management](#)

Supplemental Information

See [Iowa's Wildlife Habitats](#) for information about the different habitats in Iowa and [Wildlife Management](#) for reintroduction success stories and [Iowa's Wildlife Resource Base](#) for the major animal groups.

Teaching Suggestions

One can be inspired to write poetry by reading or listening to someone else's poetry. The references in the [Additional Materials](#) section include some children's books of poetry about animals. Read some animal poems to the students. Have students act out the poem as one student reads. This may help get them in a mind-set to create their own poetry.

Work with the drama, art, and/or speech teachers/departments to form a cooperative lesson. Their expertise will be helpful in giving the students background information on poetry structure and the importance of illustrations or photos to accompany words.

Use this activity as a follow-up to an activity about components of habitat such as 'The Beautiful Basics' or 'Habitat Lap Sit.' Before starting, have students choose one animal and brainstorm words that relate to each component of its habitat (food, water, shelter, and space). For a group poem, as suggested in step two of the procedure, have each student write down their words on index cards or paper pieces. The words can be shared and rearranged as poems are created and changed. Encourage students to include all components of their animal's habitat somewhere in the poem.

Scientific names can be interesting. Many are Latin or Greek and have unexpected meanings. (Some genus or species names in the animal kingdom are the same as Greek gods or goddesses.) Have students' research meanings of animal scientific names and include these in their poems.

Evaluation

See the activity.

Student Materials

None

Teacher Aids

None



Additional Materials

- Enter the search term 'poem' and sort by 6-8 grade on the book search on [WILD Resources section](#) of the ICEC website.
- Ewing, S. 1997. *Lucky Hares and Itchy Bears*. Alaska Northwest Books.
- Fleischman, P. 1988. *Joyful Noise Poems for Two Voice*. Harper and Row.
- Florian, D. 2004. *Omnibeasts: Animal Poems and Paintings*. Harcourt Children's Books.
- Moss, J. 1997. *Bone Poems*. Workman Publishing Company.
- Prelutsky, J. editor. 1997. *The Beauty of the Beast: Poems from the Animal Kingdom*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.
- Worth, V. 2007. *Animal Poems*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Hass, R. and P. Michael. 2008. *River of Words: Young Poets and Artists on the Nature of Things*. Milkweed Editions.

