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Case of the Missing Gator

WebQuest Description: The webquest will offer information about the ecosystem of the Florida Everglades and the importance of the animals that inhabit the Everglades.
Grade Level: 3-5
Curriculum: English / Language Arts
Keywords: clues, detective, mystery, evidence, suspect, witness
Published On: 2011-09-06 22:51:28
Last Modified: 2011-09-07 18:09:39
WebQuest URL: http://zunal.com/webquest.php?w=112353

Introduction

     You are a Florida Everglades Park Ranger and you have just arrived at Gumbo Limbo Hammock to announce some frightening news. Dajun the alligator has been scaring the people in the area and he must be killed. When you start looking for him, you notice he is missing. Where can Dajun have gone?   While you are gathering the clues to try and find Dajun, you will be learning about the ecosystem of the Florida Everglades and the animals that inhabit there. Work with your fellow Park Rangers to crack the case and solve the mystery. Be prepared to share your evidence.

Tasks

     In this case that you are about to solve, you will become familiar with the ecosystem of the Florida Everglades, and understand the importance of the animals that live in that ecosystem. As you gather evidence and analyze clues to find Dajun, the missing gator; you will be learning about many of the endangered species in the area and how we can help to protect the environment.

Process

   Part 1.   Before you begin your investigation, make predictions on what you think might happen in the story The Missing Gator of Gumbo Limbo. You know that Dajun, the alligator is missing, but you do not know where it is or how it got there.
Check out all the resources below to help you solve the mystery and do your research.
       Answer the following questions as you read the story. You may record your answers in the worksheet attached or in a word document. Share your answers with the teacher and classmates in our Edmodo account.
1.   Why does Travis want to shoot the alligator Dajun? (Pages 2,3)
2.   Use specific details to explain why Gumbo Limbo Hammock is such a good place for homeless people to live? (pages 3,4)
3.   Why did Liza tear down the reward sign? (page 9)
4.   What kind of man is James? (page 16)
5.   Where do the woods people get their drinking and bathing water? (page 18)
6.   How do you know the water is safe to drink? (page 18)
7.   Do you think Dajun is hiding someplace or is it just a coincidence that he is not around when they are looking for him? (page 44 -45)
8.   What do you think will happen to Gumbo Limbo Hole without the presence of Dajun? (page 44)
9.   What was killing all the wildlife? (page 56-58)
10.   What good environmental chore does the buttonwood perform? (page 58-60)
11.   What special interest affect Florida's network of waterways? (page 81-84)
12.   Why did Liza and her mom use soap instead of detergents? (page 87-88)
13.   How did Dajun help Liza's mom get a job? (page 113)
14.   Where did Liza find Dajun? (page 117-118)
15.   Why did Liza say the mystery was not completely solved? (page 123)

Part 2.   Research the Florida Everglades Ecosystem. Use the chart provided in the Resources Section to organize your thoughts and information.
Florida Everglades Ecosystemhttp://www.nwf.org/Wildlife/Wild-Places/Everglades.aspx
Natural Ecosystemhttp://www.dep.state.fl.us/secretary/everglades/
A Vast Wetlandhttp://www.tigerhomes.org/animal/florida-everglades.cfm
Everglades- Natual Resourcehttp://www.nrdc.org/water/conservation/qever.asp

Everglades Restoration Planwww.evergladesplan.org/
Everglades Animals and Habitatshttp://www.miamisci.org/ecolinks/everglades/animals.html
Plants and Animals of the Evergladeshttp://www.evergladesplan.org/facts_info/sywtkma_animals.aspx
The Florida Evergladeshttp://www.greenscreen.org/articles_sr/Habitats/Habitats/Everglades%20-%20Sr.pdf

Part 3
Culminating Activitiy
A.   Now that you have completed reading The Missing Gator of Gumbo Limbo and completed your research on the Florida Everglades Ecosystem, what do you think actually happened to Dajun?
B.   What can we do to prevent the extinction to our endangered species?
Share your opinion and response to questions in our Edmodo account.
C. Be prepared to share your findings, evidence, clues, and opinion in class.

Questions provided by:
http://teacherweb.com/SC/MillbrookElementary/MrsParsons/gatorstudyguide.pdf

Animated gif provide by: gifs-paradise.com

Evaluation

 Keep in mind that the teacher will use the rubrics on this page to evaluate your work and response throughout this project. Just click on "Download File" to upload the rubrics and look at them.
(Animated Gif from http://school.discoveryeducation.com/clipart/)   Rubric for Mystery Genre Webquest

CATEGORY

4

3

2

1

Evidence and Information

All information presented as evidence was clear, accurate and thorough.

Most information presented as evidence was clear, accurate and thorough.

Most information presented as evidence was clear and accurate, but was not usually thorough.

Information had several inaccuracies OR was usually not clear.

Use of Facts/Statistics

Every major point was well supported with several relevant facts, statistics and/or examples.

Every major point was adequately supported with relevant facts, statistics and/or examples.

Every major point was supported with facts, statistics and/or examples, but the relevance of some was questionable.

Every point was not supported.

Presentation Style

Team consistently used gestures, eye contact, tone of voice and a level of enthusiasm in a way that kept the attention of the audience.

Team usually used gestures, eye contact, tone of voice and a level of enthusiasm in a way that kept the attention of the audience.

Team sometimes used gestures, eye contact, tone of voice and a level of enthusiasm in a way that kept the attention of the audience.

One or more members of the team had a presentation style that did not keep the attention of the audience.

Organization

All evidence and arguments were clearly tied to an idea (premise) and organized in a tight, logical fashion.

Most of the evidence and arguments were clearly tied to an idea (premise) and organized in a tight, logical fashion.

All of the evidence and arguments were clearly tied to an idea (premise) but the organization was sometimes not clear or logical.

The evidence and arguments were not clearly tied to an idea (premise).

Providing Evidence and Solving the Mystery

The team clearly understood the topic in-depth and presented the evidence and solved the mystery using their information forcefully and convincingly.

The team clearly undestood the topic in-depth and presented the evidence and solved the mystery using their information with ease.

The team seemed to understand the main points of the topic and presented the evidence and solved the mystery using their information with ease.

The team did not show an adequate understanding of the topic or provide evidence and solve he mystery

Category and Score					Score
				Total Score	

Conclusion

By working through this WebQuest you have had the opportunity to solve the mystery of The Missing Gator of Gumbo Limbo and research the Florida Everglades Ecosystem.Now you will be able to share and defend your findings and point of view with other classmates and the teacher.

Teacher Page

IntroductionThis lesson was designed for fourth grade students who are looking forward to being actively engaged in their learning. The topic to be covered through the Webquest will be: Solving the Mystery of a book: The Missing Gator of Gumbo Limbo, and Florida Everglades Ecosystem. Students will solve a mystery case and become familiar with the ecosystem of the Florida Everglades. They will also understand the importance of the animals that live in that ecosystem, and how we should protect this environment. LearnersThe Webquest is intended for fourth grade students between the ages from 9-11 years old. The multimedia activity is geared towards fourth grade students based on the current Palm Beach School District New Generation Content Reading and Science Standards and the NETS. Students will be able to use research skills to locate, describe, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and comprehend Florida's Everglades Ecosystem and solve a fictional book mystery case related to Florida's Everglades. Learners will also be able to analyze the data and make informed decisions. Each student will utilize the Webquest at their own pace. Each student may select to work independently, or with a partner to assist each other with a particular section or activity. Peer tutoring can be offered for students with novice or limited technological skills.
StandardsThe multimedia activity is geared towards fourth grade students based on the current Palm Beach School District New Generation Content Reading and Science Standards and the NETS.
Reading:LA.4.2.1.1- The student will read and distinguish among the genres and sub-genres of fiction. LA.4.2.1.2- The student will identify and explain the elements of plot structure, including exposition, setting, character development, problem/resolution, and theme in fiction. LA.4.2.1.5- The student will respond to, discuss, and reflect on literary selections, connecting text to self, text to

world, text to text.

Science:SC.4.L.16.2- The student will explain that although characteristics of plants and animals are inherited, some characteristics can be affected by the environment. SC.4.L.17.4- The student will recognize ways plants and animals, including humans, can impact the environment. C.4.N.1.1- The student will raise questions about the natural world, use appropriate reference materials that support understanding to obtain information (identifying the source), conduct both individual and team investigations through free exploration and systematic investigations, and generate appropriate explanations based on those explorations. Technology Standards: NETS for Students:1. Creativity and InnovationStudents demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students:a. apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processesb. create original works as a means of personal or group expressiond. identify trends and forecast possibilities2. Communication and CollaborationStudents use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. Students:a. interact and collaborate with peers employing a variety of digital environmentsand mediab. communicate information and ideas effectively to peers and teacher c. develop cultural understanding and global awareness3. Research and Information FluencyStudents apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Students:a. plan strategies to guide inquiryb. locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and mediac. evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasksd. process data and report results4. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision MakingStudents use critical thinking skills to plan and conduct research, manage projects, solve problems, and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources. Students:a. identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigationb. plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a projectc. collect and analyze data to identify solutions and/or make informed decisionsd. use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions5. Digital CitizenshipStudents understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology and practice legal and ethical behavior. Students:a. advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technologyb. exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology that supports collaboration, learning, and productivityc. demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learningd. exhibit leadership for digital citizenship6. Technology Operations and ConceptsStudents demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems, and operations. Students:a. understand and use technology systemsb. select and use applications effectively and productivelyd. transfer current knowledge to learning of new techTechnology Standards: NETS for Teachers:1. Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and CreativityTeachers use their knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation. Teachers:a. promote, support, and model creative and innovative thinking and inventivenessb. engage students in exploring real-world issues and solving authentic problems using digital tools and resourcesc. promote student reflection using collaborative tools to reveal and clarify students' conceptual understanding and thinking, planning, and creative processes2. Design and Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences and AssessmentsTeachers design, develop, and evaluate authentic learning experiences and assessments incorporating contemporary tools and resources to maximize content learning in context and to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified in the NETS•S. Teachers:a. design or adapt relevant learning experiences that incorporate digital tools and resources to promote student learning and creativityb. develop technology-enriched learning environments that enable all students to pursue their individual curiosities and become active participants in setting their own educational goals, managing their own learning, and assessing their own progressc. customize and personalize learning activities to address students' diverse learning styles, working strategies, and abilities using digital tools and resourcesd. provide students with multiple and varied formative and summative assessments aligned with content and technology standards and use resulting data to inform learning and teaching3. Model Digital-Age Work and LearningTeachers exhibit knowledge, skills, and work processes representative of an innovative professional in a global and digital society. Teachers:a. demonstrate fluency in technology systems and the transfer of current knowledge to new technologies and situationsc. communicate relevant information and ideas effectively to students and peers using a variety of digital-age media and formatsd. model and facilitate effective use of current and emerging digital tools to locate, analyze, evaluate, and use information resources to support research and learning4. Promote and Model Digital Citizenship and ResponsibilityTeachers understand local and global societal issues and responsibilities in an evolving digital culture and exhibit legal and ethical behavior in their professional practices. Teachers: a. advocate, model, and teach safe, legal, and ethical use of digital information and technology, including respect for copyright, intellectual property, and the appropriate documentation of sourcesb. address the diverse needs of all learners by using learner-centered strategies and providing equitable access to appropriate digital tools and resourcesc. promote and model digital etiquette and responsible social interactions related to the use of technology and information.Performance Tasks:• Through a Webquest, the students will gather information and subsequently analyze the information to solve the mystery of a book, reflect about how we can protect Florida's Everglades, and provide solutions to prevent the extinction of endangered species. • The students will conduct a debate/oral presentation providing researched information, evidence, clues, solutions, and opinions about the topics. • The Webquest and face-to-face classroom interaction will focus around learners demonstrating their achieved knowledge about the Mystery genre and Florida's Everglades ecosystem. • The student's written work and oral presentations will be evaluated using teacher made rubrics that are posted on the Webquest. Other Evidence:• Through teacher observation and mid-project check points worksheets.• Oral and written responses to Essential Questions using worksheets as a guide. • Homework where students can continue working on the Webquest and reflecting or answering the Essential Questions on Edmodo.comSuggested Resources: *Suggested Web sites such as: Beth Newingham's Exploring the Mystery Genre Unit on Scholastics Website (http://hill.troy.k12.mi.us/staff/bnewingham/myweb3/) *Florida Content Standard   (http://www.floridastandards.org/standards/flstandardsearch.aspx) *Technology standards: NETS for students 2007   (http://www.iste.org/standards/nets-for-) *NETS for teachers 2008   (http://www.iste.org/standards/nets-for-teachers/nets-for-teachers-2008.aspx)

Image from "The Case" student webquest page retrieved from (www.care2.com)

Image from "The Evidence" student webquest page retrieved from (www.travel.nationalgeographic.com)

Standards

Credits

Other

Credits and References

Thank You: WebQuest.org (http://webquest.org/index-create.php)Zunal.com (http://www.zunal.com/)You Tube |(http://www.youtube.com/)Animation provided by (http://school.discoveryeducation.com/clipart/) and Gifs.net (http://www.gifs.net/gif/) Music and Audio provided by: YouTube (http://www.youtube.com/)Images provided by Microsoft ClipArt (http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/images/?CTT=6&ver=14&app=powerpnt.exe) and Google Images (http://www.google.com/imghp?hl=en&tab=wi)Beth Newingham's Third Grade Troy School District Website: http://hill.troy.k12.mi.us/staff/bnewingham/myweb3/Scholastic Website: http://teacher.scholastic.com