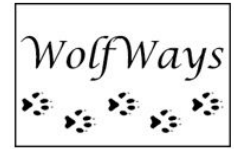


Wolf Portrait



Student Objectives:

1. Assess how the portrayal of wolves – be it in the media, in one’s culture, within a person’s social circle, etc. affects a person’s personal perception of the animal. create a one’s
2. Create a "portrait" of a wolf as it is depicted in a media source
3. Examine their own perception of wolves and the origin behind their knowledge and feelings regarding wolves.

Background:

Few people have a personal experience of wolves. What most of us know or feel about wolves is based on outside information and influences.

Perceptions are generally formed by some combination of fact, fiction, reason, emotion and cultural background. Perceptions can influence public policy towards wolf management. This lesson gives students a chance to examine the influence of the media on people's perceptions regarding wolves. Students will also be encouraged to reflect on their own perceptions, thoughts and feelings and the origins of their knowledge about wolves.

Activity – Option A

1. Ask the students to brainstorm books and movies that they have read or seen that have wolves in them or have wolves as the subject. Write their responses on the board. (Possible answers; the wolves in the movie “Beauty and the Beast” or “Frozen”, werewolf stories, “The Grey”, online and TV nature videos, Peter and the Wolf, Little Red Riding Hood, National Geographics “Wolves” book, etc.) Students may share the basic storyline.
2. Hand out the “Wolf Portrait” paper. Ask students to choose one of the books/movies that they are familiar with and write down the name of the book/movie at the bottom of the paper. Ask students to:
 - Draw a picture of the wolf as portrayed in that book/movie in the middle of their paper.
 - Write next to each paw print any words or phrases that describe the wolf as it is portrayed in their book/ movie
3. Divide the classroom into smaller groups. Within the group, students share their “Wolf Portraits” and compare their pictures and words. How are they alike – how are they different? Is their story/movie fictional or non-fictional? How does each portrait make them feel about wolves?
4. Lead a class discussion.
Ask the students in each group to share what they discovered in their small groups. Possible questions to ask of the class:

- Can a story influence how you feel about wolves simply by the way they are portrayed?
- What difference does it make if the source is fiction or non-fiction? How can we know what to believe?
- Do you agree with the portrayal of the wolf in your story? Why/ Why not?
- What is your perception of wolves today? What is the origin of that perception?

5. On the board write "true", "false", "opinion" and "not sure" Students will list their words/phrases under one of these headings, based on their current knowledge of wolves. This may generate questions. These are questions that the students may research or if a WolfWays presentation is scheduled, write down to present during the Q/A section of the Wolf Presentation.

6. Ask if student can think of other animals that have either positive or negative reputations because of their portrayal in stories (ie spiders, deer, snakes, bats, dogs, etc.). This activity can be extended to include people and the topic of prejudice.

Activity Option B -

1. Hand out the Wolf Portrait worksheet. Have students draw a picture of a wolf, as they perceive it, in the center of their worksheet. Encourage creativity. They can draw the face only, the whole wolf, a cartoon — whatever they visualize.

3. Say the word, “wolf.” Give students three to five minutes to write on their worksheets (over, under and around the paw prints) any words or phrases that come to mind pertaining to wolves.

4. Ask students to write a paragraph of at least five sentences telling what they know and feel about wolves. This can be written on the back of the portrait page or on a separate sheet of paper . Have them save their paragraphs to review and revise as they learn more about wolves.

5. Discuss the basis of personal beliefs and how they influence our perception of information as fact or fiction. Pose the following questions to the class: On what do we base our beliefs and perceptions? Personal experience? What others have taught us? The experiences of others? Research? The opinions of experts? Cultural traditions? Media – books/movies/ online videos? How might information and the acquisition of knowledge change someone’s personal beliefs? Can you think of some once firmly held beliefs that have been proven wrong? (Example: The earth is flat.)

6. The descriptive words/phrases may be listed on the board and then categorized, based on their current knowledge, as true, false, opinion, or not sure. This discussion may generate questions. These are questions that the students may research or write down to present during the Q/A section of the Wolf Presentation.