

# Who's afraid of the big, bad wolf



**Grade Level:** 3-5

**Time Needed:** See procedures (estimates)

## Introduction:

This lesson is designed to present to children a realistic outlook on wolves. Some children see wolves as big dogs, and tend to think well of them, without understanding that they are not dogs, but wild predators. Others see them as dangerous predators who eat children and pets. The truth, of course, is somewhere in-between.

## Essential Questions:

- Should we keep wolves away from places where people live?
- Should we be afraid of predators?

## Standards:

### NGSS:

- **LS2.C: Ecosystem Dynamics, Functioning, and Resilience**

When the environment changes in ways that affect a place's physical characteristics, temperature, or availability of resources, some organisms survive and reproduce, others move to new locations, yet others move into the transformed environment, and some die.  
(secondary)

- **LS4.D: Biodiversity and Humans**

Populations live in a variety of habitats, and change in those habitats affects the organisms living there.

### **Common Core:**

- Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. (3-LS4-4)
- SL.3.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace. (3-LS4-4)

### **National Council of Social Studies:**

- investigate the impact of human activities on the environment. This enables them to acquire a useful basis of knowledge for informed decision-making on issues arising from
- How do people interact with the environment and what are some of the consequences of those interactions?

### **International Baccalaureate:**

- PYP 1: Approaches to teaching 1.1: Teachers use inquiry-based teaching strategies and learning engagements. (0403-01-0100)
- Approaches to teaching 3.2: Teachers encourage students to transfer their conceptual understandings to unfamiliar contexts. (0403-03-0200)

## **Objectives:**

Examine the behaviors of predators.

Recognize that predators have behaviors that are not always dangerous.

Assess the impact of human behaviors on natural environments.

### Materials:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bY4FWXqxTlc> 'The Three Little Pigs and the Somewhat Bad Wolf' read by Kaia Gerber
  - <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/The-Three-Little-Pigs-and-the-Somewhat-Bad-Wolf-Retell-Masks-5103142> The Three Little Pigs and the Somewhat Bad Wolf Retell Masks
- <https://rangerrick.org/zoobooks/baby-wolves-get-a-lot-of-loving-care/> Baby Wolves Get a Lot of Loving Care
- <https://rangerrick.org/zoobooks/a-wolfs-body-is-made-for-chasing-large-prey/> A Wolf's Body is Made for Chasing Large Prey
- [https://rangerrick.org/rr\\_videos/amazing-wolf-howl-wolf-conservation-center-nywolf-org/](https://rangerrick.org/rr_videos/amazing-wolf-howl-wolf-conservation-center-nywolf-org/) Amazing Wolf Howl
- [https://rangerrick.org/rr\\_videos/wolf-party-greeting/](https://rangerrick.org/rr_videos/wolf-party-greeting/) Wolf Party Greeting
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysa5OBhXz-Q> How Wolves Change Rivers
    - Wolves
      - <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Stability-Change-Reintroduction-of-Yellow-Stone-Wolves-6121907> Stability & Change: Reintroduction of Yellowstone
      - <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Predator-Prey-Line-Graphing-28869> Predator & Prey Line Graphing
- <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/The-Wolf-Guide-5145258> the Wolf Guide (2 versions-grades 1-4 & 5-12)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55WS15Lj5Zo> Wolves and Ravens: Nature's Best Friends
- <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Animal-Masks-Wolf-Raven-3710965> Animal Masks - Wolf & Raven
- <https://wolfhaven.org/learn-about-wolves/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/wolf4-5.pdf> Wolf Activity Booklet grades 4-5

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSoxVyOoE\\_E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSoxVyOoE_E) The Story of the Two Wolves - Fables of the World
- <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Group-Work-Self-Reflection-Rubric-5895079> Group Work: Self Reflection Rubric
- <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Group-Project-Rubric-3-5-355027> Group Project Rubric

### Hook:

- Ask how many if the students have ever seen a wolf in the wild. If any have, ask for their experience.
- Ask them if they remember any fairy tales that included wolves; how did the wolves fare in these stories?
- Why do they think children were taught these stories?
- Show the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bY4FWXqxTlc> 'The Three Little Pigs and the Somewhat Bad Wolf' read by Kaia Gerber
  - Ask why they think this version of the Three Little Pigs was written?

### Procedure 1. Wolf Behavior

- Explain that they will be studying how real wolves behave. Explain that wolves are predators, and that this means they must kill other animals in order to eat, but that this is not the only thing they do.
- Distribute individual copies of and read it together:  
<https://rangerrick.org/zoobooks/baby-wolves-get-a-lot-of-loving-care/> Baby Wolves Get a Lot of Loving Care.
  - What did they read that showed wolves as caring for each other?
  - What did they read that showed they will grow up to be predators?
  - Distribute individual copies of:  
<https://rangerrick.org/zoobooks/a-wolfs-body-is-made-for-chasing-large-prey/>

- Ask if they can compare a wolf's body to that of other predators (example: cats-big and small, have large canine teeth)
- Show the two videos:
  - [https://rangerrick.org/rr\\_videos/amazing-wolf-howl-wolf-conservation-center-ny-wolf-org/](https://rangerrick.org/rr_videos/amazing-wolf-howl-wolf-conservation-center-ny-wolf-org/) Amazing Wolf Howl
  - [https://rangerrick.org/rr\\_videos/wolf-party-greeting/](https://rangerrick.org/rr_videos/wolf-party-greeting/) Wolf Party Greeting
    - Do these howls seem like hunting behavior? Why or why not?
- Distribute pp. 4-12 of:  
<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/The-Wolf-Guide-5145258> the Wolf Guide 2 versions-grades 1-4, and 5-12 (5th grade teachers may want to look at the middle school version)
  - Allow them time to read, either alone or with a partner, and to highlight important facts.
  - Since young students tend to highlight everything, ask them to try to highlight only **1 or at most 3** words in a sentence. Activity can continue as homework if necessary.
  - When finished, they may go on to the word search or coloring while classmates finish.
  - Ask them to come to the board one by one to write a word that they highlighted that describes a wolf.
  - Make another set of individual copies of the wolf picture, and ask students to write inside their wolf picture no more than 10 things they think are important to know about wolves. Place them around the room.

### Procedure 2. Wolves and the Environment

- Show the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysa5OBhXz-Q> How Wolves Change Rivers.
  - Ask what they think about this.
  - Distribute:<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Predator-Prey-Line-Graphing-28869> Predator & Prey Line Graphing

- They can do this individually, in pairs, or in groups, depending on the skill level of your class.
  - What did they learn from this activity?
  - Did it support the video or not?
- Distribute:  
<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Stability-Change-Reintroduction-of-Yellow-Stone-Wolves-6121907> Stability & Change: Reintroduction of Yellowstone
  - Give them a few minutes to write down some of the pros and cons.
  - You can either discuss their answers or hold a debate between a pro side and a con side. Give them some time to come up with their reasons for supporting their side.
    - <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Debate-Rubric-2348884> debate rubric (optional, of course)
- Distribute:  
<https://wolflhaven.org/learn-about-wolves/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/wolf4-5.pdf> Where Have Wolves Traveled?
  - Do the first activity, plotting where the wolves have been, and answer the questions.
  - Discuss the plot points and the answers.
  - If you lived on a ranch near Yellowstone, how do you think you would feel about having wolves so near you and your cattle? What do you think Yellowstone National Park should do to keep your cattle safe?

### Procedure 3. Closing Activity (Optional)

- Show the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55WS15Lj5Zo> Wolves and Ravens: Nature's Best Friends
  - Discuss: what can these two very different animals teach us about how we should behave?
  - Choose one or both of the following mask-making activities:

- <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/The-Three-Little-Pigs-and-the-Somewhat-Bad-Wolf-Retell-Masks-5103142> The Three Little Pigs and the Somewhat Bad Wolf Retell Masks
- <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Animal-Masks-Wolf-Raven-3710965> Animal Masks - Wolf & Raven
- Depending on which you choose, divide the class into the correct number of groups (either 4 for the Somewhat bad wolf, or 2 for raven & wolf).
  - Allow them time to make the masks.
  - Ask them to write and perform a script that demonstrates what they learned about wolves.
- Here are some possible rubrics for this activity:
  - <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Group-Work-Self-Reflection-Rubric-5895079> Group Work: Self Reflection Rubric
  - <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Group-Project-Rubric-3-5-355027> Group Project Rubric
  - As a final activity, show the video:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSoxVyOoE\\_E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pSoxVyOoE_E) The Story of the Two Wolves - Fables of the World
    - Discuss: What does the saying mean: “the one you feed”?