

Manatee Lesson Plan Ideas for Pre-K Teachers



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Manatees are one animal that you may want to consider incorporating into your list of lesson plan topics this year. The underwater creatures seem to fascinate most children. They are also quite easy to work into a list of classroom activities. Here are several suggestions:

Geography

Start the manatee lesson plan by showing the children a map of the world. Then place an upper case letter "M" onto such areas as Florida, South America, Africa and the West Indies. You may also want to highlight the water bodies in those areas like the Congo and Amazon rivers. Let the children know that the animal that they will be learning about lives in those areas.

Science

Next, provide the children with a series of clues and let them try to guess the animal's name. For example, you could play audio clips of a manatee's vocalizations. You could also opt to hold up a head of romaine lettuce and display an upper case letter "M." When the children are finished guessing, show them a picture of a manatee. The Home Safe website has a series of manatee photos that you could use as visual aids.

Afterward, read the children Kathleen Martin-James' book "Gentle Manatees" and Francine Jacob's tome "Sam the Sea Cow." In my experience, reading both books aloud will help to familiarize the children with manatees.

When you are finished reading, discuss the manatee's physical attributes, behaviors and life cycle with the children. I'd also suggest helping the children test the temperature of tap water. Once they are done testing, you could talk about how water temperature plays a role in the animal's migration.

I should also mention that the Volusia County website contains a downloadable, free "Manatee Coloring Book" that you may find helpful when preparing your lecture. The book is geared towards older students. However, it contains a substantial amount of facts and an activity that is designed to demonstrate the creature's size.

Arts and Crafts

Later, give each student a copy of the "Coloring and Activity Book: Manatees" available through the Save the Manatee website. The booklet contains several items of value, including an age-appropriate diagram of a manatee's anatomy. Using it will help to bolster the children's understanding of what you mentioned during your talk. In addition, the same website features manatee audio files, stickers, bookmarks and a puppet template that you could use to jazz up other areas of your lesson plan.

Language Arts

Lastly, teach the children how to write the words "manatee", "sea", "cow", "calf" and "Florida." Once that's done, let them practice writing the upper and lower case letter "M." The Education website has an "M is for Manatee" tracer worksheet that you may find helpful in that regard.