

WILD at Schools: Eat Like a Bear

Wildlife and Heritage Service

This free, 45-60 minute program is for grades K-2 and is designed for a classroom and larger space or outdoor area. Optional habitat assessment of the schoolyard. This activity has been adapted from [Project WILD](#).

Learning Objectives

As a result of this program students will be able to:

- Identify black bears.
- Analyze the evidence of teeth shape and type to hypothesize likely diet.
- Understand food preferences and habitat requirements and how these change seasonally.
- Optional: Determine if an area such as the schoolyard provides a suitable habitat for bears.

Concepts to be covered:

K focus (NGSS): What habitat requirements do black bears have to survive?

1st grade focus (NGSS): Adaptations of black bears to find food and to survive the winter.

2nd grade focus (NGSS): Role of black bears in seed dispersal of berries and cherries.

Curriculum Standards & Science and Engineering Practices Addressed

Grade	Standard	Detail	Program Element
K	K.MD.B.3 K-LS1-1 K-ESS3-1	Classify objects into categories; count the number in each category and sort the categories by count. Use observations to describe patterns of what animals need to survive. Use a model to represent relationships in the natural world.	Food collection and sorting activity students count and categorize food. Students consider the habitat requirements of black bears Students model how food collection changes through seasons.
1st	1-LS1.A MP.4	Different animals use their body parts in different ways to see, hear, grasp objects, protect themselves, move from place to place, and seek, find, and take in food, water and air. Model with mathematics.	Adaptation of bears such as sense of smell, and teeth to find and eat food. Food collection activity.
2nd	LS2.A MP.4	Plants depend on animals to move their seeds around. Model with mathematics	Students learn about the role of black bears in seed dispersal. Food collection activity.
Engineering and Science Practices		Use a model that represents a concrete event Conduct simple investigation to describe relationships in the natural world to answer scientific questions.	Students model food collection by bears in different seasons. Optional activity: Students investigate the habitat in their school yard to answer the question of whether a bear could live there.

Program Summary

1. Introduction to the different components of habitat: food, water, shelter and space so students can decide where black bears live.
2. Students look at a bear skull and compare the teeth to theirs as well as an herbivore and carnivore (1st and 2nd grade) to draw conclusions about a bear's diet.
3. Students examine additional adaptations bears use to find food.
4. Students model bears finding food in spring and fall by collecting food cards and looking at the different plants and animals they eat.
5. Introduction to human-bear conflicts. Grade 1-2 students suggest ways we can avoid these problems.
6. Students examine how bears increase the amount of food they eat in fall to prepare for winter when they hibernate.
7. *Optional*: exploration of schoolyard to search for the different habitat components a bear would require.

Key Program Vocabulary

Adaptation: a change or the process of change by which a species becomes better suited to its environment.

Camouflage: an animal's natural coloring or form that enables it to blend in with its surroundings.

Canine tooth: a pointed tooth between the incisors and premolars of a mammal, often greatly enlarged in carnivores.

Carnivore: an animal that feeds on other animals.

Habitat: the natural home of an animal/plant made up of 4 elements: food, water, shelter or cover and space.

Herbivore: an animal that feeds on plants.

Hibernation: spending the winter in a dormant state.

Incisors: a narrow-edged tooth at the front of the mouth, adapted for cutting.

Molars: a grinding tooth at the back of a mammal's mouth.

Metabolism: physical and mechanical processes occurring to sustain life.

Omnivore: animals that eat food of both plant and animal origin.

Seed Dispersal: the movement or transport of seeds away from the parent plant.



Larry Hogan, *Governor*; Mark Belton, *Secretary*
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