

Wolves in the News



Objective

The student will identify, analyze, and summarize wolf natural history and conservation issues in the news by visiting a variety of websites, summarizing and reviewing the article, and presenting the information to the class.

Materials

Per class:

- Internet and library access
- colored push pins
- large world map

Per student or student pair:

- one copy of Presentation Points Card

Background

Gray wolves once ranged throughout the continents of the Northern Hemisphere. Today the species only occupies about two thirds of its former range and many populations have plummeted or disappeared due to habitat destruction and overhunting by humans. The conservation challenges that wolves currently face are at the forefront of many environmental news stories as efforts to replenish or reintroduce wolves to certain regions clash with the views that wolves threaten valuable livestock.

Action

1. Have each student (or student pair) find, summarize, and review an article relating to wolves from a newspaper, magazine, or news website. Students should also research further background information about the topic of the article in addition to researching natural history information on wolves in that region. (Some excellent websites for additional information include Defenders of Wildlife, National Wildlife Federation, and World Wildlife Fund.) Students will then present their research and review to the class during a mock News Conference.
2. Instruct students to research and write down the following information from their news article and research. They will use this as a guide for a 3 to 5 minute presentation to the class.
 - Geographic area the article pertains to
 - Title and Subject of the article
 - Summary of article
 - Article review
 - Wolf genus and subspecies (scientific name) targeted in the article
 - Wolf population's range and habitat
 - Wolves' diet in that region
 - Five facts describing the animal's behaviors, adaptations, threats, population status, and conservation actions to protect wolves in that region.
3. Mock News Conference—Instruct students to move their desks/tables into a circle or U-shaped configuration. Next, the students should create a name plate for themselves stating their name and the wolf subject of the article. Instruct students to place their name plates facing the interior of the circle or U-shape. Lastly, hang or place a large world map on the classroom bulletin board or a separate cork board.
4. Going around the circle or U-shape, instruct each student/student pair to begin their 3 to 5 minute presentation by identifying the geographic area their article pertains to by placing a colored push pin into the corresponding area on the World Map. The student/student pair will present their review and research. End the Mock News Conference by discussing what the most common conservation issues are for wolves.