

Bear Reports



Grade Level: 1–6

Standards:

Minnesota Academic Standards in ELA: (Common Core Reading Standards for Informational Text K-5)

- 1.2.2.2 – 5.2.2.2 – Key Ideas and Details
- 1.2.4.4 – 5.2.4.4 – Craft and Structure
- 1.2.7.7 – 5.2.7.7 – Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
- 1.2.10.10 – 5.2.10.10- Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

Writing Benchmarks K-5 (Common Core Writing Standards K-5, 6-12)

- 1.6.2.2 – 5.6.2.2, 6.7.2.2, 1.6.3.3 – 5.6.3.3, 6.7.3.3 – Text Types and Purposes
- 3.6.4.4 – 5.6.4.4, 6.7.4.4, 3.6.5.5 – 5.6.5.5, 6.7.5.5, 3.6.6.6 – 5.6.6.6, 6.7.6.6 – Production and Distribution of Writing
- 3.6.7.7 – 5.6.7.7, 6.7.7.7, 3.6.8.8 – 5.6.8.8, 6.7.8.8 – Research to Build and Present Knowledge
- 3.6.10.10 – 5.6.10.10, 6.7.10.10 – Range of Writing

Minnesota Academic Standards in Science Codes

- 1.4.1.1.1, 3.4.1.1.2, 5.4.1.1.1 – Living things are diverse with many different observable characteristics that enable them to grow, reproduce and survive
- 1.4.2.1.1, 1.4.2.1.2 – Natural systems have many components that interact to maintain the living system
- 3.1.1.2.1, 3.1.1.2.2, 3.1.1.2.3, 3.1.1.2.4 – Scientific inquiry is a set of interrelated process incorporating multiple approaches that are used to pose questions about the natural world and investigate phenomena

Link Resources:

www.bear.org

www.bearstudy.org

Black Bear Basics:

http://www.bear.org/website/images/stories/Documents/Black_Bear_Basics.pdf

Best Bear Books:

<http://www.bear.org/website/bear-pages/best-bear-books.html>

ABCs of Black Bears – book versions:

http://www.bear.org/website/images/stories/education-outreach/resources/ABCs_100dpi.pdf (low res)

http://www.bear.org/website/images/stories/education-outreach/resources/ABCs_300dpi.pdf

Goal:

Students learn scientific facts about bears and share factual information in report form.

Curriculum Focus:

Science, Written Language, Technology Skills

Lesson:

Step 1 - Research

Read “The ABCs of Black Bears” as a class read-aloud. Use the PowerPoint version included in the Black Bear Box or download the PDF file book version from the resource link above. You might schedule a few letters each day for a week or so to spread out the information. Allow time in computer lab, if possible, for students to explore the Black Bear Facts on the North American Bear Center website at www.bear.org to investigate links and additional information independently.

In the classroom, provide a ‘bear non-fiction book’ area (a milk crate can be used to hold books) so that students can research additional facts. A list of ‘Best Bear Books’ can be found above under Resources. If you wish to include fiction books in your bear unit, be sure to display those in a separate area as the students’ reports need to be factual.

Allow time for students to read bear books as partners, independently, or as read-aloud books depending on their age level and ability.

Step 2 - Take Notes

Introduce the Bear Facts Note Grid (form below). For younger students, fill in the various areas together as a class. For older students, allow time for them to find information for each area independently. At this point stress writing facts as phrases, not sentences. Older students should be able to find multiple facts for each area.

Step 3 - Create Poster Report (younger students)

Picture with a Sentence: Each student draws a color picture of a black bear or chooses a bear picture from www.bear.org, or www.bearstudy.org. The student (or an adult) writes a sentence telling an important fact below the picture.

Picture with a Paragraph: Each student draws a color picture of a black bear or chooses a bear picture from www.bear.org, or www.bearstudy.org. The student (or an adult) writes a paragraph telling at least 3 important facts below the picture.

Poster with Captions: Each student draws a large color picture of a black bear or chooses a bear picture from www.bear.org, or www.bearstudy.org. The student (or an adult) writes single facts on sentence strips or 3X5 index cards and attaches the facts to the poster. Another way to add facts would be to type the facts and print them out as strips or sections to be glued onto the poster in various areas.

My Bear Book: Teacher provides pages with simple bear drawings and handwriting lines underneath. Pages could be alike or could show cub, adult bear, bear climbing tree, bear in den, etc. Each student colors the bear picture on each page and writes one or more sentences underneath the picture. Pages are stapled to make the book with a construction paper cover.

Step 3 - Create Reports (older students)

3 Paragraph Report: Each student chooses several facts that fit together—for instance, what a bear eats goes with scat—to put into paragraphs. Students should be able to make 3 paragraphs from their notes. Paragraphs can be written one per day or all at once depending on the age/grade level of the students.

With a partner, paragraphs are revised (changed to make better) and edited (errors fixed). Be sure to have them check for scientific errors, too.

New ‘perfect copies’ of the paragraphs are written or typed. This can be displayed with a bear picture from www.bear.org, or www.bearstudy.org, or a drawing created by the student.

More able students or older students might add more facts in additional paragraphs. They might also add introductory sentences and concluding sentences.

Black Bear Books: Each student writes or types their paragraphs on individual pages. Illustrations are placed on facing pages, and pages are stapled into booklet form. Use construction paper for front and back covers.

PowerPoint: This can be an individual project or a whole-class effort. Students create PowerPoint pages for each general area from the Bear Facts Note Grid and add their facts as bulleted points, slide-in phrases, or sentences. They can add clip art to illustrate the pages. Sound and animation are great additions if your school has that ability—bear noises on the communications page, a bear climbing a tree on an animated page. Students can be recorded reading the text aloud on some computers. PowerPoints are popular displays for Parent Night, Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences, or Data Days as they can be set up to run continuously.

Time Line: Each student uses a blank timeline form and adds details to show the life cycle of a black bear from birth to mature adult. Details could be written on index cards and glued on the timeline, or typed, printed, cut, and glued onto the timeline. Illustrations can be drawn to go with each life stage - cub, first summer, yearling, on their own, young adult (mating age), mother or father bear. Illustrations could be below the timeline with factual details above the timeline. Yarn makes a nice texture to connect the details and illustrations to the timeline.

This could also be done as a whole-class project by assigning groups of students to each life stage and putting the class work together to create a single timeline for display.

Step 4 - Sharing and Evaluating

Display: Post student work in an area where others can access it, such as the hallway outside your classroom or on the wall near the lunchroom or front entry way, etc. Ask at the mall, bank, local museum, etc. - many places are willing to display student work.

Authors: In the classroom, set up a row of “author chairs” near the rug or gathering area. A few students at a time sit in the author chairs and read their reports aloud. If reports are short, you may be able to do this in one time period. For longer work, have a group of authors share each day. My students love “authors” and especially like it when I also create the assignment and sit in the author chair to share (good chance to be a role model).

Road Trip: Ask another teacher for a time when your class can come to their room and share their bear reports. They could do this partnered (one student from each class in a pair), in small groups, or as whole group. If you have a large class, you might want to send small groups to different classes to share to limit the time needed for sharing. My class buddies with a kindergarten class and we both enjoy sharing work we’ve created.


Another option for sharing would be to arrange to visit a nearby nursing home. Practice ahead of time with students and let them visit residents and share their reports. Students might be most comfortable with two students to one resident.

Rubric: Before assigning the reports, decide which areas you are targeting for student mastery. Create a rubric for the skills in target areas, and share the rubric with students before they write their reports. Use the rubric to evaluate the finished work (sample rubric below).

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Bear Facts Note Grid

Body Characteristics	Habitat	Food
Enemies and Protection	 By:	Communication
Raising Young	Other Interesting Facts	Sources

Name _____ Date _____ Average score _____

Bear Report Rubric

4 gives many and interesting factual details about bears	3 gives some factual details about bears	2 has few factual details about bears, may have one factual error	1 has errors in facts or uses opinions instead of facts
4 uses mostly scientific terms and higher level vocabulary, many details	3 uses some scientific terms and higher level vocabulary, some details	2 uses common words of boring words, may repeat adjectives, few details	1 some words may be incorrect or uses the same word many times, no details
4 completed report or project and added additional information or ideas	3 completed all required sections of report or project	2 attempted to complete report or project, but some parts may not be correctly finished	1 incomplete report or project, shows minimal effort
4 required sources correctly stated and additional sources used and stated	3 required source correctly stated	2 some sources stated, may not have used required types of number of sources	1 sources not stated or incorrectly stated or only one source used
4 has few or no errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, neatly written or typed	3 mostly correct in spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, neatly written	2 some errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, readable, parts may be confusing	1 frequent errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, messy presentation, confusing