

Lesson Plan

Prairie Dog Jeopardy

Book: *We Need Prairie Dogs*

Series: The Animal Files

Level: Navigator

Objective

To help students practice topic-specific terms related to animal habitats and preservation.

Supplies

- *We Need Prairie Dogs* book
- Whiteboard or projector
- Timer

Before the Activity

Read *We Need Prairie Dogs* out loud to students, or assign it to students to read on their own.

Draw or project a Jeopardy-style chart at the front of the class, like this:

Life as a Prairie Dog	Homes and Habitats	Threats and Progress	Effect on the Environment
100	100	100	100
200	200	200	200
300	300	300	300
400	400	400	400

Activity

Divide students into three teams, and play a game of Jeopardy to review the terms and concepts from *We Need Prairie Dogs*. On each team's turn, students can choose a category and a number. You will read a clue out loud. Each clue will describe a word related prairie dog habitats or conservation. Each answer is just one word long. For example, if the clue said, "To change over time to deal with a certain situation," the answer would be "adapt."

After you read the clue, students have 45 seconds to decide on their answer. If they get the correct answer before the time runs out, give the team the number of points in the box they chose. Then the next team gets to choose a clue. Higher numbers are worth more points, but the clues will be more difficult. Continue until students have answered all the questions listed below:

Life as a Prairie Dog

100: The name for baby prairie dogs. (Answer: pups)

200: The name for a group of animals that live together. (Answer: colony)

300: The name for a small group of prairie dogs containing one male, a few females, and their pups. (Answer: coterie)

400: The name for mammals, such as prairie dogs, squirrels, and chipmunks, with large front teeth. (Answer: rodents)

Homes and Habitats

100: An underground home made of tunnels and chambers. (Answer: burrow)

200: Piles that prairie dogs build near the entrance to their burrows. (Answer: mounds)

300: The collection of living things in a natural area. (Answer: ecosystem)

400: Large, flat areas with few or no trees. (Answer: grasslands)

Threats and Progress

100: A word for animals that hunt other animals for food. (Answer: predators)

200: A word for species that are in danger of dying out. (Answer: endangered)

300: A word for moving a prairie dog to a new location. (Answer: relocation)

400: A word for people who work to manage the number of prairie dogs. (Answer: conservationists)

Effect on the Environment

100: Prairie dog waste helps do this to the ground. (Answer: fertilize)

200: Plants above prairie dog colonies have more of these. (Answer: nutrients)

300: Prairie dogs help keep plants such as this under control. (Answer: mesquite)

400: By controlling plant growth, prairie dogs help prevent this. (Answer: erosion)

Evaluation

The team with the most points at the end wins.

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' reading standards for informational texts, grade 4 (RI 4.4) and language standards, grade 4 (L 4.6).