

Lesson Plan

Life Cycles

Book: Bald Eagles

Series: Animals of North America

Level: Beacon

Objective

To help students learn to describe the steps in a process, to examine how illustrations and captions add to a reader's understanding of a process, and to create illustrations and captions of their own.

Supplies

- *Bald Eagles*
- Sheet of paper for each student
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Before the Activity

Read through the *Bald Eagles* book, or assign it to the students to read on their own.

Activity

Ask each student to turn to the Bald Eagle Life Cycle diagram (p. 24) or use a projector to show the diagram to the class. Point out the following elements to the students:

- Each step in the life cycle has a picture.
- Each step has a short description.
- Each step has an arrow that points to the next step.
- Each step (except the last one) has a circle around the image.

Give each student a sheet of paper and ask them to create their own life cycle diagram. Their diagram should have eight steps instead of just four. It should include the following phases of an eagle's life cycle:

1. The parents make a nest.
2. The females lay eggs.
3. The parents sit on the eggs.
4. The chicks hatch.
5. The chicks grow flight feathers.
6. The chicks are strong enough to fly.
7. The chicks leave the nest.
8. The chicks get white feathers on their heads and tails.

The students should also write one or two short sentences describing each step. They should explain any changes in the eagle's behavior or appearance (such as feathers changing color), giving a specific date (such as "after three weeks") if possible. Students can look for information about each of these steps in Chapter 4 ("Bald Eagle Families") of *Bald Eagles*.

Each step should also include a picture. The picture should show any important changes to the eagle's behavior or appearance. Next to each picture, the students should draw an arrow pointing to the next step in the eagle's life cycle.

Evaluation

Give the students 3 points for each step: 1 for putting the step in the correct order, 1 for including a relevant picture, and 1 for writing an accurate description.

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' standards for reading informational texts, grade 3 (RI 3.3; 3.7), and the National Science Education Standards' Content Standard C, grades K–4.