

Where Do They Live?

Title	Genre	Summary	Aspects of theme explored
Lake Living	Explanation	To keep themselves safe from wolves and wildcats, beavers build a home, called a lodge, in the middle of a lake.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> how beavers live building animal homes animals working together
The Owlets Fly	Narrative	Catrina and Damon discover some eggs in their grandad's attic. Four weeks later, five barn owlets are born. What will happen if Grandad discovers the owlets?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> animals that live in human environments protecting animals
Making a Mouse House	Procedure	Pet mice are friendly and easy to look after if you know how. To keep pet mice in your classroom, you'll need to make a safe home for them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> caring for pets animals that live in human environments what animals need to survive
Turtle's Pond	Traditional story	Turtle loves his home in the pond. But one day, he discovers that Beaver has taken over his home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> different animals living in one place competition for housing
Barn Swallows	Poem	A poem about some barn swallows building a nest and feeding their babies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> finding safe places for homes taking care of baby animals bringing food into the home
Animal Homes	Graphic report	This report uses labelled illustrations to show different kinds of animal homes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> underground homes complex structures built by animals animal communities

Suggestions for using Where Do They Live?

Guided reading

See the following lesson plans.

Theme studies

This book could be used as part of a theme study on animals. Different groups of students could look at particular animals and where and how they live.

- Introduce the theme and look at the contents page with the students. Discuss the range of genres.
Ask the students to read the item summaries and discuss the way each piece relates to the main theme. The students could choose one of the items to begin the theme study.
- Use the whole book or items from it in your content-area teaching.
- Use the narrative 'The Owlets Fly' to encourage the students to discuss their experiences of finding animals in human environments.
- Use the Find Out More section as a springboard for further independent research.

Text comparisons

Comparing the poem 'Barn Swallows' with the explanation 'Lake Living' will allow the students to explore how animals live and provide for their young. They can compare the animal homes on land with those in the water and how parents gather food for their young.

Shared reading

'Barn Swallows' is suitable to enlarge for shared reading.

Independent reading

Where Do They Live? can be used for independent reading for pleasure or as an introduction to researching animals and how they live.

Lake Living

This explanation describes how beavers build their dams and homes.

Features of the text

- Explanation
- Introduction
- Fact file
- Procedure
- Headings and subheadings

Purpose

'Lake Living' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- making, confirming and revising predictions;
- determining the author's purpose;
- identifying the sequence of steps for a task;
- restating information from the text;
- making personal connections with the text.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- What do you know about beavers?
- What are some interesting ways to begin a non-fiction piece of writing?
- Why has the author used subheadings? How does this help you to read and understand the text?

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- Read the introduction. Why do you think the author has begun with questions?
- Read to the end of page five. What does this tell you about beavers?
- Read to the end of the story. Do beavers really have air conditioning? Why did the author use these words?

Following up

The students can:

- compare and contrast how beavers and humans construct their homes
- prepare a flow diagram showing how to build a dam or a lodge
- find out more information about beavers and write a fact file, using the fact file in the text as a model
- write a list of adjectives and adverbs that describe beavers.

The Owlets Fly

Some barn owls make a nest in Grandad's attic, but he considers them a pest and decides that they have to go.

Features of the text

- Narrative
- Descriptive language
- Plot, characters, setting, theme
- Factual information

Purpose

'The Owlets Fly' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- using prior knowledge;
- identifying points of view;
- making inferences;
- making personal connections with the text.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- How do birds take care of their chicks?
- Why do you think birds use attics and lofts to raise their chicks?
- Do you think that it's sometimes OK to keep secrets? Why?

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- Read the first four pages. What clues in the text tell you that Grandad and the children have different views on the birds?
- Read to the top of page thirteen. What would you do next if you were Catrina or Damon?
- Read to the end of the story. Why do you think Grandad and the children had different viewpoints?

Following up

The students can:

- write a letter to the parents as Grandad or one of the children, explaining their viewpoint on the owls
- write an explanation of how an owl looks after its young
- research owls and construct a flow diagram of their life cycle.

Making a Mouse House

This text outlines the procedure for making a comfortable house for a mouse.

Features of the text

- Procedure
- Descriptive language
- Photographs with captions
- Activity

Purpose

'Making a Mouse House' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- identifying the features of a text;
- making inferences;
- following instructions;
- using the text as a model for writing.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- Why would people want to keep mice as pets?
- What do you think you would need to make a mouse house?
- What kind of home do you think a mouse needs? How would this affect the kind of home you make for it?

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- Read the introduction. What is its purpose?
- Read the first set of instructions. Which words describe where a mouse likes to sleep during the day? How do you know which kind of water bottle to buy?
- How does the author help you understand how to make the house?
- Why is the last section called Home Improvement?

Following up

The students can:

- reread the procedure and list the adjectives used
- write their own procedure using descriptive and precise language
- follow the steps to make the adventure tunnel
- design a home for another animal using this procedure as a model.

Turtle's Pond

Beaver takes over Turtle's pond, so they have a race to decide who can stay and who has to move.

Features of the text

- Traditional story
- Animals that speak
- Plot, characters, setting, theme
- Conflict and resolution

Purpose

'Turtle's Pond' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- identifying the features of a traditional tale;
- using prior knowledge;
- identifying character traits;
- locating information in a text.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- In what kinds of stories do you usually find animals talking?
- How do you usually settle an argument?
- What animals do you think of as clever? Why do you think this?

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- Read the first two pages. What do you think the problem of the story is going to be?
- Read the next two pages. Why do you think Turtle is smiling to himself? Use your prior knowledge of traditional stories to help you answer this question.
- What are some of the character traits of Turtle and Beaver?

Following up

The students can:

- reread the story in pairs
- research the homes of turtles and beavers and compare them on a chart
- choose other animals and identify their character traits, then write a story using this tale as a model.

Barn Swallows

In this poem, barn swallows return every year to a barn to raise their young.

Features of the text

- Poem
- Rhyme and metre
- Descriptive language

Purpose

'Barn Swallows' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- using prior knowledge;
- reading aloud with expression;
- identifying the features of a poem;
- exploring the use of descriptive language.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- What words would you use to describe the flight of a bird?
- What do you think a barn swallow is?
- Where do birds like to make their homes? Why?

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- Read the first verse of the poem. Why would the barn swallows arrive in spring?
- Read the next two verses. Read aloud some of the words that describe the birds. What do you see or think about when you read these words?
- What do you notice about the pattern of the rhyme in this poem?

Following up

The students can:

- practise rereading the poem in pairs, developing fluency and expression
- list the adjectives used to describe the swallows' flight, actions and sounds
- choose another animal and write adjectives to describe its movement

Animal Homes

This report uses labelled illustrations to show how a bird's nest, termite tower, wasp's nest and spider's burrow are constructed.

Features of the text

- Introduction
- Report
- Labelled illustrations with enlargements
- Headings and subheadings

Purpose

'Animal Homes' can be used to introduce and reinforce the following skills:

- reading and interpreting graphic information;
- discussing the features of reports;
- comparing and contrasting information;
- using the text as a model for writing.

Introducing the text

Select one or more of these discussion starters:

- What do you know about reports?
- What animal homes do you know about?
- What do you think a home for an animal needs?

Reading and discussing the text

Use some of the following suggestions to guide the students through the text:

- Read to the end of page twenty-nine. What are the similarities between a bird's nest and a termite tower? What are the differences?
- Read page thirty. How does the diagram help you understand more about a wasp's nest?
- Read to the end of the report. What are some of the ways in which the trapdoor spider makes its home safe?

Following up

The students can:

- draw and label a diagram of another animal home
- describe the building of an animal home from the point of view of the animal
- make models of animal homes from natural materials or papier mâché.