

COMPANION LEARNING GUIDE

NARRATED BY LIAM NEESON

# RUNNING WILD

RETURN TO THE RIVER



***GROWING UP & GOING PLACES***

FORMAL EDUCATION GUIDE:  
2ND – 5TH GRADE



# RUNNING WILD

RETURN TO THE RIVER

## Key Concepts

- Many animals use the power of camouflage in order to help them survive. While some animals use camouflage as a way to ambush prey, others use it to avoid being detected by predators. All types of camouflage are used by an animal to help it survive!
- There are many different types of camouflage in the animal kingdom. Two examples of this are disruptive coloration and background matching. While an animal in camouflage may still be visible when you look very closely, they might be easy to overlook at first glance!
- When we examine different habitats, we find that each one is home to a unique and special community of plants and animals.
- High biodiversity describes a habitat with many different kinds of plants and animals. High biodiversity is important because it makes habitats strong, healthy, and balanced.

### 2-LS4-1 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity

Make observations of plants and animals to compare the diversity of life in different habitats. approaches to an art or design problem.

### National Art Standards VA:Cr1.1.2a

Brainstorm collaboratively multiple approaches to an art or design problem.

## Vocabulary

**Background Matching** – a type of camouflage where the color of an animal's body makes it hard to detect, because it matches and blends-in with the color of its environment.

**Biodiversity** – the variety of life in a habitat or ecosystem.

**Camouflage** – a tactic some animals use to hide or disguise their bodies, often blending-in with their surroundings.

**Disruptive Coloration** – a type of camouflage where the patterns on an animal's body make it hard to detect, because its shape and outline becomes blurred together with the natural patterns of its environment.

**Habitat** – a home for a plant or animal.



# RUNNING WILD

## RETURN TO THE RIVER

## Procedure

### Concept: Growing Up & Going Places

I am going to begin by asking you a few questions. Remember, you need to raise your hand if you think you know the answer!

- When you were smaller, did you go to preschool or kindergarten? Nod your head “yes” if you did, or shake your head “no” if you did not!
- Are you still in kindergarten today? How was your life at school as a kindergarten student different from your life now? Raise your hand to share!

- **Answer:** “That’s right! Your kindergarten class might have been in a different classroom or at another school. The field trips you took in kindergarten might be different from the field trip that you are going to go on next. The books you read in kindergarten were different from the books you read now, and so were the games you liked to play. And the shoes that you wore back then were smaller, because your feet were way, way tinier in kindergarten!”

- Now, as we grow up, we visit different kinds of places based on our age. The places that we visit and spend our time as babies are different from the places we visit when we are elementary school students. And, the places that we are visiting and spending our time right now in this class will be different from the places we visit when we’re grandmas and grandpas.
- Can you think of a place that you like to hang out right now that maybe a grandma or grandpa wouldn’t find so fun? Raise your hand to share!
  - **Answer:** “Great answers! Everyone is different, but some grandmas and grandpas might not find some of those places very fun anymore.”
- Just like we visit different places at different times in our lives, there are many animals that visit and live in different habitats depending on their stage of life.
  - So, what is a “habitat?”
  - **Answer:** A home for a plant or animal.

## Materials

### ACTIVITY 1:

- White Cardstock or Watercolor Paper
- Colored Pencils
- Crayons
- Scissors
- Glue Sticks
- (Optional) Watercolors or Washable Tempura Paint
- (Optional) Paint Brushes & Small Cups of Water

### ACTIVITY 2:

- Printed “Unity & Diversity - In It Together!” cards

### REVIEW:

- Printed “Running Wild: Return to the Review” worksheets
- Colored Pencils

## Setup

### ACTIVITY 1:

- Pre-assign student small groups
- Collect enough cardstock or watercolor paper to give at least two sheets to each student.
- Collect enough scissors and glue sticks for each student, or each student group.
- Collect enough crayons, color pencils, or watercolors for each student to have their own set.
- If possible, allot 5-15 minutes during which students can spend time outside in the grass to notice and enjoy nature.
- Print the “Running Wild: Return to the River Review” worksheets, and set out colored pencils.



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• In a moment, I'm going to name just a few animals. If you think you know the name of that animal's home, or habitat, please raise your hand to share!

- Polar Bear
- Jellyfish
- Crocodile
- Spider
- Panda
- Moose
- Raccoon

• Awesome job! Now, many of the animals that I just named stay in the same habitat for all or most of their lives. A few of the animals that live in different habitats as they grow include:

- Monarch butterflies, who migrate from the northern United States down to California and Mexico for warmth during the winter.
- Frogs, who start out as larva and tadpoles that can only survive in the water, but later spend a lot of time on land.

Salmon, who spend some stages of their life in freshwater, some stages in coastal estuaries, and some stages in the ocean.

These animals who visit different habitats at different points in their lives can be thought of as travellers. During their travels, do you think they will find some differences between each habitat that they visit?

## 4th & 5th Grade Only:

What kinds of differences might they find? Raise your hand to share!

- **Hint:** Think about the factors that affect an animal's survival.
- **Answer:** Food, shelter, weather, human presence, new predators and dangers, new plants and animals, and more!
- Exactly! Each habitat is unique, and so are the plants and animals who live there. Sometimes they work together in similar ways to keep their communities growing and healthy, and yet, they are often so different!





# RUNNING WILD

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### *Activity: Unity & Diversity - In it Together!*

It's time for an animal activity! In just a moment, we are going to begin an activity that will help us to learn more about different animals and the special habitats where they live. But first, I'd like a few people to help remind me what "habitat" means. Raise your hand to share!

- Great answers! A plant or animal's "habitat" is its home - the environment where it lives.
- We already know that some animals, like monarch butterflies, frogs, and salmon, live in different habitats at different stages of their lives. These habitats are each unique and different. The "travelling" animals that visit them discover that each habitat has different kinds of food, shelter, and new plants and animals in their communities!

Now, when a habitat has many different kinds of animals living there, that habitat or community is said to have "high biodiversity."

- So, what is "biodiversity?" Raise your hand to share!
  - **Answer:** Biodiversity is the variety of life - the different kinds of animals! - in a habitat or ecosystem.
  - It is very important for a habitat to have high biodiversity. High biodiversity makes habitats strong, because each plant and animal has its own unique, and special job in the place that it lives. Having many different kinds of plants and animals means more good jobs getting done, which helps keep that habitat healthy and balanced!

In this activity, we are each going to be getting a plant or animal card. After we read our cards, we will start learning about the many different members that each help to build a habitat's community. If we are lucky, we might even discover that our habitats have high biodiversity, which helps us stay strong!

## 2nd & 3rd Grade Only:

- **Instructor Note:** Group the plant and animal cards into three stacks based on the type of habitat printed on the front. You should have one freshwater stack, one coastal estuary stack, and one ocean stack.
- **Instructor Note:** Split the students into three groups, giving each group their own spot in the classroom.
- In just a moment, I am going to hand you a plant or animal card. Once you get your card, hold onto it with the picture side up, stay quiet, and put your finger on your nose to show me that you are ready!
- **Instructor Note:** Assign each group a habitat (freshwater, coastal estuary, or ocean), and pass out one card to each student from their group's corresponding stack.

## 4th & 5th Grade Only:

- In just a moment, I am going to hand you a plant or animal card. Before reading the information on the back, we are going to split up into habitat groups. When you get your card, take a look at the front side with the picture. Underneath the picture of your animal, read your habitat, join the other members of your community, and then wait quietly.
- **Instructor Note:** Assign one spot in your classroom for each of the three habitat groups. For example, freshwater by the whiteboard, coastal estuary by the door, and ocean at the back of the classroom.
- Once you get your card, hold onto it with the picture side up, move to your habitat group spot, stay quiet, and put your finger on your nose to show me that you are ready!
- **Instructor Note:** Pass out one plant or animal card to each student, and ask them to get into their habitat groups.

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Thank you for showing me that you are ready! For our next step - *but don't do anything just yet!* - you are going to read the list of facts about your plant or animal on the back of your card. Then, you will discuss with your group members what your habitat is like, and how you help each other to create a strong and healthy community. Then, in a few minutes, you will get to share a little bit about you and the special place you call home. Ready, set, go!

• **Instructor Note:** Walk around to each group and offer guiding questions such as:

- “What job does your plant or animal do?”
- “What kinds of predators and prey do you have?”
- “What is the water like in your habitat? Fresh or salty? Shallow or deep?”

• **Instructor Note:** Allow the students to discuss for 2-5min, waiting for the conversations to naturally take their course. Then, call their attention back to you.

You can think of me, your teacher, as a beautiful salmon! Because salmon are “travelling” animals, I am lucky enough to visit three unique habitats throughout the course of my life - freshwater rivers and streams, coastal estuaries, and the ocean. As I embark on my travels, I would like you to share what makes your habitat special, and how the members of your community help to create a healthy place to live.

- **Instructor Note:** Call on a few members from each group to answer the following questions:
- What makes your habitat special and unique?
- How do the members of your community help to create a healthy habitat?
  - Great job! Did you notice how different each of these habitats were, and the differences between the plants and animals that live in each place?
- Now we are going to play a special bonus round, and this time our rules will be a little bit different. Last time, everyone you were talking to was a member of your own habitat group. This time, you will need to find someone from a different habitat that you share at least one similarity with. This can be any similarity, as long as it is true of that plant or animal. Once you find a partner, stand together and hold your cards in the air to show that you are ready to share!

- **Instructor Note:** Call on each pair to share their similarity. As each pair shares, send those two students back to their seats.
- Amazing work! Did you notice how many different plants and animals we had in each habitat today? As many plants and animals as we have students in our class, plus one salmon - me!
- There are some incredible animals that travel to different habitats depending on their stage in life. Remind me one more time - What is a habitat? Raise your hand to share!
  - **Answer:** A habitat is a home for a plant or animal.

There are often big differences between the plants and animals that live in each habitat, and when there are many different kinds of animals in a habitat, that place is said to have high biodiversity. Having high biodiversity is important because it keeps a habitat strong, healthy, and balanced.

**Fun Fact:** *We are all important members of our own habitats - in fact, we are standing in one of our habitats right now! When we go outside, we might see birds, bugs, plants, fungi, and other members of this community all around us. What important jobs can we do to help keep our habitats healthy and strong?*

## “Run Wild” Time

Move the class to an outdoor area for just 5-15 minutes, ideally away from the school playground. Invite them to notice and feel curious about nature a little extra after their time watching “Running Wild.” Encourage them to touch the dirt, grass, twigs, and leaves; feel the warm/cool air on their skin; listen for birds, bugs, and the wind; smell the plants around them; and try to spot insects.

Name:

Date:

# RUNNING WILD: GROWING UP & GOING PLACES

Every animal lives in a habitat.

A habitat is...

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During our activity, I pretended to be an animal.

My animal was:

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A drawing of my animal in its habitat:

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A MISSION PARTNERS ENTERTAINMENT GROUP AND DORSEY PICTURES FILM PRESENTED BY THE MAX MCGRAW WILDLIFE FOUNDATION AND ULINE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WILD SALMON CENTER AND TIMASHEV FOUNDATION  
MUSIC BY ALEX HEFFES DIRECTORS OF PHOTOGRAPHY ANDY MASER TAVISH CAMPBELL EDITED BY JAMES TAGGART SUPERVISING PRODUCER DI ROBERTS EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CHRIS DORSEY CHARLES S. POTTER JR.  
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[www.runningwild.org](http://www.runningwild.org)

