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# 'MY LITTLE BOOKS'

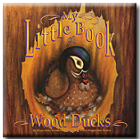
## 6 WEEK UNIT

### GRADES 4-6

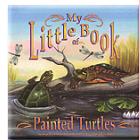
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BY: LANA READ

Unit includes:



My Little Book of Wood Ducks  
By: Hope Irvin Marston



Little Book of Painted Turtles  
By: Hope Irvin Marston



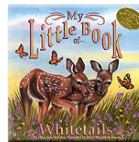
My Little Book of Timber Wolves  
By: Hope Irvin Marston



My Little Book of Bald Eagles  
By: Hope Irvin Marston



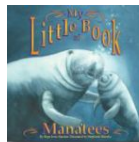
My Little Book of River Otters  
By: Hope Irvin Marston



My Little Book of Whitetails  
By: Hope Irvin Marston



My Little Book of Burrowing Owls  
By: Hope Irvin Marston



My Little Book of Manatees  
By: Hope Irvin Marston

## GENERAL OUTLINE

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Of the eight books, six will be shared by the entire class, and two will be kept at a learning center as additional work for students who finish their initial work early. (The extras here will be *Whitetails* and *Manatees*). The focus will be on one book each week, and the same general outline will apply to all of them, so there is a consistent pattern that the children will settle in to over the six weeks. The teacher will introduce each book to the class and read it aloud, emphasizing new vocabulary and pronunciation of intended expression suggested by the author's word art and descriptors.

Class discussion will follow with a review of new vocabulary, a clarification of puzzling parts, and the sharing of students' personal experiences with the animal. This may also include small group work, or words given by the teacher to go into the student's word book.

A projection-assisted guided reading will follow where any students who feels comfortable doing so may read along with the teacher. Otherwise, students are to follow along and match visual cues with the verbal cues given by the teacher. After the guided reading, learning centers will begin. While they are in progress, the teacher will work with individuals or a small group of children who need more support with the book via guided reading.

Learning centers will end in time for a "debriefing" where student work completed in the centers can be shared as a demonstration of expectations and a means of clarification for other students who have not yet begun that center.

Lessons will be required to assist certain learning centers. After reading the first book, it would be beneficial to the children to discuss how expression is used when reading book, and how Hope Irvin Marston intends certain words to be read by using word art. Talk about the impact of powerful descriptors and how they help create a picture in your mind as you listen to a story. Instruct the students to close their eyes, listen to a particularly descriptive passage, and draw what they heard. Have students compare details of their drawings to emphasize the power of individual interpretation.

Devote a lesson to **the homonym/homograph/homophone center**. Introduce these terms, one at a time, every two weeks. Give students clear examples (**not** found in any of the books) in their word books to provide support at the learning center. Give these examples and definitions orally and/or written on the board so the students can listen and record them.

**W**hen the three lessons have been completed, have the students fold an 8 ½ by 11 piece of paper into three equal columns and label them accordingly. The teacher will orally provide a pairing of words (examples from the books), and use each in a sentence. The students will determine whether the words are homonyms, homographs, or homophones as a group effort and write the correct spelling of the words in the right column. The teacher will provide correct answers when needed so each student has a clear definition of each term and can give examples of each. This exercise gives students their own copies of examples for clarification for future reference, as well as practice dictation, listening and writing skills.

**T**he **pyramid food chain** should be created as a class activity and posted in the classroom as a reference for the accompanying learning center. The class should determine what is involved in creating an hierarchical chain, as well as brainstorm relevant questions that need to be asked to produce an accurate final product. (Examples: Is the food source shared with another species? Is the species flexible or does it need a specific diet? How can the species adapt to change?)

## LEARNING CENTERS

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**1** Have students search book(s) for powerful descriptors. Identify five descriptive words, determine if they are adjectives or verbs, and define them in their word book. Create a word web for each word and use the branches to brainstorm what each word suggests to them. The teacher will provide an example to get the students started, emphasizing there is no right or wrong word. Students should write the first words that come to mind. Finally, students write a paragraph relevant to the animal in the book read that day in which they include all of their descriptive words.



*Descriptor examples from the books: gangly; spindly; blanketed; glided; scooted; gnawed; pestered; flitted; scurried; tumbled; scrambled; bounded; nibble; feasted; whirred; spiralled; swooped; trudged; teetered; majestic.*

**2** This center will change every two weeks, equally sharing homonyms, homophones and homographs. The student must find at least two examples of homonyms, homophones, or homographs (depending on the week) and construct a paragraph relevant to the information obtained from the books so far. At the end of the paragraph the student provides a definition and proper spelling of the words used in that context. Students share/compare lists of words they've found. Each paragraph should include at least one example not found in the book.

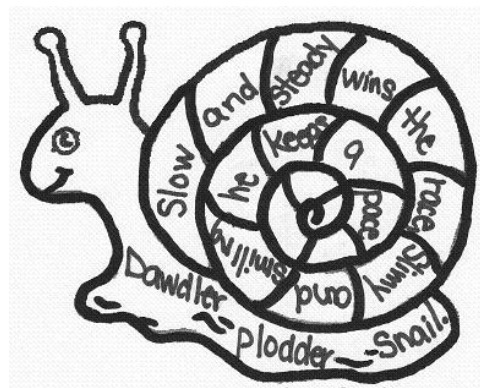
**Homonym examples from books:** down (feathers, direction); lie (untruth, lie down); coat (jacket, to layer); bill (monetary, beak); groom (wedding, clean); court (law, relationship); current (water, recent); bank (pile/heap, monetary); nurse (profession, feed); bark (tree, dog); leaves.

**Homophone examples from books:** led/lead/lead; two/to/too; for/four/fore; wood/would; new/knew; threw/through; hole/whole; flew/flu; meat/meet; sun/son; paws/pause; tails/tales; ate/eight.

**Homograph examples from books:** bow (knot or incline); close (proximity or shut); tear (cry or rip apart); wind (breeze or twist around).

**3** Discuss descriptive verbs and adjectives as a means of intensifying writing skills. Students define the difference between verbs and adjectives. Then, in a paragraph or two, they identify (in their own words) how these powerful descriptors change the story. Students find examples of both verbs and adjectives in the book to help describe the changes they discuss. The paragraph(s) will need to be illustrated, and must also match the intent of the powerful descriptors.

**4** Students refer to their descriptors list and word webs. Choose an item (object or animal) that has been seen in one of the books read. Write a poem that includes at least five new powerful descriptors, and provides information about the object/animal that is used. An example will be available at the center to help demonstrate what the goal is. Students will need to write a sloppy copy of their poem, as well as illustrate, and provide a final copy.



**5** This center is a research area for habitats. Various books will be provided at this center for silent reading time to accumulate information. Students define *habitat* before answering questions pertaining to the animal they chose to research.

Temperature/weather restrictions, diet, dependency on other species and any other information found regarding the animal's habitat will be included in a one-page research report. Also, each student will need to have a specific example of a struggle that animal has had involving their habitat referenced from the media. (Examples: news articles of deer and hunting out of season, videos of manatees and boats, or protests of bald eagles being hunted for feathers).

**6** Students will create an animal sounds library! They may use the Internet to research the sounds that any of the animals in the books might make. They will then read the book currently being focused on, inserting their impressions of each animal as called for in the story. Following this they will discuss the impact of the added expression to the

overall tone of the story.

Next, the students will choose any one of the books read in the unit so far and practice reading the book, helping each other with pronunciation or meaning. The group will need to be able to discuss a few details about the animal, and practice the sounds expressed by the animals. Then, have the groups go into a younger classroom (K-3, also split into groups of five or six), talk to the younger children about the animal, and teach them the sounds. The older group will read the book to the younger group, who will be cued to make the noises of the animals in the book. The more confident reader(s) can read the story while the more timid readers will take on tasks such as cueing the younger students for sounds, or providing facts they have had time to determine.

**7** Students will reference the hierarchical pyramid food chain created as a class and determine which animals depend on each other, shared food sources, shared habitats and proximity dangers. Which animals can coexist without dangers, which cannot? Then working together the students create a large mural interconnecting all the animal's environments. Each group must demonstrate what interactions would occur, as well as how and why. Post all murals in the classroom and/or hallway.

**8** Write a letter to Hope Irvin Marston at [hopemar7@twncy.com](mailto:hopenmar7@twncy.com). Tell her three intriguing animal facts that you learned from her books, and what you learned about expressive writing. The letter should include some form of word art, as well as five powerful descriptors (from the book or not). Each student should also include their favourite book and why, as well as any dislikes encountered throughout the series.

**9** An Optional Center will be available *only* after all other centers and work are completed. The two extra books that were not read with the rest of the class will be provided here. The student will read the book, put any new descriptors or new words into their word books, and put together a presentation for the rest of the class. Students will be rewarded with artistic freedom regarding how they wish to present the book to the class. Students who have completed the previous activities may work in groups if they choose. A combination of learning center activities is acceptable. New ideas are welcome once they have been approved by the teacher.

***Accompanying activity to be completed during social studies time:***

**Habitat Diorama:** Each student chooses an animal from one of the books read in class and researches its habitat, including environmental and human related threats. Students search out such things as this: Does the animal build a new home, or scavenge an abandoned home? Once the student understands the animal, he/she creates a shoebox diorama of the habitat of that animal. Upon completion of the diorama, each student presents the diorama to the class, explaining different aspects of the habitat and important points of reference, including materials used by animal and specifications for safety. The class presentation must include media-based evidence of a difficulty that that animal struggles with.

Examples: The manatees and boats, or the deer and wolves “experiment” in Yellowstone Park.

~The teacher should stagger the presentations to constantly contrast air/water/land animals. Also, if it is possible to arrange these presentations to be given to parents or another class, that could be fun!! ~