

School-Age Fun

Pond Friends Unit










School-Age Fun Booklet

The experiences included in this booklet are designed for children in the KG to 3rd grade age group. These activities are not just fun, they are educational as well. Be sure to adapt and modify for your individual children as needed.

Below you will see a box that contains the developmental areas the experiences included in this booklet address and the associated picture codes. When you read the activity plans, just look for these codes. They will tell you what developmental areas you are addressing as you do each experience. This makes documentation super easy and enables you to make sure you are addressing all developmental areas for all developmental levels on a consistent basis. Please see our User's Guide for more information on the 10 developmental areas and the 40 Gee Whiz Learning Indicators.

Following this page, you will find hands-on experiences for your school-age/afterschool children. **Items in red may need a little more time to prep or gather.** We hope you find them super easy to follow and a lot of fun! Please, feel free to reach out to us at customerservice@geewhizeducation.com if you have any questions.

Gee Whiz Developmental Areas & Learning Indicators

	Language Development (LD1, LD2, LD3, LD4)
	Literacy Knowledge (LK1, LK2, LK3, LK4, LK5)
	Math Knowledge (MK1, MK2, MK3, MK4, MK5, MK6)
	Science Knowledge (SK1, SK2, SK3)
	Approaches to Learning (AL1, AL2, AL3)
	Logic & Reasoning (LR1, LR2)
	Social Studies Knowledge (SS1, SS2, SS3, SS4)
	and Creative Arts & Music (CA1, CA2, CA3, CA4)
	Social & Emotional Development (SE1, SE2, SE3, SE4)
	Physical Development & Health (PD1, PD2, PD3, PD4, PD5)



This symbol indicates the experience addresses character education.



This symbol indicates the experience helps children build gross motor skills.



This symbol indicates the experience can, or should, be done outdoors.



Pond Friends Unit

Focus: Exploring Pond Life

Get Moving!

What is Metamorphosis?

(Developmental Areas:        

Materials:

- ☐ Access to a computer or tablet
- ☐ White paper, stapler
- ☐ Crayons/markers/colored pencils/pencils

- While some school-age children may be familiar with the process of metamorphosis, others may not. Today, you will explore this amazing natural process with the children. They will then have the opportunity to act out the stages a frog goes through as it changes from an egg to a tadpole to a frog. Then, they will take what they learn and share their knowledge with others through writing and art as they create their own books about metamorphosis.
- Because some of the children may be familiar with the process of metamorphosis while others may not, start by sharing a short video with those children who show interest. Be sure to pause the video frequently to ask, and answer, questions. Here is one option you might want to show the children: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etGmCvIL014>.
- After watching the entire video, encourage the children to talk about what they learned. Then, invite them to act out the process of metamorphosis (egg to frog). Be sure to engage the children in conversations as they pretend and encourage them to ask more questions as well.
- Next, set out the white paper, stapler and writing/drawing tools listed above. Invite the children to stack several sheets of white paper together and then staple to create a book. The children can then create their own stories about metamorphosis by drawing and writing. Those who are not ready to write independently can dictate to you.
- **EXTENSION:** Once the children complete their books, have them "read" them to the other children in your group. This will provide them with an opportunity to practice oral presentation skills.

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What do you already know about metamorphosis? What would you like to learn?*
- *What stage of the metamorphosis of a frog is your favorite? Why do you like that part best?*
- *If you could go through metamorphosis, how would you change? Why did you pick those changes?*

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What do you know about kingfishers? What would you like to learn?*
- *What other birds do you think fish?*
- *If you were going fishing in our community, where would you go? Why did you make that choice?*

A Bird That Can Fish

(Developmental Areas:        

Materials:

- ☐ **Cardboard fish cutouts (make plenty...the children could help make these...see fish pattern on last page)**
- ☐ Access to a computer or tablet
- ☐ **Kitchen tongs (as many as you have)**
- One of the many unique animals that live near the pond is the kingfisher. This is more than likely a bird that is new to the children. The children will practice using the internet to gain information as part of this experience. This opens the door for you to discuss the importance of validating internet sources. A game then challenges the children to practice persistence and fine motor control as they pretend to be kingfishers.
- Sit near your computer or hold your tablet in your lap. As children become curious, pull up an image of a kingfisher. Do any of the children know the name of this unique bird? Encourage the children to describe the features of the kingfisher. Does it remind them of any other birds? Which ones and why?
- Next, use Google (or your favorite search engine) with the children to find out more information about kingfishers. The children can help type search terms in the search engine box. Then, when the search results appear, evaluate each of them to find those that are more valid (e.g., .org, .edu, .gov, etc.). Those children who are reading can help read the information they discover as they search.
- After learning about kingfishers, introduce the game, "Let's Go Fishing!" Scatter the cardboard fish on the floor and provide the children with kitchen tongs. The children can pretend that they are kingfishers and the tongs are their beaks. They can then attempt to "catch" fish with the tongs.
- **EXTENSION:** The children will probably enjoy this activity so be sure to offer it more than one time.

Pond Friends Unit

Focus: Fun at the Pond

Water Safety Review

(Developmental Areas:         )

Materials:

- ☐ **Paper towel rolls OR construction paper**
- ☐ **Child-safe binoculars (if available)**
- ☐ Tape
- ☐ String/yarn
- ☐ Large sheet of white paper + marker

- Today, you will spend time reinforcing a VERY important concept ... water safety. Each year, too many children drown because they venture into bodies of water (like ponds). The discussions you have today will help the children remember the safety rules they should remember when they are near ANY body of water. Then, they will create a prop they can use to safely water animal life that is near a pond or other body of water.
- What are water safety rules? Pose this question to interested school-age children and listen to what they have to say. These children should have a basic understanding of ways they can stay safe when near water. As the children share their ideas, write them down on a large sheet of white paper. Be sure to talk about letters, letter sounds, words and sentences in the process. Hopefully, the children will share some very basic water safety rules such as NEVER going near, or in, any body of water without an adult and NEVER drinking water from ponds, rivers, lakes or streams.
- Next, show the children the child-safe binoculars (if you have some) and talk about how a tool like this could help them observe plant and animal life around ponds, streams, lakes, etc. from a safe distance. Then, provide the materials listed above and invite each child to make his/her own pair of binoculars. As the children create, be sure to talk with them about where they plan to use their binoculars when they are complete.
- **EXTENSION:** Be sure to take time to reinforce water safety rules with the children frequently.

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *What are water safety rules?*
- *Why are water safety rules important?*
- *What water safety rules do you follow when you are near water?*
- *How do you plan to use your binoculars?*

Questions to Spur Thinking

- *Tell me about a time when you went fishing.*
- *Does anyone in your family fish? Who?*
- *What do you think you would like best about fishing? What wouldn't you like?*
- *Tell me about how you constructed your fishing pole.*

Let's Go Fishing!

(Developmental Areas:        )

Materials:

- ☐ **Art and collage materials the children can use to make their own fishing poles (your choice)**
- One of the many activities people do in ponds and lakes is fishing. Some of the children may be familiar with fishing while others may not. You will want to adjust this experience based on their existing background knowledge. If any of the parents/guardians in your group fish, you might want to invite them in to share their knowledge with the group. The children will then use their creativity as they create their own fishing poles using art/collage materials.
- Pretend to be fishing and wait for children to become curious and ask you what you are doing. Use this to introduce fishing as an activity that some people enjoy doing in ponds and lakes. Encourage the children to talk about their own experiences with fishing (if they have any) as well as what they already know about fishing. Some of them may have family members that enjoy fishing. As part of this discussion, talk about the tools people use when they fish (like fishing poles).
- Next, set out the assorted art/collage materials and invite the children to use them as desired to create their own fishing poles. Remember ... there is no "right" or "wrong" way for the children to do this. Encourage their creativity! They may also need to problem-solve along the way ... which is great! As the children create, be sure to engage them in back-and-forth conversations about fishing.
- **EXTENSION:** Be sure to allow time for the children to pretend with their fishing poles once they are complete.



The Pond

An acrostic poem by _____

P _____

O _____

N _____

D _____

Create an acrostic poem by using the first letter in each row to fill in a word that describes a pond.

