



A Lesson on I Like Plants by Sarah Faller

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 30 minutes or less

Lesson Keywords: Plants grade4

Lesson Description: Focus on scientific words within context. Writing section includes student's opinion as well as direct examples from text.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.3: Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.4: Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.3: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RF.4.3a: Use combined knowledge of all letter-sound correspondences, syllabication patterns, and morphology (e.g., roots and affixes) to read accurately unfamiliar multisyllabic words in context and out of context.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1b: Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2d: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

Instructions: Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

I Like Plants

by

Content: Even when I was very young, I always loved plants. When we walked to school, I would look at the different plants. I would make up names for them. I would draw pictures of them. When my teacher asked us to draw a picture of anything we liked, I always drew pictures of plants.

When I got to high school, I took a course that was all about plants. Most students took the course in biology. But I took the course on plants. We went into the park to identify different species. It was amazing. I found out that there were at least 27 different kinds of plants in our neighborhood park. There were also about 12 different kinds of trees. Some were deciduous. We were there in spring, so they had their leaves.

I learned that weeds are not really bad plants. They are interlopers. They come from another environment. Somehow they get to the new environment. It could be that animals bring them. The animals might pick up the seeds on their fur and carry them to the new habitat. Then they fall off and start to grow.

When I went to college, I knew that I wanted to study plants. I wanted to be a plant scientist. I wanted to be a botanist. I took classes in math, English, and history. They were good classes. But it was the science classes I loved.

Now I teach at a college. I teach about plant life. I explain how fertilizers can help plants grow but also can destroy the balance of nature. I teach about helpful insects. One of the most helpful insects for plants is the ladybug. Ladybugs are small insects that eat aphids. They can protect plants by eating the aphids that would eat the plants' leaves. There are about 5,000 kinds of ladybugs. In winter the ladybug hibernates. Then in spring it comes back out and starts to protect the plants again. Several states have named the ladybug their state insect. I teach students ways to help the environment like that.

I teach about ecology, too. I teach how important decisions are. I explain that if you introduce a non-native herbivore into an environment it can cause problems. For example, in Australia long ago people brought rabbits. The rabbits ate so many plants that they caused a problem. This invasive species ate plants that other animals depended on. The rabbits even killed trees. They ate the bark off the trees, and the trees died. Some people think that Australia's desert has expanded significantly because of the introduction of the rabbits. They say it is a very big problem. If they had understood ecology, they might not have brought those rabbits. I hope my students take what they learn and make good choices for the environment.

I keep learning more about plants and the animals that depend on them, and I teach students what I learn. I learn from my research on the Internet now as well as going to the park and studying the plants in my community. I share what I learn when I teach, and I write books that help people learn about nature.

Task 1: Vocabulary

Instructions: Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

Q: 1 WordPhrase: species **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: We went into the park to "identify" different species. What does the word "identify" mean in this sentence?

- A: point out
- B: smell
- C: taste
- D: eat

Question: Which of the sentences below uses the word "identify" correctly?

- A: I would really love to identify a yummy apple.
- B: Don't those roses identify really well?
- C: Can you identify the the suspect?
- D: How fast can you identify a pizza?

Q: 2 WordPhrase: deciduous **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: There were also about 12 different kinds of trees. Some were deciduous. What does the word "deciduous" mean in this sentence?

- A: tall
- B: have leaves that seasonally fall off
- C: smelly
- D: have no leaves

Question: Which of the sentences below uses the word "deciduous" correctly?

- A: That boy sure is deciduous!
- B: Those apple tress are deciduous, its leaves are yellow now.
- C: My friend likes to be deciduous at school.
- D: That tree is very short, it must be deciduous.

Q: 3 WordPhrase: interlopers **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: I learned that weeds are not really bad plants. They are interlopers. What does the word "interlopers" mean?

- A: a plant that intrudes on another
- B: a plant that is there to just look pretty
- C: a plant that always smells good
- D: a plant that kills everything it touches

Question: which one of the sentences below uses the word "interloper" correctly?

- A: A weed is not an interloper.
- B: The interloper stays away from all the other plants.
- C: Interlopers are usually found in a secluded region by itself.
- D: The weed is an interloper to the other plants.

Q: 4 WordPhrase: depended **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: This invasive species ate plants that other animals depended on. what does the word "depended" mean in this sentence?

- A: Did not need
- B: rely on
- C: slept
- D: colored

Question: Which one of the sentences below uses the word "depended" correctly?

- A: The little girl was so happy about her new crayons that she depended all over the table instead of in her coloring book.
- B: I was so tired that I depended in the car.
- C: I depended on my sister when I needed her to help me.
- D: I wish i would have depended my sandwhich because I am hungry.

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Task 2: Forum Discussion

Instructions: This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

1 - Fieldtrip to the park

I took the course on plants. We went into the park to identify different species. Why would a park be a good place to identify different plant species?

2 - Interlopers

Where do interlopers come from? What are some of the ways the author says that they might arrive?

3 - Ladybugs

According to the story, what is the major role of the ladybug? What makes it so helpful?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: You are to write a paragraph that is 250-300 words on the following:

Even when I was very young, I always loved plants. Now I teach at a college. I teach about plant life. Do you think it is a good thing or a bad thing that the author loves the subject he teaches? Why? Give some reasons to support your opinion. What were some of the important things that the author learned about plants before becoming a professor? Give specific examples from the story.

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