



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1996 Volume V: Genetics in the 21st Century: Destiny, Chance or Choice

I Wear My Genes Inside Out: The Genetic Characteristics of Animals

Guide for Curriculum Unit 96.05.04
by Francine Conelli Coss

Each year, my kindergarten class completes an extensive unit on animals. Beginning in late February with pets and continuing through May with wild life and water life, my kindergartners study many different types of animals. Through the theme-based curriculum provided by The Treasure Tree the children are exposed to four animal centered themes: Pet Show, On the Farm, Animals Animals, and Splish Splash. Each theme introduces specific types of animals, their habitats, eating habits and physical characteristics. Although these aspects are covered through the recommended curriculum resources, information is lacking in family history, procreation and bearing young. The unit, "I Wear my Genes Inside-Out: The Genetic Characteristics of Animals" will fill the void of information in these areas through its discussion of how genetic information can be revealed, recorded and engineered in animals. "I Wear my Genes Inside-Out," in conjunction with the recommended curriculum in The Treasure Tree, will expand the four animal-centered themes to include the genetic relationship between adult animals and their offspring, the probability of specific characteristics occurring in offspring through the parents' genetic history, and the effects genetic characteristics have on a living being when combined with environmental changes.

(Recommended for Science, Language Arts, and Mathematics, grades K-5)

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