



## Meet Your Wildlife Neighbors

**Grade Level:** Upper Elementary and Middle School

**Concept:** Diversity of species in our local ecosystem

**Subjects:** Science, language arts

**Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- Identify local wildlife using an app
- Research a local plant or animal
- Give a “Meet Your Wildlife Neighbors” mini-lecture

**Teacher’s Notes:**

- If you do not have access to a natural area around your school, you can plan a field trip to a local park.

**Summary:** Students will identify and learn about their wildlife neighbors (plants and animals in their school yard) using the SEEK app from iNaturalist. Then, they will choose one plant or animal to research and present a short lecture.

**Materials:**

- Film Clips
  - *Karl Maslowski’s Localism (2:22 min)* <https://vimeo.com/687652985>
  - *Maslowski’s Lectures (2:20 min)* <https://vimeo.com/687662279>
- iNaturalist app on tablets or cell phones
- Meet Your Wildlife Neighbors student page

**Introduction:** Although Karl Maslowski liked to travel to take photographs and create films, he spent most of his efforts observing, photographing, and writing about wildlife in the greater Cincinnati area. Getting to know your own wildlife neighbors is an important part of seeing yourself as part of nature, not separate from it. Tell students that they are going to have the opportunity to “meet” some of their wildlife neighbors.

**Procedure:**

1. Show students the film clip titled *Karl Maslowski’s Localism (2:22 min)* <https://vimeo.com/687652985> that comments on Maslowski’s localism. Explain that Maslowski realized that you don’t have to go very far to find something remarkable in nature. You can go right outside your door. Ask, What wildlife have you seen around our school?

Where have you seen this wildlife?

Do you know the names of any of the plants and animals around you’ve seen in our schoolyard?

2. Ahead of time, download the [SEEK app from iNaturalist](#) to student devices. Demonstrate how to use it and/or show them [this video](#) about how the app works. You can also download the [SEEK userguide](#).

3. Take students to a natural area in the schoolyard and allow them to use the app to identify any plants and animals they see. Don't forget the insects! When you return inside, have student share what wildlife they identified.
4. Tell students that an important part of Karl Maslowski's work was to share his photographs, observations, and learnings about wildlife in the Cincinnati area. He did so through wildlife lectures and a newspaper column. Show students the clip titled, *Maslowski's Lectures (2:20 min)* <https://vimeo.com/687662279>.
5. Have students choose a local animal or plant to research and present their own mini-lecture to introduce this wildlife neighbor to the rest of the class. From the video, students can see the slides that Karl Maslowski used for his lectures. Similarly, they could use PowerPoint or Google Slides to make a slideshow to introduce their wildlife neighbor. They can also use the Meet Your Wildlife Neighbor student page to collect information and organize their ideas.

#### **Extensions:**

Learn about State Wildlife Symbols at the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Website <https://ohiodnr.gov/discover-and-learn/safety-conservation/about-odnr/state-symbols/state-symbols>

Learn about Kentucky Wildlife from the Department of Fish and Wildlife <https://fw.ky.gov/Wildlife/Pages/default.aspx>

#### **Resources:**

SEEK app from iNaturalist [https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek\\_app](https://www.inaturalist.org/pages/seek_app)

#### **Academic Standards Addressed in this Lesson**

**Depending on grade level taught, the following standards can be addressed by taking the focus of this lesson to one or more topics below:**

##### **Elementary Life Science: Grades 3-5**

- 3.LS.2: Individuals of the same kind of organism differ in their inherited traits. These differences give some individuals an advantage in surviving and/or reproducing.
- 4.LS.1: Changes in an organism's environment are sometimes beneficial to its survival and sometimes harmful.
- 5.LS.1 Organisms perform a variety of roles in an ecosystem.

##### **Middle School Life Science**

LS2.C: Ecosystem Dynamics, Functioning, and Resilience

##### **Common Core English Language Arts**

Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge, Grades 3-5

Speaking and Listening: Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas, Grades 3-5

Name \_\_\_\_\_



## Meet Your Wildlife Neighbors

Student Page

Introduce your class to one of your wildlife neighbors!

Name of plant or animal \_\_\_\_\_

Photograph or drawing:

Where can you find it? \_\_\_\_\_

What does it need to survive? \_\_\_\_\_

Interesting facts: