



Wildlife Photographer EDU Summary

Wildlife Photographer: Karl Maslowski is a one-hour documentary about one of Cincinnati's most acclaimed nature writers, photographers, and filmmakers. Karl Maslowski (1913 – 2006) helped introduce generations of Americans to the natural world through his newspaper columns, wildlife photographs and pioneering films. The documentary combines archival photographs and film, interviews and HD video for a compelling look at Maslowski's long career from his impoverished childhood to his work as a conservationist. The documentary is a co-production of Steve Maslowski, a son of Karl Maslowski, and Voyageur Media Group, Inc., a nonprofit organization dedicated to the creation of educational media.

Who was Karl Maslowski?

Karl Maslowski (1913-2006) rose from modest means to become a nationally acclaimed wildlife photographer, filmmaker, and conservationist. He contributed thousands of photographs to books, calendars and magazines, including *National Wildlife*, *Ranger Rick*, *Time* and *Life*. Maslowski was a pioneer in nature filmmaking, contributing to some of the first wildlife films of *Disney*, *National Audubon Society* and *National Geographic*. He also wrote over 2,500 weekly nature columns for *The Cincinnati Enquirer*, and hundreds of articles for national publications. During World War II, Maslowski served as a combat cameraman under the famed director William Wyler. His film of air battles and camp life was incorporated into the 1947 movie *Thunderbolt!* His work as a conservationist, brought to light challenges facing ecosystems and wildlife, including bald eagles. Maslowski also helped establish nature preserves, including the Cincinnati Nature Center, Oxbow, Inc., and the Edge of Appalachia Preserve System as a board member of the Cincinnati Museum Center. See [About](#) for more biographical materials on Karl Maslowski.

How can this documentary be used by educators?

Lessons for upper elementary (grades 3-5), middle school (grades 6-8), and high school (grades 9-12) have been written to introduce students to the life and work of Karl Maslowski. Themes of perseverance, pursuit of passion, and service are explored as well as scientific concepts of conservation, interconnectedness of living things, and diversity of species. Students are given opportunities to build, photograph, read, write, and make presentations in these lessons.

Viewing and retaining all the information presented in this documentary all at once can be challenging for students. Clips from the film have been selected to use within the lessons below, and you may also want to share some of the information above about Maslowski before or during the lessons.

In the **elementary and middle school classrooms**, three lessons have been prepared that include clips from the film. These lessons are best used consecutively, although they could be used independently. The lesson titles and descriptions are below.

Lesson 1: Build a Wildlife Blind

Students are introduced to Karl Maslowski and watch clips of the film that show the wildlife blinds Maslowski built to hide in as he photographed and filmed wildlife. Then they build their own blind where they can hide to observe wildlife in their schoolyard.

Lesson 2: Meet Your Wildlife Neighbors

Students learn about Maslowski's localism and that there are remarkable things in nature right outside your door. Then they use an app to identify plants and animals in their school yard.

Lesson 3: Help Your Wildlife Neighbors

Students learn about Maslowski's conservation efforts from the film and then organize their own effort to help local pollinators.

In the **high school classroom**, the first viewing of the film could be in sections or by viewing the entire film at once. These lessons are best used consecutively, although they could be taught independently. The lesson titles and descriptions are below.

Lesson 1: The Life of Karl Maslowski

Students view the entire film and sequence the major events of Maslowski's life. Then, they discuss the main themes of the film: conservation, perseverance, service, pursuit of passion, and making your own path.

Lesson 2: Wildlife Conservation

Students read three of Maslowski's newspaper columns, which feature conservation themes. They will relate the columns to the environmental movement of the time. Then they research local endangered species in Ohio and Kentucky.

Lesson 3: Protecting Natural Places

Students will learn how Karl Maslowski worked to conserve natural places in the Miami Valley. They will photograph a local natural place and write about why it is important to them or their community.

It is hoped that educators will use their own creativity to further develop lessons and activities to accompany and enhance this documentary.