



How Do You Know the Wolf?

Students reflect on the origin of their beliefs and attitudes about wolves, then poll others.

SECTION 5 Finding Solutions

Subjects:

science, social studies



Approximate lesson time:

20 minutes plus assignment time



Materials:

worksheet on pages 5-6, paper, pencil/pen

STUDENT OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this lesson, the student should be able to:

1. Appraise the origin of their beliefs and attitudes about wolves.
2. Analyze the origins of other people's beliefs and attitudes about wolves.

VOCABULARY:

belief • attitude

TEACHER BACKGROUND:

How do we come to know the things we know? Beyond formal learning settings, much of our information comes through informal channels: conversations, advertisements, movies, fictional books and other sources. Sometimes, without our even realizing, a series of information "scraps" get woven together to form a knowledge base. With reflection, students can analyze the sources of their knowledge and improve their self-awareness.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Ask students to name all the things that come to mind when you say the word *wolf*. Discuss with students why they associated these ideas with wolves.
2. Instruct students to complete the first set of questions, on the worksheet on page 5.
3. As a class, discuss the second set of questions, on page 6.
4. Ask students if they think the ideas discussed in class are different from ideas other people would have: their parents, grandparents, people in another part of the country.
5. Instruct students to develop a survey that will investigate what people think about wolves and how they came to think these things. Brainstorm who could be interviewed. Perhaps students can telephone friends or family in another part of the country. Use the questions on the worksheet, or have students develop their own. Be sure to investigate *how* interviewees form their attitudes, both positive and negative.
6. After students have interviewed several people, allow them to report what they learned in the interviews.
7. Discuss: What conclusions can we draw about how people form their beliefs and attitudes about wolves? What categories can be identified? How do the responses differ by age group or region?

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**National
Science
Education
Standards**

*Unifying Concepts
and Processes*

*Evidence, models,
and explanation*

Science as Inquiry

*Abilities
necessary to do
scientific inquiry*

*Understanding
about
scientific
inquiry*

**Science in
Personal and
Social Perspectives
(9–12)**

*Environmental
Quality*

EXTENSION:

Collect demographic information on survey participants, such as age, location, rural or city resident, male or female, hunter or non-hunter, livestock owner or non-livestock owner. Compare answers of different groups. To what do you attribute the differing answers?

ASSESSMENT:

Instruct students to write a script for an imaginary conversation between two people who have widely disparate views of wolves. The imaginary people should discuss a topic related to wolves or wolf management. Students may select any setting where the conversation can occur. The conversation should include some items where the speakers agree and some items where the speakers disagree.



Chris Darimont

NAME: _____



How do you know the wolf?

STEP ONE

Answer these questions by yourself:

1. When did you first learn something about wolves?
2. What was it you learned?
3. How did you learn it? (Was it in a book, on TV, on the Internet, from a person?)
4. How else have you learned about wolves? (List as many as possible.)
5. How do you *feel* about wolves?
6. Why do you feel this way?
7. What have you done (big or small) in your life that relates to wolves in any way?

