



# How the Animals Saved the Old Cypress Tree

## Background Information for Teachers

Performing Arts offer the opportunity for students to develop in many academic areas. It presents students with the ability to be creative and inventive decision-makers, varied and powerful communicators, and poised and confident achievers. It helps develop a sense of teamwork and fosters leadership skills. But above all of these, this type of outlet helps to provide an enriched quality of life.

The history of art is the history of mankind. As you trace back through the millennium it is our ability to make art, and represent our lives through art, that has been a defining achievement of homo-sapiens. Early grade exposure to the arts helps students develop their ability to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and understanding concerning the world around them.

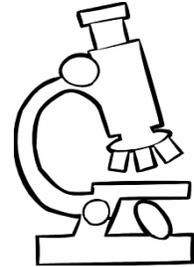
This exercise will help students assemble the knowledge of the wetlands they have gained so far into a cumulative whole that will involve them mentally and physically. This student theater enables them to develop skills in relating real-world situations to themselves on a non-threatening level. By participating in theatrical experiences, students gain many opportunities to demonstrate their problem-solving and cooperative skills.



# *How the Animals Saved the Old Cypress Tree*

## **Time to Experiment: INTRODUCTION TO A PLAY -**

**Materials:** (you must provide materials unless otherwise noted)  
Introduction to Performance and Stage Directions (provided)  
Play - "How the Animals Saved the Old Tree" (provided)  
Basic Mask Pattern, one for each animal - 9 (provided)  
Beak/Nose Pattern, one for each animal - 9 (provided)  
Material cloaks to be used as basic costume, one for each animal - 9 (provided)  
Cypress Knee and stand Patterns (provided)  
Hat for Tree Cutter (provided)  
Map for Tree Cutter (provided)  
Plastic Ax for Tree Cutter (provided)  
Scissors  
Crayons/pens/pencils/paint/paint brushes  
Poster board sheets, cardboard sheets (8.5" x 11")



### **Procedure:**

1. Read and follow directions for the "Movement and Improvisation" sheet
2. Read and follow directions for the "Stage Direction Game" sheet
3. Read and follow directions for the "Stage Props and Costumes" sheet
4. Read and have students perform "The PLAY"
5. Check your students knowledge, by reading a description of the "Animals in the Play" sheet, and have them try to guess which animal you are describing.

### **Extensions:**

1. After completing some movement exercises (see preparation), each child picks an animal and with the teachers help explores the characteristics of each animal.
2. After completing "The Play" have students perform their own created play, either themselves or using the puppets in the trunk.

### **Conclusions:**

Your students should be able to have a more complete understanding of the importance of trees and animals in the swamp, and the intricacies of performing a play.



# How the Animals Saved the Old Cypress Tree

## Introduction for teacher:

The play can be performed "as is" or the children can follow the story line and create their own dialog.

Recommended:

Kindergarten, First and Second Grade: The teacher becomes the narrator and the children perform the action.

Third and Fourth Grade: The children present the play by becoming the characters, other children in the class(es) can help direct and create the scenery.

All the children should be familiar with the difference between a **forest**, a **swamp** and a **marsh**. See the glossary of terms.

## Preparations Through Movement and Improvisation

Some children are shy, so having all the children perform various movements as a group will help the children feel secure. As the children become more confident in their movement and the character of the animals, they should be encouraged to perform or demonstrate for the other children. This should be fun and may promote a lot of laughter. As the children chose an animal from the play, they need to be reminded to stay in "character" as they are now the animal, even if the audience may find their actions amusing.

## Movement and Improvisation

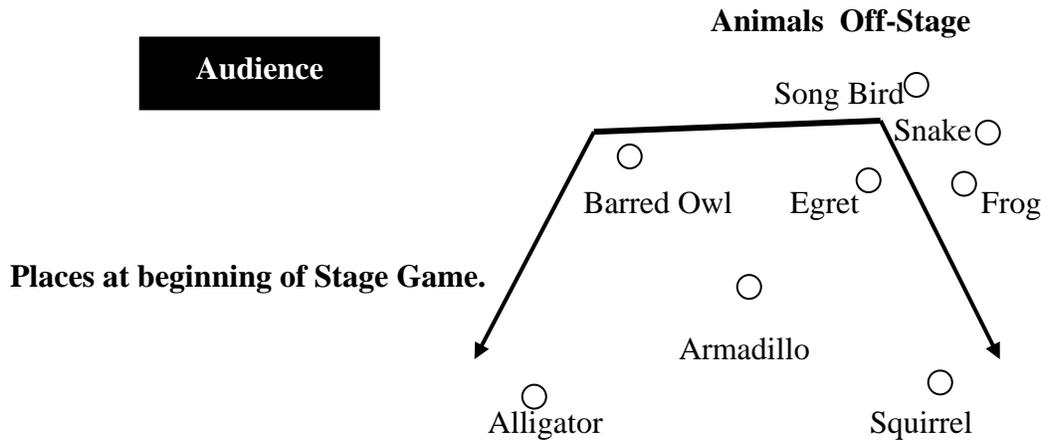
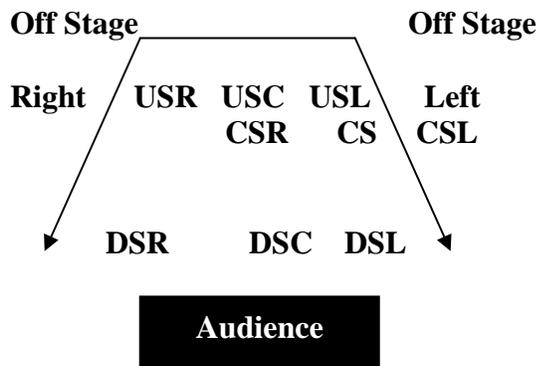
1. Begin by having the children move into an open space. Ask the children to put out their arms and if they are touching someone or something to move until they are not touching anything. Let them circle slowly. Then say "Freeze". Children love this and will generally become a statue. This is your group control word.
2. Tell the children to stay frozen until you say an action word. Give the children time to do the action then after each action word use "Freeze". For example say, "Jump, jump as high as you can. . . . Freeze"! Action words: hop, wiggle, jump, glide, fly, explode, bumpy, vibrate, sticky like moving through mud, etc.
3. Have all the children sit on the floor. Using pictures discuss the characteristics of each animal in the play. Have some of the children demonstrate how each animal would move, what sounds or calls does it make are they **herbivores**, **carnivores** or **omnivores**? After all the children have discussed the animals, ask them to demonstrate how they would move as these animals. Example: Squirrel might move in quick movements. Wading birds fly but have long legs and walk by stretching them out in a long stride.



# How the Animals Saved the Old Cypress Tree

## Stage Directions Game

The object is to help the children understand the use of the stage and why we use these directions. Set up a stage by using chairs to mark the boundaries of the stage. Explain up stage, down stage, center stage, off stage, stage right and stage left. Choose about 10 children at a time to perform their animal movements for the rest of the class, the audience. The children are placed around the stage and can only move when you call the animal's name and give them a direction to another area.



### Stage Direction:

**Off Stage** – the actor cannot be seen by the audience.  
**Up Stage** – away from your audience.  
**Center Stage** – center area of the stage.  
**Down Stage** – Near your audience.  
**Stage Left or Stage Right** – is the actor's left or right when facing the audience. **USR** – Upstage Right, etc.

All the highlighted words are defined in the glossary

### Sample Directions for the Stage Game

"Alligator - center stage" (the alligator was **DSR** - down stage right - and now moves to **CS** - center stage - slowly walking like an alligator)

"Song bird - down stage right" (the song bird was **OSL** - off-stage left - and now moves to **DSR** - down stage right - flapping and darting like a song bird)

The children need to be reminded to stay in **character** by moving like the selected animal and not to run into another animal. The fun comes when everyone is moving around the stage at the same time.

**End by saying** - "Freeze" then have them exchange "acting" students for the audience.



# *How the Animals Saved the Old Cypress Tree*

## **Stage Props and Costumes:**

### **Cypress Tree Prop and Backdrop Introduction**

Drawn on big pieces of paper by children and taped along the wall. This backdrop indicates a cypress swamp. Cypress knees can be drawn then cut out and become free standing to give depth to the scene. Included is a pattern to create a free standing cypress knee. Cypress knees can be different sizes and also clustered together. The children can be creative and create a magical swamp. It does not have to be realistic, after all these animals talk. The important message is saving Louisiana swamps.

#### **Materials needed:**

Large sheets of paper, paint or markers, poster board, glue, tape and scissors.

#### **Procedure:**

Use large pieces of paper to draw Cypress trees. Using cypress knee pattern, draw the shape and the stand on poster board. Color and cut out. Glue stand to back of Cypress knee.



## Creating Animal Mask Introduction

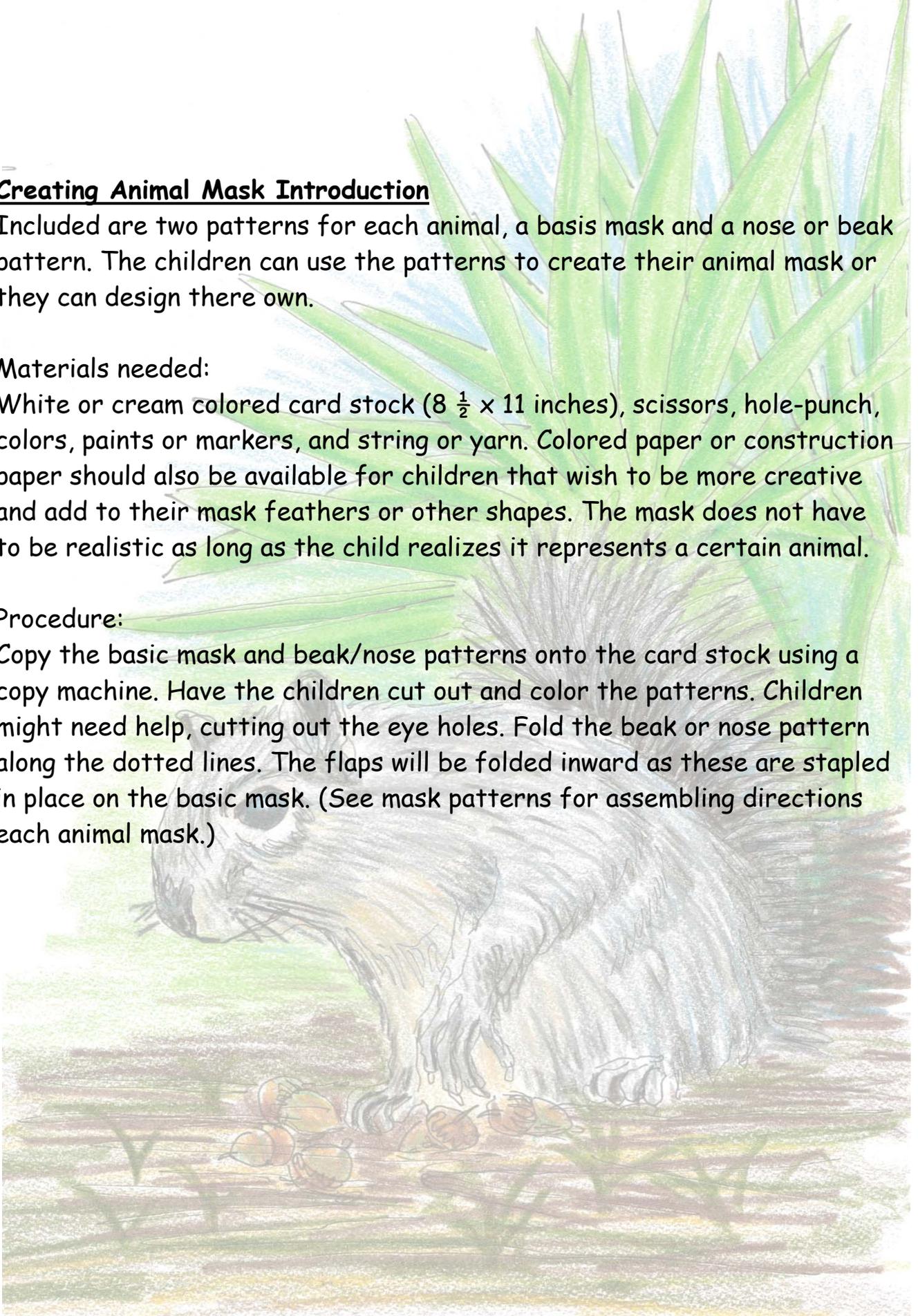
Included are two patterns for each animal, a basis mask and a nose or beak pattern. The children can use the patterns to create their animal mask or they can design there own.

### Materials needed:

White or cream colored card stock (8  $\frac{1}{2}$  x 11 inches), scissors, hole-punch, colors, paints or markers, and string or yarn. Colored paper or construction paper should also be available for children that wish to be more creative and add to their mask feathers or other shapes. The mask does not have to be realistic as long as the child realizes it represents a certain animal.

### Procedure:

Copy the basic mask and beak/nose patterns onto the card stock using a copy machine. Have the children cut out and color the patterns. Children might need help, cutting out the eye holes. Fold the beak or nose pattern along the dotted lines. The flaps will be folded inward as these are stapled in place on the basic mask. (See mask patterns for assembling directions each animal mask.)



## Protest Signs for Play Introduction

Create signs with statements such as:

Save Our Trees

We Protest Cutting Trees

Trees Create the Air We Breathe

The Swamps Will Disappear Without the Trees

Trees Help Stop Flooding

Trees Help Stop Erosion - Keep Our Land Together

Materials needed:

Poster board, scissors, colors, paints, or markers

1. For a hanging sign students will need:  
Scissors, a hole-punch, and yarn or string
2. For a hand held sign students will need:  
Yard sticks or long dowels and duck tape.

Procedure:

The children can create other sayings for the signs. Make sure the children know how to make the letters large enough so the audience can read it.

1. For a hanging sign:  
Students will need to use the scissors to cut the poster board in half or quarters (4 equal sized pieces) then they need to use a hole-punch to create 2 holes in the upper right and left corners then use the yarn or string to make a loop and put the sign on themselves
2. For a hand held sign:  
Students will need either yard sticks or long dowels and duck tape to attach the poster to the sticks, using the duck tape on the back of the poster and on the sticks.



**SAVE  
OUR  
TREES**



**SAVE  
OUR  
TREES**



### Creating Stump for Tree Cutter Introduction

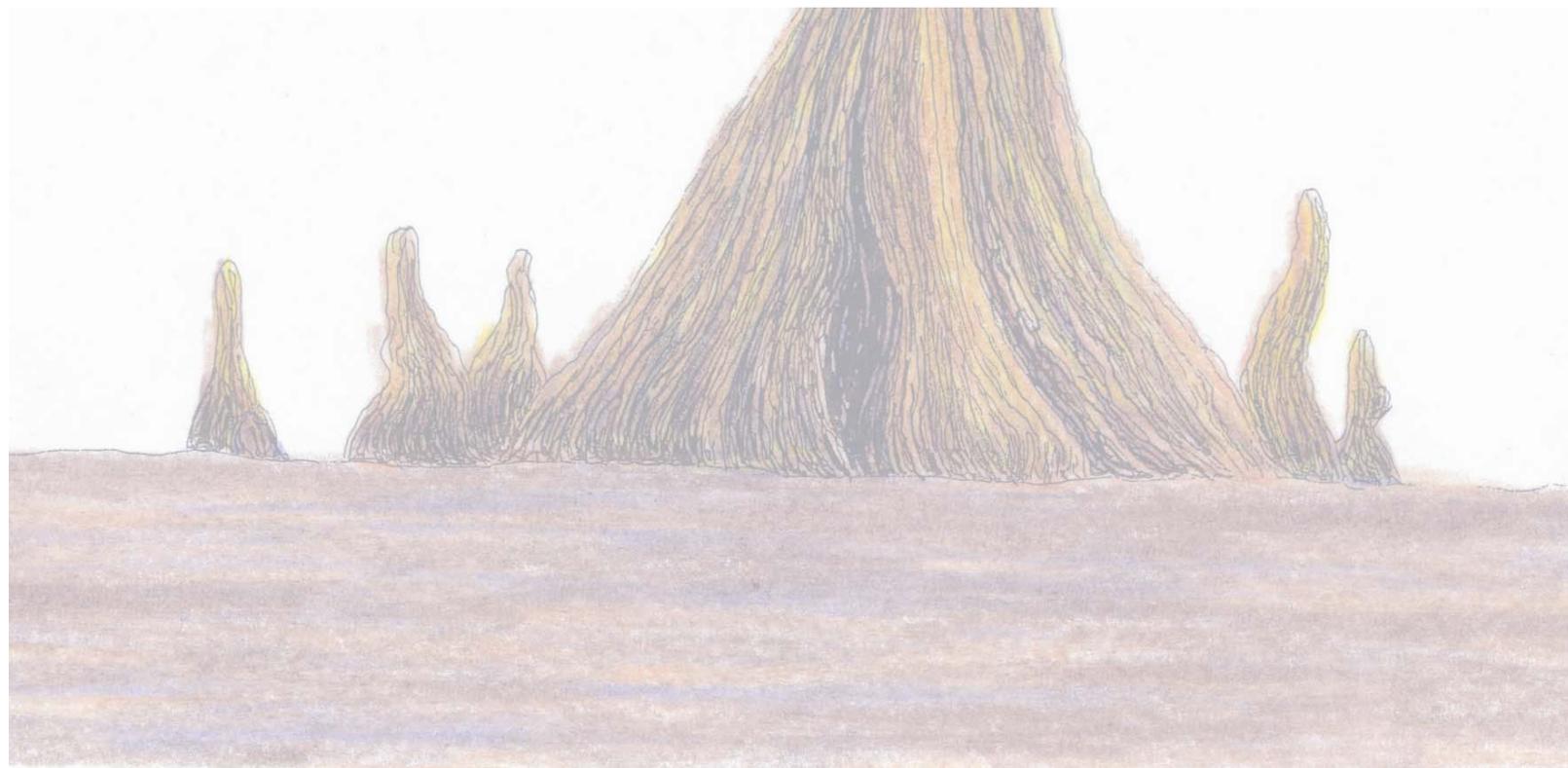
An area for the tree cutter to rest, it is a short stool with paper taped around it to look like a stump of a cut tree.

#### Materials needed:

A short stool, a large sheet of brown wrapping paper, paint or markers, tape and scissors.

#### Procedure:

Cut a circle the same shape as the top of the stool and color in rings like the rings of a cut tree. Place circle on stool and tape. Color paper brown or use brown paper. Cut paper to fit around bottom of stool and tape in place. This base can be highlighted to look like bark with a brown marker.



# *How the Animals Saved the Old Cypress Tree*

## *The PLAY!*

**Director:** This can be a child with the help of a teacher. The director is responsible for rehearsals. He/she directs how the actors interpret their lines, the portrayal of the characters, where the actors move on stage and their actions.

### **Characters/Actors:**

3. **Tree Cutter** - girl or boy, hat, ax, and map.
4. **Alligator** - Mask, dark green material. Movement: moves with confidence uses a loud voice.
5. **Owl (Barred)** - Mask, dark brown material. Movement: flaps wings only a few times and glides. Speaks with an elongated o. Example: Look, Whoooo, to imitate an owls call.
6. **Egret** - Mask, white material. Movement: Moves with large slow wing movement, often stands on one leg for short periods of time.
7. **Turtle** - Mask, green material. Movement: Moves slowly and speaks slowly.
8. **Squirrel** - Mask, grey or brown material. Movement: very quick jumpy and speech should also be quick.
9. **Armadillo** - Mask, light grey or black material. Movement: Does not see well so runs into things. This animal moves slowly but can jump when scared.
10. **Snake** - Mask, material. Movement: Can walk but use serpentine pattern, not a straight line to go from one point to another. Elongates the "s" sound when speaking, like a hiss.
11. **Frog** - Mask, yellow-green material Movement: Hops, (jumps on two feet.) Every once in a while says Creeek, Creeek or other agreed frog sound.
12. **Song bird** - Mask, yellow material Movement: Flaps wings a lot and speaks in a high sing song voice.



**Props:**

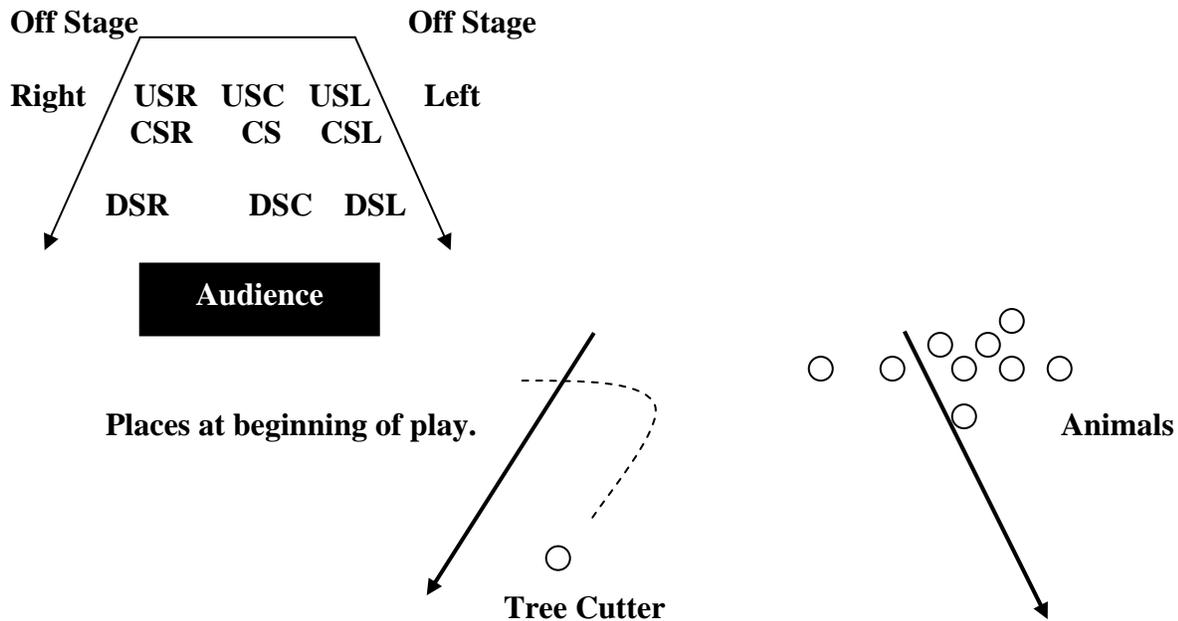
These are all of the costumes, masks, signs, and any other materials that are used on the stage.

**Scene:**

Swamp area with cut stump (paper to cover stacked books or short stool), Cypress knees, and indications of other trees at the back of the stage area. Children's drawings of cypress trees, on big pieces of paper, can be used as a backdrop.

**Stage direction:**  
 In *(Italics)*. See glossary.

All the **highlighted words** are defined in the glossary.



**Stage Direction:**

**Off Stage** – the actor cannot be seen by the audience.

**Up Stage** – away from your audience.

**Center Stage** – center area of the stage.

**Down Stage** – Near your audience.

**Stage Left** or **Stage Right** – is the actors left or right when facing the audience. **USR** – Upstage **R**ight, etc.

**Off-stage:** Try using a portable backboard or curtain so children/actors can not be seen by the audience. If this is not possible ask the children to exit as far from the stage area as possible and to stand still so they do not distract the audience from the stage action.

**Act I:**

**Alligator:** *(On stage USL and pays no attention to the Tree-cutter.)*

**Tree-cutter:** *(Enters from USR, does not see Alligator. Looks and walks around stage searching and moving as if his shoes are heavy to indicate walking through water and mud.)* "This is hard work walking through all this mud in the swamp. I know that old Cypress tree is around here somewhere. It is really large! *(Stops, looks around and moves toward stump.)*" "Oh! am I tired."

*(Sits on a stump DSR, looks at map, puts his ax on ground and slowly falls asleep while looking at a map, head resting on chest.)*

**Animals:** *(All the animals begin to appear from off-stage and gather near Alligator in the USL area away from the Tree Cutter. Each child must remember the characteristics of their animal in order to become that animal.)*

*(Animals see the tree-cutter and different animals speak. The director can have some of the actors repeat their lines.)*

**Squirrel:** *(Jumping up and down in one place and pointing)* "Is that the Tree Cutter? Look is that the Tree Cutter?"

**Armadillo:** "Where, Where I don't see him!"

**Owl:** "Ooooh! Armadillo!" *(Points with his/her wing.)* "Look, over there! Ooover there!"

**Snake:** *(Can walk out but the have the child kneel or get low to the ground.)* "There he'ssss looking at hissss map."

**Song Bird:** *(Flapping her wings flies near Snake but quickly moves near Owl. Some snakes eat small birds.)* "Oh! No! Oh! No! What can we do!"

**Armadillo:** "What Tree Cutter?"

**Egret:** *(Turns to Armadillo and speak)* "Armadillo really! The Tree Cutters have cut down many of the swamp trees already. *(Turns to other animals.)* How can we save the Old Cypress tree?"

**Frog:** "What can we do?" "What can we do?" *(Makes frog sound.)*

**Turtle:** "I hope he doesn't want Turtle soup!"

**Alligator:** "Hey! Yea, I could eat him!"

*(All the animals look at Alligator!)*

**Owl:** "Ooooh! That will not help! Other Tree Cutters will just come!"

**Squirrel:** *(Very excited)* "I know! I know! We could have a protest!"

**Animals:** *(All speak at once. Director can assign the lines to different animals.)* "Yes a **Protest!**" "What a great idea!" "A Protest!" "That should make him listen." *(The animals go off SL. Owl remains on stage shaking his head.)*

**Animals:** *(The animals enter chanting with their signs from USL moving DSR and circling around the Tree Cutter. Owl does not join other animals but stays USL moving his head side to side as owls do when watching something.)*

"Don't cut our old Cypress tree!"

"Don't cut our trees, if you please."

"If our trees are lost, our homes will be the cost!"

*(Repeat the chant in a rhythm as the actors move slowly around the Tree Cutter.)*

"Don't cut our old Cypress tree!"

"Don't cut our trees, if you please."

"If our trees are lost, our homes will be the cost!"

**Tree-cutter:** *(Wakes up -surprised.)* "What's going on here!"

*(Animals still chanting as they move around Tree-cutter. Repeat the chant as many times as needed.)*

**Owl-***(Flies **DS** circling around the group and Tree-cutter )* "Whooooo! Whooooo! Whoooo will follow me! Whooooo! Whoooo will follow me!"

**Tree-cutter:** *(Jumps up, confused, rubbing his eyes in disbelief.)* "This swamp must be haunted! The animals are crazy."

**Animals:** *(All the animals follow the Owl **USL** still chanting.)*

**Tree-cutter:** *(Sits back on stump as animals leave and says to audience. Does not look at animals **USL**.)* "Is this a dream? What's going on!"

**Owl:** *(Animals stop chanting and surround Owl.)* "OK! OK! This is a great idea but why would the Tree Cutter care? *(Points at tree-cutter with wing.)* Maybe we should teach him what the Old Cypress tree and all the trees mean to us."

**Song Bird:** "Oh, Owl! That's a great idea!"

**Snake:** *(Accent the s.)* "Sssso what Sssong Bird! Do you think thissss tree-cutter will care about our Cypresss treesss?"

**Song Bird:** *(Annoyed speaks in a high pitched voice and flaps wings.)* "Well! Snake! I guess he will!"

**Armadillo:** "Yes, Snake he will care, if we do a good job explaining how important the trees are to our habitat, our homes."

**Frog:** "I agree with Armadillo." *(Make frog sound.)*

**Turtle:** "Yes, yes and how the atmosphere is affected without trees."

**All the Animals:** "Let's do it!"

**Alligator:** "Owl you go first since it was your idea." (*The animals go off stage except for Owl and put down their signs.*)

**Tree-cutter:** (*Does not look **USL** or see the animals. Looks at a map, draws on paper as if trying to figure out where the Old Cypress tree is located.*)

**Animals:** (*Each animal returns slowly **USL** until it is their turn to speak. Then they will hop, fly, etc. down **DSR** to deliver their speech. Each animal will remain in a group around the Tree-cutter. Alligator speaks last by then all the animals are circled around the Tree-cutter so the audience can not see the Tree-cutter.*)

**Owl:** (Flies toward Tree-cutter) "Excuse me! Excuse me!"

**Tree-cutter:** "Who said that!"

**Owl:** "I did! Why do you want to cut down a cypress tree that has lived for over 700 years in this swamp?"

**Tree-cutter:** "What! I mean . . . well that tree would make a lot of lumber to build houses with."

**Egret:** (Flies down toward **CS**, then walks with long deliberate steps toward Tree-cutter as he speaks.) "Yes, yes but that Old Cypress tree is very important to me. It's my home! My children can grow protected in the nest I built and learn to fly from its branches."

**Tree-cutter:** "Well there are other trees."

**Squirrel:** *(Arrives when Egret stops talking. While Tree-cutter is talking, he hops up and down in a very agitated way.)*

"Yes! Yes, but you have cut most of the large cypress trees that produce seeds. I use the seeds as food and they are delicious! Hemmm! Yum! *(For a moment thinks about food.)*

**Tree-cutter:** "Well you are destroying the seeds that would make new trees!"

**Squirrel:** "I don't eat them all. The other seeds fall and eventually take root and become young trees."

**Frog:** *(Hopped up while Squirrel was speaking.)* "The leaves of the trees help clean the air and create oxygen. The trunk of the cypress tree is a great place to hide away from my predators that would eat me! Creeek, Creeek."

**Tree-cutter:** "You still have the stump and part of the trunk of the tree."

**Turtle:** *(Speaks very slowly and points to some cypress knees)* "If you please . . . . we need the whole tree! The roots of the cypress tree come out of the watery mud and form knees. These cypress knees catch sediment creating small mud islands where I can rest and sun myself."

**Armadillo:** *(Wonders around stage until he runs into Turtle as he finishes speaking.)* "Excuse me!" *(Tells Turtle then faces Tree-cutter )* "I live near the edge of the swamp. But, I also like to root around these islands for grubs and bugs to eat!" *(Moves around and hits Song Bird that is flying in.)* "Sorry! Sorry!" *(Turns in a circle facing the wrong way.)*

**Song Bird:** *(Flies down.)* "Oh! Armadillo! *(Turns Armadillo around to correct direction and then smooths her feathers. Faces and speaks to Tree-cutter.)* Did you know these mud islands created by the knees of the Cypress tree make a nursery where other plants can grow? Palmettos and



trees like Swamp Maples and Wax Myrtles. Oh! I love to eat the berries of Wax Myrtles and the insects found on these trees."

**Snake:** *(Made a zig-zag path to area while Song Bird is speaking.)*

"Thesssse treesss are great places for me to ssun myself and a place to look for my prey that livesss on the trunks and around the rootsss.

**Alligator:** *(While the alligator is speaking the audience cannot see the Tree-cutter because all the animals are circled around him.)* "The old Cypress Tree is about the last large tree in this swamp. It is a reminder of what the swamps were like when I hatched . . . *(Wags his arms.)* before all the old cypress trees were cut down. *(Pause and looks around.)* But the most important thing, the cypress tree holds the soil together in its watery habitat, creating an environment where we can all live. We need our trees!

**All the Animals:** *(Say very loud.)* "Don't cut our old Cypress tree!"  
*(Animals chant as they circle around the Tree-cutter, who has his head down as if asleep. Keep chanting but say each line softer until last line said in a whisper as all the animals go off stage in different directions.)*

"Don't cut our old Cypress tree!" "Don't cut our trees, if you please."

"If our trees are lost, our homes will be the cost!"

**Tree-cutter:** *(Goes to Sleep)*

**Animals:** *(Slowly move off stage whispering their chant - don't cut down our tree)*

**Tree-cutter:** *(Wakes up and looks around as last animal goes off stage.)*

"Was that a dream? Was I asleep, it seemed so real! I never thought about the cypress trees or the swamp that way . . . a home, a **community!**  
*(Picks up his pack, stands-up and turns around slowly to audience.)*

We don't need to cut anymore of the cypress trees in this swamp. We could even plant some cypress trees. Maybe, we should **preserve** this



swamp so other can see the great big tree. After all, that old Cypress tree has been standing so long it is now the **Monarch** of the Swamp.

*(Turns back to audience and freezes.)*

*(All the actors come back on stage and everyone takes a bow. Be sure to practice bow and on stage places for the end of the play.)*

# The End

A one act play  
by Wanda Lee Dickey, Park Ranger

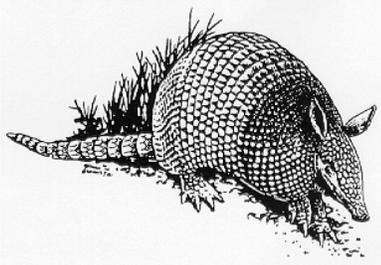
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## Animals in the Play:



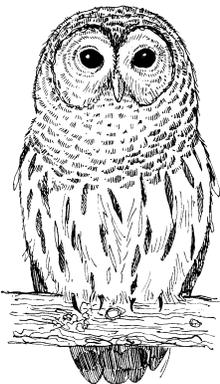
### **AMERICAN ALLIGATOR** **(*Alligator mississippiensis*)**

Alligators are aquatic reptiles, native to freshwater wetlands. Submerged alligators have a flap of skin that shuts off the throat so they can open their mouths under water, flaps of skin closes the ears, muscles close the nose, and a thin transparent covering across the eyes. Alligators can not control their body temperatures so in very hot weather they stay in the water or shade to cool off. During the cold months alligators dig burrows in under water banks and mud holes in the marsh. They become sluggish and food intake is minimal. Hunting and trapping of alligators is permitted but strictly regulated.



### **NINE BANDED ARMADILLO (*Dasypus***

**novemcinctus)** is covered with bony plates except for its ears and legs. Unlike the some South American armadillos it cannot curl into a ball to protect itself. Instead it digs a hole. Armadillos are mammals and have hair on their stomach areas. They are very agile and if surprised will jump high in the air. Armadillos use a long sticky tongue to catch insects and are most active at night. A litter, consist of 4 young with skin like soft leather, since their bony plates do not harden until they are fully grown.



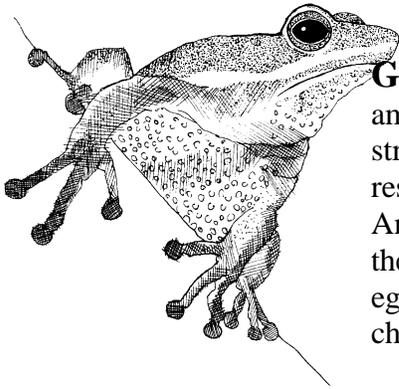
### **BARRED OWLS (*Strix varia*)** are common in wetlands of Louisiana.

While most owl species hunt at night (are nocturnal) the Barred Owl will hunt in the day time. Like most owls, the Barred Owl uses their excellent hearing, silent flight, and keen eyesight to capture mice and rats. Unlike most owls it has adapted its eating habits to whatever is available. It will eat crawfish, small mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and insects. Owls eat their prey whole and eliminate inedible parts (like fur, feathers, bones, etc.) in pellets. The Barred Owl makes its nest in large holes in trees in which 2 to 3 eggs are laid. Both the male and female feed the young. Their call sounds like “Who cooks for you?”



### **Great Egret (*Casmerodius albus*)**

Long-necked, large, white bird with yellow bill, black legs and feet. These elegant birds were almost hunted to extinction for their feathers to grace ladies hats and dresses. Early organizations around the 1900's such as the Audubon Society helped to save these birds. Egrets nest in colonies by making bulky stick nests in trees and shrubs. They eat small fish, frogs, small snakes and some insects.



**Green Tree Frog (*Hyla cinerea*)** is Louisiana's state amphibians. Green but gray when dormant and has a white stripe along each side. Found around still waters. Mating call resembles clink of cowbell.

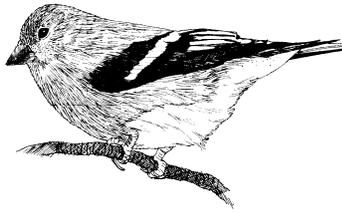
Amphibians live part of their lives in the water, and part of their lives on land. Frogs lay eggs in a mass in the water, the eggs hatch and tadpoles appear. The tadpoles feed, grow and change into adult frogs. Then they can live on the land.



### **Water Moccasin/ Cottonmouth (*Agkistrodon piscivorus*)**

A dark, heavy-bodied venomous water snake can be olive, brown or black; with no pattern or with a serrated-edged dark cross bands. If disturbed this snake will stand its ground and open its white "cotton" lined mouth.

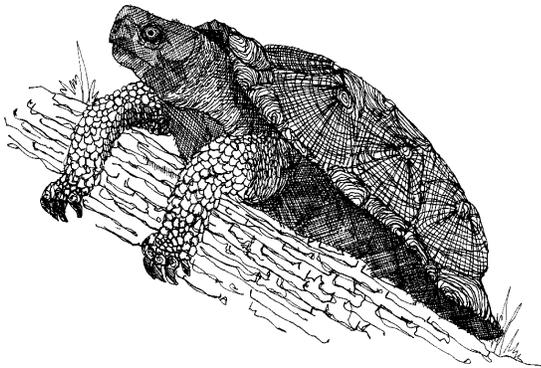
**Banded Water Snake (*Nerodia fasciata*)** Banded water snake, a non-venomous snake, is often confused with the water moccasin. In the swamps of Louisiana you will find many water snakes, if the pupil of their eye is round and not vertical and their head is not a flat-topped spade shape, these snakes are non-venomous.



**SONG BIRD** Many song birds migrate through the swamps and marshes along the Mississippi Fly Way during their winter and spring migration. The birds rest and feed on their way to their nesting areas. Some of these will remain through the summer and raise their young. One such bird is a bright yellow bird with blue-gray wings called a **Prothonotary Warbler (Protonotaria citrea)**.



**THE SQUIRREL (Sciurus carolinensis)** The eastern gray squirrel often appears brownish and at certain times black. It eats nuts, insects, fungi and even bark. Squirrels make a bush size nest of leaves and twigs in forks of large trees. This hollow dome nest is water proof. Squirrels also nest in holes in trees. Four to six young are born in each litter. Squirrels adapt well to human areas and can be found in most city parks, as well as in neighborhoods.



**TURTLE – RED-EARED SLIDER (Trachemys scripta)** There are many types of turtles in the wet lands. You can see them basking in the sun on logs near the bayous and canals. They feed on insects, freshwater clams, snails and aquatic plants. Most lay their eggs in June or July in nests near water but in sunny locations. Hatchlings emerge in about 2 ½ months, but the baby turtles can remain in the nest through the winter.

# How the Animals Saved the Old Cypress Tree

## Glossary

**Atmosphere** - the whole mass of air surrounding the earth.

**Baldcypress** - "Cypress" "Swamp Cypress", *Taxodium distichum* - A deciduous coniferous tree with needle-type leaves that can grow up to 140 feet in damp soil or directly in water. The round cone seed pod must have soil to germinate and can float as long as three years to find proper conditions. Most of the large cypress trees, part of the Redwood family, were cut for their heart wood which resists rot and insects. It has been called "Eternal Wood".

**Cypress Knees** are the roots of this tree that rise above the surface of the water. They catch sediment and often create small islands on which other vegetation can grow.

**Carnivores** - Animals that eat meat.

**Characters** - The part an actor plays.

**Community** - A group living in an area with similar interest or needs.

**Drought** - A period of time with no rain which can last for months or years.

**Environment** - The surrounding conditions that influence a person or thing.

**Forest, Bottomland Forest** - an area of land covered with trees and other plants. The ground in a bottomland forest can be wet or flooded but it does not have water on the land for long periods of time.

**Habitat** - A natural place where plants or animals live.

**Herbivores** - Animals that just eat plants.

**Marsh** - A wetland where only grass type plants grow.

**Monarch** - A king or queen that rules over an empire.

**Omnivores** - Animals that eat both plants and meat.

**Oxygen** - A gas that animals breathe in order to survive.

**Palmetto, Dwarf Palmetto, Louisiana Palmetto** *Sabal minor* - A fan shaped leaf palm with a stiff stem that grows in wetlands. It has small whitish flowers along a stem that become berries, a food for birds. Palmettos are among the most abundant of our native tree palms. The leaves were used to make shelters, hats and baskets.

**Predator** - An animal that hunts & eats other animals.

**Preserve** - An area of land where everything is protected.

**Prey** - Animals that are hunted for food by other animals.

**Protest** - An act to express thoughts about a perceived problem.

**Swamp/Red Maples**, *Acer rubrum* - These trees grow on damp or wet soil. The leaves are dull green with 3 shallow short pointed lobes. The flowers are red. In winter, the leaves turn red before dropping to the ground.

**Sediment** - Small bits of rock, sand and plants that create soil.

**Stage Directions** - The early European stage, performing area, was a raised platform in the open-air. The common people usually stood in front of the stage. So everyone standing could see the action on the stage. It was "raked" or slanted toward the audience. Therefore, the actor had to

go "up" to walk away from the audience and "down" to walk toward the audience. So the stage directions are from the point of the performer. Today, we still use these directions even though it is now the audience that is tilted.

**Swamp** - An area of land with trees that is always wet except in times of drought.

**Wax Myrtles, Southern Bayberry, *Myrica cerifera*** - A small tree, with evergreen aromatic narrow saw-toothed leaves, that produce male and female flowers on separate trees. The female flowers produce a tiny one seed berry covered with a bluish-white wax. Birds eat the berries. Early settlers made candles by boiling the berries for the wax.

**Wetlands** - Areas of land that are wet for at least part of the year.

# Benchmarks and Grade Level Expectations

## Benchmarks K-4

### Science as Inquiry

#### A. Abilities Necessary to do Scientific Inquiry

- SI-E-A1 asking appropriate questions about organisms and events in the environment.
- SI-E-A2 planning and/or designing and conducting a scientific investigation.
- SI-E-A3 communicating that observations are made with one's senses.
- SI-E-A6 communicating observations and experiments in oral and written formats.
- SI-E-A7 utilizing safety procedures during experiments.

#### B. Understanding Scientific Inquiry

- SI-E-B5 presenting the results of experiments.
- SI-E-B6 reviewing and asking questions about the results of investigations.

### Life Science

#### A. Characteristics of Organisms

- LS-E-A2 distinguishing between living and nonliving things;

### Language Arts: Reading

- ELA-1-E1 Gaining meaning from print and building vocabulary using a full range of strategies (e.g., self-monitoring and correcting, searching, cross-checking), evidenced by reading behaviors using phonemic awareness, phonics, sentence structure, and meaning
- ELA-1-E2 Using the conventions of print (e.g., left-to-right directionality, top-to-bottom, one-to-one matching, sentence framing)
- ELA-1-E3 Adjusting speed of reading (e.g., appropriate pacing, intonation, expression) to suit the difficulty of materials and the purpose for reading (e.g., enjoying, learning, problem solving)
- ELA-1-E5 Reading, comprehending, and responding to written, spoken, and visual texts in extended passages (e.g., range for fiction passages-450-1,000 words; range for nonfiction-450-850 words)
- ELA-1-E6 Interpreting (e.g., retelling, summarizing) texts to generate connections to real-life situations

### Language Arts: Writing

- ELA-2-E3 Creating written texts using the writing process
- ELA-2-E4 Using narration, description, exposition, and persuasion to develop compositions (e.g., stories, letters, poems, logs)
- ELA-2-E5 Recognizing and applying literary devices (e.g., figurative language)
- ELA-2-E6 Writing as a response to texts and life experiences (e.g., journals, letters, lists)
- ELA-3-E1 Writing legibly, allowing margins and correct spacing between letters in a word and words in a sentence
- ELA-3-E2 Demonstrating use of punctuation (e.g., comma, apostrophe, period, question mark, exclamation mark), capitalization, and abbreviations in final drafts of writing assignments
- ELA-3-E3 Demonstrating standard English structure and usage by writing clear, coherent sentences
- ELA-3-E4 Using knowledge of the parts of speech to make choices for writing
- ELA-3-E5 Spelling accurately using strategies (e.g., letter-sound correspondence, hearing and recording sounds in sequence, spelling patterns, pronunciation) and resources (e.g., glossary, dictionary) when necessary

### Language Arts: Critical Thinking

- ELA-7-E1 Using comprehension strategies (e.g., sequencing, predicting, drawing conclusions, comparing and contrasting, making inferences, determining main ideas) to interpret oral, written, and visual texts
- ELA-7-E2 Using basic reasoning skills, life experiences, and available information to solve problems in oral, written, and visual texts
- ELA-7-E3 Recognizing an author's purpose (reason for writing), and viewpoint (perspective)
- ELA-7-E4 Using basic reasoning skills to distinguish fact from opinion, skim and scan for facts, determine cause and effect, generate inquiry, and make connections with real-life situations

### Arts

- CE-1TH-E1 Explore and identify various emotions in interpersonal settings (1, 4)
- CE-1TH-E2 Interact in group situations and show differentiation of roles through experimentation and role playing (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
- CE-1TH-E3 Identify and exhibit physical and motional dimensions of characterization through experimentation and role playing (1, 2, 4, 5)
- CE-1TH-E4 Create story lines for improvisation (1, 2, 3, 4)
- CE-1TH-E5 Explore technical dimensions of the dramatic form individually and collaboratively such as theatrical space, scenery, costuming, make-up (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)



## Grade Level Expectations K-4

### Science as Inquiry

#### Abilities Necessary to do Scientific Inquiry

K 1 2 3 4

1 1 1 1 1

Ask questions about objects and events in the environment

2 2 2 2 2

Pose questions that can be answered by using students' own observations, scientific knowledge, and testable scientific investigations

4 5 6 6 7

Use the five senses to describe observations

6 7 8 8 9

Select and use developmentally appropriate equipment and tools (e.g., magnifying lenses, microscopes, graduated cylinders) and units of measurement to observe and collect data

7 8 9 9 10

Express data in a variety of ways by constructing illustrations, graphs, charts, tables, concept maps, and oral and written explanations as appropriate

8 9 10 11 12

Use a variety of appropriate formats to describe procedures and to express ideas about demonstrations or experiments (e.g., drawings, journals, reports, presentations, exhibitions, portfolios)

9 10 11 12 13

Identify and use appropriate safety procedures and equipment when conducting investigations (e.g., gloves, goggles, hair ties)

#### Understanding Scientific Inquiry

K 1 2 3 4

13 14

Identify questions that need to be explained through further inquiry

14 15

Distinguish between what is known and what is unknown in scientific investigations

20

Determine whether further investigations are needed to draw valid conclusions

### Life Science

#### Characteristics of Organisms

K 1 2 3 4

22 28

Classify objects in a variety of settings as *living (biotic)* or *nonliving (abiotic)*

### Physical Science

#### Properties of Objects and Materials

K 1 2 3 4

16

Observe and describe common properties of solids, liquids, and gases

17

Sort and classify objects by their state of matter

22

Investigate and explain conditions under which matter changes physical states: heating, freezing, evaporating, condensing, boiling

### Earth and Space Science

#### Properties of Earth Materials

K 1 2 3 4

37

Illustrate how water changes from one form to another (e.g., freezing, melting, evaporating)

35

Examine soils to determine that they are often found in layers

39

Identify the characteristics of soil, according to color, texture, and components, including *living (biotic)* and *nonliving (abiotic)* substances

36

Observe and record the properties of rocks, minerals, and soils gathered from their surroundings (e.g., color, texture, odor)

45

Recognize and describe that rock is composed of different combinations of minerals

46

Describe earth processes that have affected selected physical features in students' neighborhoods (e.g., rusting, weathering, erosion)

55

Recognize that sedimentary rocks are composed of particles that result from weathering and erosion (e.g., sandstones, conglomerates)

### Language Arts

#### Standard 1 – READING

K 1 2 3 4

1,5 1-5 1,2,4,5 1-6 1-3

ELA-1-E1

6,7 9

ELA-1-E2

9,10 15 10 10 5,7

ELA-1-E5

11 16 11 11 6

ELA-1-E6

#### Standard 2 – WRITING

K 1 2 3 4

19,20 26

ELA-2-E1

21 27

23 22

ELA-2-E2

23 28

ELA-2-E3

25 29

25

ELA-2-E4

27 30

26

ELA-2-E5

27 31

27 26

ELA-2-E6

#### Standard 3 – GRAMMER

K 1 2 3 4

28-30 32 27 28 27

ELA-3-E1

31 33,34 28,29 29,30 28

ELA-3-E2

35-38 30 31 30,31

ELA-3-E3

39 31,32 32

ELA-3-E4

32 40-43 33-35,37 33,34,36 32

ELA-3-E5

#### Standard 7 – CRITICAL THINKING

K 1 2 3 4

22 17 14

ELA-7-E1

22 18 15

ELA-7-E2

24 19,20 16

ELA-7-E3

25 24 21 19

ELA-7-E4

