



Arkansas Wildlife Federation’s “Wildlife of Arkansas” Student Art Contest Curriculum

Wildlife of Arkansas Student Art Contest	<u>Duration:</u> 1.5 hours (can be modified or broken into parts)	<u>Grades:</u> K-12 (can modify for higher grades)
<u>Key Concepts:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contest Overview & Rules <input type="checkbox"/> What is Wildlife? <input type="checkbox"/> Exploring the Outdoors <input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas Wildlife Research <p><u>Materials Needed:</u> Clipboard, handouts, art supplies</p>		<u>AR Standards Connections:</u> CR.2 Students will organize and develop artistic ideas and work. CR.3 Students will refine and complete artistic work. P.4 Students will analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.
<u>Supporting Resources:</u> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div data-bbox="136 701 548 1039"> <p><u>AWF Art Contest Webpage</u></p> <p>“The Divisions of Arkansas” Lesson Plan from Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission</p> <p>AGFC Wildlife Feature Videos</p> </div> <div data-bbox="578 739 987 1008"> <p>AGFC Wildlife Booklets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Backyard Birds <input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas Waterfowl <input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas Fish <input type="checkbox"/> Arkansas Snakes <input type="checkbox"/> Black Bears <input type="checkbox"/> Elk in Arkansas </div> <div data-bbox="1045 739 1370 814"> <p>Arkansas State Parks Digital Discovery</p> </div> </div>		
<u>Essential Understanding:</u> Participating in the Wildlife of Arkansas Student Art Contest provides an opportunity to challenge student artists, participate in a statewide competition, and practice creativity while connecting to nature.		
Essential Question: How can nature inspire art?		
<p>I. <u>Introduction</u></p> <p>Ask, “How can art help us learn about nature?” After some discussion (turn & talk, group share, etc) explain that your students will be participating in a statewide art contest focusing on Arkansas wildlife and nature.</p> <p>Contest overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contest is free and open to K-12 students in Arkansas. <input type="checkbox"/> One entry per student is accepted. <input type="checkbox"/> Artwork must be the student’s original work completed in the current school year and submitted online before the deadline of March 29, 2024. <input type="checkbox"/> Artwork must feature Arkansas-native plants, wildlife and/or landscapes. Artwork that does not will be disqualified. <input type="checkbox"/> All submissions must be titled. <input type="checkbox"/> Medium can be oil, acrylic, charcoal, pastel, watercolor, graphite, ink, and mixed media on canvas, wood, paper, or poster board no larger than 24”x32”. <input type="checkbox"/> Artwork will be judged based on three criteria: creativity, skill, and interpretation of the theme. <input type="checkbox"/> Three winners will be selected in each grade. 		

“Ensuring a thriving future for Arkansas wildlife.”



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- Winning artwork will be featured in a travelling art exhibition showcased at locations around the state.
- Submissions will open on January 8, 2024, and will remain open until the deadline on March 29. Artwork may be submitted anytime during this period.

II. Exploring the outdoors with creativity in mind

Next, prepare to take your class outdoors - either around your schoolyard, nearby park or natural area (even a single tree can provide good inspiration!). Before heading out, share your safety, behavior and learning expectations: (stay together, leave no trace, voice level, etc.) **Note:** if a suitable outdoor space is not available, you can use the AR State Parks "[Digital Discovery](#)" Resource for inspiration.

While exploring, students will practice their observation skills. Once you have arrived at your destination, direct them to pick up a leaf, rock or other small natural object. Each student should have one. Ask them to share with a partner what they notice about it: what can they see, feel, smell or hear as they observe it? If your students have access to appropriate technology (cameras, smartphones, etc.) they can take reference photos during this time.

Then, explain that they will practice using their art skills to interpret their nature object in four different ways using the "Nature Art Four Ways" Handout at www.arwild.org/art-contest.

III. Research & Plan

Upon returning to class, explain that the class will be planning their artwork for entry in the contest. To help with this, define the following terms:

Wildlife: Any wild animal that is naturally occurring in an area. Can also include plants, fungi or other living things.

Native Species: Wildlife that are naturally present in a habitat, having not been introduced by people nor escaped from captivity.

Next, have the students brainstorm by making a list of animals that are interesting to them. At this point, any animal is fair game, including fish, birds, insects, etc. Then, have them work independently or in pairs to eliminate species that are not native to Arkansas (the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission has an excellent set of basic identification guides for a variety of wildlife, [found here](#)). Then, have them circle their top three favorite animals. Note: Some students may list groups of animals like "snakes" or "ducks." In this case, it may be helpful for them to select a particular species (for example, "timber rattlesnake" or "wood duck") which will make it easier to plan their artwork later on.

End the lesson with the research and planning handout, available for download at <http://www.arwild.org/art-contest>.