

Animal Dads



Written and illustrated by Ami Dobelle

Teacher friendly and ready to use, this guide aligns with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and is appropriate for kindergarten through grade three. It includes discussion questions, fun multidisciplinary activities, and printable sheets. Your students will be meaningfully engaged and will ask for more books and information about all of the different kinds of animal dads!

Guides and activities by Ami Dobelle can be found at www.amidobelle.com

About this Book:

Animal Dads is a book based on real animal dads whose parenting skills are above others in the animal kingdom. From seahorses to emperor penguins, readers will learn about how these animal dads are number one when raising their offspring.

About the Author:

Ami Dobelle has had an extensive career at zoos and aquariums. She has studied animals and animal behavior for over twenty years. Ami is an experienced educator and animal trainer, who has appeared as an animal expert on multiple television shows. Her hands-on work with animals inspired her to write *Animal Dads*. Please visit her website at www.amidobelle.com.

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Curriculum written by Ami Dobelle, a high school teacher and a creator and contributor to the curriculum for the Paramus Catholic High School in Paramus, New Jersey.



Pre-reading Discussion Questions:

Before reading this book, launch a discussion with students and invite them to engage in the story's theme.

- In this book different the roles of various animal dads are discussed. Who helps you get ready for school in the morning? Who helps you with your homework?
- Look at the cover of this book and predict what it will be about. Do you think this story will be fiction or non-fiction? Why?

Post-reading Discussion Questions:

Standards: RL1, RL2, RL3, RL5, RL7, SL1, SL2, SL3, SL4, SL5, SL6, L1, L5, L6 2

- What were some of the animal dads discussed in the book? Were there any that surprised you?
- Discuss the amount of babies that some of the dads had to take care of. Who had the most?
- A red fox dad teaches his babies how to hunt by playing games. Are there games that you like to play that also help you learn?
- Which animal dads had to take care of babies that hatched from eggs? Do you think that these dads have a harder job than the dads with babies that don't hatch from eggs?
- Turn and talk with a friend. Describe the animal dads. Compare one of the animal dads to your dad or the person who takes care of you.

Activities:

Writing: (Grades K-1) Standards: RL3, W2, W8, SL1, L1, L2

Discuss with the students how the animals in *Animal Dads* had special skills that helped to raise their babies. Ask the children if they can recall some of these animal dads' abilities. For example, the Rhea Dad had to sit on a nest for two months, the Crocodile Dad had to help the babies out of their eggs, and the Giant Water Bug Dad had to carry all of his eggs on his back. Ask children about their own talents leading them to discover that every person is good at different things.

Ask students to write a sentence telling what they do well on a strip of paper. Children may need a sentence starter on the board that reads *I can...* or use the strips on page 4 of this lesson plan. As an option, you may use a large sentence strip for whole group. Place their sentence in an old coffee container labeled “I Can” on the front. After all the children place their sentences in the can, the teacher selects a strip of paper from the can and reads only the name of the child that wrote the sentence. That child will act out the sentence using no words, just motion. For example, if a student wrote a sentence that says, “I can swim,” then he would pantomime swimming, and his classmates would guess his talent. If another child wrote, “I can write in Russian,” then she would show her action, and her friends would guess her talent. This is a wonderful introduction for the first day of school to get to know students’ names and their talents, as well as a beginning lesson on the uses of the verb “can”.

As an extension, ask for the students to think of something they might want to learn. For example, the Crocodile Dad has lots of sharp teeth, but no wings. The Crocodile Dad might want to learn to fly. Children who are ready to expand their writing can write about something they would like to learn to do or something they might need to practice. For example, a child might write: *I want to learn how to ride my bike without training wheels.*

Writing: (grades 2-3) Standards: RL3, W8, SL1, L1, L2

Talk to the students about the roles of the different animal dads in the book. Guide children to the fact that each animal dad does something special and unique to help raise his babies. Ask students if they have something special that they like to do with their dad or the person who takes care of them. Talk to students and remind them that at the end of the book, we see different animals that raise their babies all different ways. One nice thing about this lesson is that the students will learn that it is not always a mom who raises babies.

Tell students that they are going to help to compose a list of all the different ways that their dad, and all the other people in their lives, help them on a daily basis. It does not only have to be specifically dad focused. Pair students up and ask them to create a poster of all the special people who help them. The poster must include between 2 and 4 people and must be positive statements. For example, “My grandmother helps me brush my teeth.” Once children are finished they will present their posters to their classmates. Compare the posters to see if there are many students who listed similar people who help them.

I can _____ .

I can _____ .

I can _____ .

I can _____ .