**Unit 3 Lesson 5: YOU are Conservation**

**Lesson Topic: Student Research and Conservation Action**

**Lesson Theme(s):** Anyone can be a conservationist, including students. Our new knowledge can positively contribute to the outside world and improve life for all.

**Missouri Science Standards: LS2.C.2; ESS3.C.2; ETS1.A.1**

**Activity 1: Pick a Species and Learn All You Can**

*Activity Summary: Students pick a species they want to study from the Missouri Bird Conservation Plan. Then, using the skills they developed in Lesson 1, they do their own research to find out as much as they can about the species including what is the in Missouri Bird Conservation Plan – Technical Section.*

*Teacher Notes:*

* *The Missouri Bird Conservation Plan was both written for professionals as well as the public. However, some of the language and vocabulary used may still be advanced for these grade levels. Therefore, it may be important to state this to the students and encourage them to look up any terms they are unfamiliar with.*
* *Another option would be to reach out to any of the organizations and agencies listed on the plan to see if anyone would be willing to come talk to the students about the plan and answer any questions the students have about the plan and/or their species.* 
  + *The Missouri River Bird Observatory (MRBO) would be willing and contact information is listed on the Virtual Nature School website.*

**Activity 2: Make a Story**

*Activity Summary: Students will create their own story about the bird they chose to teach the other students about it. They can choose whatever format that most speaks to them (Ex: Podcast interview, comic book strip, short story, informational video, write a play, etc.) This story should include what is impacting their species and why its declining.*

*Teacher Notes:*

* *Students’ choice on format may largely depend on availability of resources to the individual students. The activity instructions are written in a broad sense for students to choose what format they would like to use, but if resources are limited, one option may be to give students only a few options to choose from.* 
  + *Other options: instead of filming a video, the students could perform LIVE. Instead of a recorded podcast, they could do so LIVE in front of the class.*

**Activity 3: Call to Action**

*Activity Summary: Students come up with a plan on what they can do with their classmates to help their species of bird. This could include a variety of actions from doing a trash pickup, to planting native plants in their schoolyard, to writing a letter to a conservation organization in their community. This activity should walk the students through what we can do as a society to help their species, what is already being done, and what can they do as students to help.*

*Teacher Notes:*

* *Students may need sufficient time and help with brainstorming a plan of action. However, it will be a valuable life skill for them to work through setting a goal for a specific task and working out how they can accomplish it.*
* *Students may choose to involved other students in their plans. It might be helpful to ask the students ahead of time whether they would be willing to help another student with their project.* 
  + *Another option would be to make it mandatory that each student help with another student’s project; either through editing their plan or contributing to the action itself.*

**Concluding Questions**

\*Student worksheet included in packet.

*Teacher Note: These questions are built for reflection instead of assessment due to the content of the lesson*.

1. Why did you choose the species that you chose?
2. What resource did you find most helpful when researching information about your species? Why was this resource the most helpful?
3. What did you find most surprising about why the species you chose is declining? Explain.
4. What aspect of “Activity 2: Make a Story” was the most enjoyable to you and why?
5. What did you find most challenging about making a plan of action for helping conserve the species of your choice? Why was this challenging?
6. What do you think you have gained from this experience that you will carry with you into the future? Be specific.