

Project Numbat

Teacher and Student Resource Package

Middle and Upper Primary School

About Project Numbat

Project Numbat is a community-based not-for-profit organisation working to raise awareness and support for the conservation of Western Australia's unique animal emblem, the Numbat.

Information about the organisation and its activities can be found at www.numbat.org.au.

Teacher Overview

The following package has been developed by Project Numbat to support teachers in embedding conservation education into curriculum programs. The package provides cross-curricular activities focusing on the Western Australian animal emblem – the endangered Numbat – and other native animals.

It has been designed to enhance the effectiveness of the Project Numbat powerpoint presentation which can be downloaded and delivered by teachers with the accompanying detailed lesson plan to support its implementation. It is strongly advised you read the **Numbat Fact Sheet** before delivering the presentation as this covers most aspects of the Numbat and will help in guiding discussion and answering questions during the presentation.

Alternatively, teachers can request a Project Numbat volunteer to deliver the presentation and facilitate discussions on-site with students. Requests can be sent to schools@numbat.org.au.

If a Project Numbat volunteer is visiting your school, please note they are not all trained teachers, though all have experience working within the education field and all have current Working with Children status. Please support our presenters and your students by reading this support pack carefully to ensure you maximise the learning opportunities available from this experience.

The Before and After Activity Packages extend the learning experiences beyond the powerpoint presentation, thus enabling the key understandings to be embedded across the curriculum over a period of time instead of being delivered as an isolated learning experience.

Through use of these activities prior to and after the presentation, teachers can ensure learning opportunities are maximised. This will nurture the development of environmentally responsible students and ultimately lead to positive actions being undertaken that support the well-being of our unique Western Australian native animals.

We Want to Hear from You!

We are keen to hear how you have implemented the Project Numbat education package in your classroom and would like to showcase student learning on our website. If you have anything you would like to show us, please send it to schools@numbat.org.au.



Before Presentation Activities

Word Fun!

Students will benefit from discussing the following vocabulary prior to the presentation:

- *native* – found in or coming from a particular place
- *unique* – special; one of a kind
- *mammal* – special group of animals, classified/grouped by a covering of hair over the skin. Females produce milk to feed young
- *marsupial* – a mammal that gives birth to underdeveloped young (not born like a small version of the adult like a human baby), which develop outside the mother, often in a pouch.
- *predator* – an animal that preys on another animal for food
- *prey* – an animal hunted or caught for food
- *habitat* – the environment where an animal lives
- *diurnal* – active during the day

Ways to have fun with these words include:

Word Guess Charades (Resource 1)

Cut out and fold the words provided in the resource. In small groups, each person takes a turn selecting a word card. They then either act out/draw/or give verbal clues (nominate method as they have their turn) so others can guess the word.

Native or Not (Resource 2)

Conduct a magazine animal search and sort the animal pictures according to where the animal originates from. Organise the pictures by investigating the original locations of the animals and glue them onto the world map provided.

Letter Juggle

Work in small groups, pairs or individually to see how many smaller words you can make using the letters from each word in the list e.g. Habitat – habit, bat, hit, it, that, bait etc.

Pictorial Definitions

Design pictorial definitions to convey the meaning of the words in the list, followed by the dictionary meaning.

Word Find (Resource 3)

Animal Classification

Part of learning about the Numbat involves learning how it relates to other animals within the Animal Kingdom. Some activities that you could use prior to the presentation to develop student understanding include the following.

KWL Chart

Initiate discussion with students using a KWL Chart to guide the process in order to explore animal

classification. This will serve as a good basis for teachers to identify what knowledge/understanding students already have in regards to the topic as well as determine what further learning needs to take place as you explore the topic further. The chart can then be used as a reflection tool for students to determine what knowledge they have gained following the implementation of additional learning sessions.

Teachers may choose to complete this as a whole class, or in small groups followed by sharing sessions. You may like to use the table below as a starting off point.

KWL Chart: Animal Classification		
What we know	What we want to know	What we learnt
Classification makes it easier to identify and understand things Animals have common names and scientific names Not all animals are the same	How are animals classified? When were animals first classified and why?	

Skin Coverings* (Resource 4)

In pairs, students are provided with two animals from resource 4. Examine the animals and conduct a Think, Pair, Share about the animal and discuss what they know about it (what the animal looks like, comes from etc.).

Join two pairs and expand on this knowledge by going through the same process. Repeat process again so groups now consist of six students and six animals. Once discussions have occurred, select students to share with everyone what animals are in their group and some of the things they know about them.

Next, students try to identify a rule to sort their animals into groups. Share these findings with the class.

Explain to students that all of these animals belong to a special group in the Animal Kingdom and to be a part of this kingdom animals are sorted into different groups accordingly to some rules, just like they have tried to do. Swedish naturalist Carolus Linnaeus (1707-1778) developed a system for animal and plant classification which is still used today.

Numbat Classification

Kingdom: Animalia, or animal

Phylum: Chordata, or has a backbone

Class: Mammalia, or has a backbone and nurses its young

Order: Dasyuromorphia

Family: Myrmecobiidae

Genus: Myrmecobius

Species: fasciatus

Explain through the example of the Numbat there are seven levels of classification which begin as a broad category with general, simple rules (Kingdom – animal/plant/fungus, Phylum – backbone/no backbone) which become more specific as the classification process proceeds to each new level, with the final level of classification being highly specific and complex in their grouping.

Sorting animals according to their skin covering is one basic level of animal classification. Brainstorm the names of these groups with them: mammals (hair/fur), amphibians (slimy skin), reptiles (dry scales), birds (feathers) and fish (wet scales). For further investigation you may wish students to explore further how the classification for each animal class then uses more complex rules beyond body coverings to group animals within each class (for example; mammals – mammary glands, reptiles – shed skin).

Discuss with students why animals are classified into different groups.

Additional Information

Numbats are the only species in their family, whereas others have numerous genus, species and subspecies. This means that if the Numbat were to go extinct, the whole genus and family would too, as has already happened with the Tasmanian Tiger.

For example:

FAMILY: Dasyuridae (over 50 predator species including quolls, Tasmanian Devils, Mulgaras, Dibblers, Kowari, antechinus, phascogales, dunnarts, planigales)

FAMILY: Thylacinidae (only one species, the Thylacine, already extinct)

FAMILY: Myrmecobiidae (one species, the Numbat)

Unique Natives in my Backyard (Resource 5)

Conduct research to learn more about Australian native animals (encourage WA native animals). Use resource 5 to investigate and prepare a written report on a specific Australian animal.

As a whole class design a survey that assists in identifying the most liked Australian animal as communicated by peers in other classes across the school. Then use the survey research to graph the results and interpret the findings ready to share with class peers.

Traditionally you will find that there will be a couple of high profile Australian mammals that are most popular and thus there will be opportunity to discuss other native animals and ultimately learning about what is in your backyard. Examples of native animals to include as choices on your graph include:

- Kangaroo
- Wallaby
- Numbat
- Echidna
- Wombat
- Bilby
- Possum
- Dugite
- Fur Seal