Lesson 3.5
Exploring Parental Care
Lesson Overview

This lesson continues the investigation of how young offspring survive, with a new focus on how some young animal offspring signal to their parents when they need something. Students watch two short videos that provide evidence of this signaling. Next, pairs visualize possible ways young offspring in the Parents and Offspring book might signal to their parents, before acting out some of these possible signals using the Survival Role-Play movement routine. To conclude the chapter, students complete the final pages of their Animal and Plant Offspring mini-books by adding words to finish the sentences and drawings to illustrate them. The purpose of this lesson is to construct the idea that some young animal offspring signal their parents with sounds or movements in order to get the help they need, as well as to summarize what students have learned about parents and offspring in Chapter 3.

Investigative phenomenon: Young offspring survive.

Students learn:

- Some kinds of young offspring get help from their parents and other kinds of young offspring survive on their own.
- Some young animal offspring signal their parents with sounds or movements to get the help they need.
Visualizing Offspring Signals

Students visualize possible offspring signals as they review the photographs in the *Parents and Offspring* book.

**Instructional Guide**

1. **Introduce the visualizing activity.** Hold up the *Parents and Offspring* big book. Explain that students will think about what they have learned about offspring signalling their parents and visualize how young offspring in the book might signal their parents when they need help.

2. **Model visualizing alligator offspring signals.** Open the big book to page 10.

   - **Question:** When I look closely at this picture, I observe an alligator parent with its young alligator offspring on its back.
   - **Thoughts:** I am going to visualize how a young alligator offspring might let its parent know it needs to get up on its parent’s back. If I do not know how alligators get their parents’ attention, I could think about what I do know about young offspring getting their parents’ attention.
   - **Visual:** I am picturing the young alligator in the water next to its parent. I know young offspring make noises to get their parents’ attention. I am imagining the young alligator offspring making a noise. I am also imagining it touching its parent with its foot or poking it with its nose.

3. **Distribute books and assign partners.** Have students turn to page 8.

4. **Pairs visualize and discuss baby birds’ signals on page 8.** Ask students to observe the picture closely and then visualize how the baby birds let their parents know they need food. Give partners time to discuss. Call on a few volunteers to share their ideas.

5. **Have pairs visualize and discuss signals of other young offspring.** Explain that students will now turn to another page that shows young offspring. They will observe the picture closely, and then visualize how the young offspring might let their parents know they need help. Students may discuss elephants (page 12), penguins (page 14), tigers (page 16), chimpanzees (page 18), wolves (page 20), or seals (page 22).
6. **Share ideas as a class.** Call on volunteers to share what they visualized. Emphasize that the class does not have enough evidence to know exactly how these young offspring signal to get their parents attention, but students’ ideas about offspring making noises or touching their parents seem likely.

7. **Collect the books.**

**Teacher Support**

**Rationale**

**Pedagogical Goals: Visualizing Offspring Signals for Parental Care**

In this activity, students think about and apply what they have figured out about how offspring signal to their parents for help. Students have seen videos of young thrush and wolf offspring signaling to their parents, but the rest of the animals they focus on in this activity are new. As a result, it is likely students will visualize young offspring signaling in ways those animals do not actually signal. The goal of this activity is to provide students with additional experience that young animal offspring signal to their parents for help, and that parents respond to those signals by providing help. The goal is not for students to be able to identify exactly how offspring signal, or the type of care parents provide. So, even if students’ visualizations are not accurate, students are building their understanding of the key ideas in the lesson.

**Instructional Suggestion**

**What One Teacher Did: Extending the Discussion**

One teacher planned a more robust discussion for students to share the offspring signals they visualized. After sharing with one partner, she had students switch partners and describe something they had visualized to their new partner. Then, in a full class discussion, she had students share the pictures they made in their minds and invited volunteers to respond in one of two ways—either by saying they had visualized something similar or by explaining what they had visualized and how it was different. Practicing with a partner first supported students in using language to describe the images they visualized. Having students explain what they visualized and how it was different provided opportunities for students to hear about and compare different ways offspring might signal.
Visualizing Offspring Signals

Students visualize possible offspring signals as they review the photographs in the *Parents and Offspring* book.

**Instructional Guide**

1. **Introduce the visualizing activity.** Hold up the *Parents and Offspring* big book. Explain that students will think about what they have learned about offspring signalling their parents and visualize how young offspring in the book might signal their parents when they need help.

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