



Weaselhead Kindergarten - Grade 1 At School Program Teacher's Guide Dark Skies and Storytelling

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Thank you for your participation in our Kindergarten and Grade 1 Weaselhead Indoor Education Program! This program is specifically designed to meet cross curricular learning outcomes focused on the new Alberta Science and Social Studies curriculums. Our program is led by a Weaselhead Naturalist who brings their own expertise and personal experiences to your program.

The following items have been enclosed in this Teacher's Guide package:

- Curriculum Connections
- Program Objectives
- Participant Guidelines
- Behavioural Expectations
- Program Outline
- Activities
- Background Information on the Weaselhead Area

Program Overview

Students develop a sense of place by exploring their place in the community and the histories that connect us while learning about the importance of dark skies for all living things. Available year round.

Curriculum Connections

Kindergarten

Science: Children examine and describe surrounding environments; Children examine properties of objects.

Social Studies: Children explore self, others, and the past through expressions of traditions, cultures, and histories; Children explain how cooperation contributes to achieving common goals.

Grade 1

Science: Students analyze properties of objects and investigate how they can be changed; Students investigate direction, pathway, and speed of moving objects and animals; Students analyze environments and investigate interactions and changes; Students investigate and examine needs of plants and animals.

Social Studies: Students examine major physical features and key landmarks of our world; Students explore cultures of diverse communities; Students examine how belonging is supported within groups and communities.

Guiding Questions

Science

Matter

- What senses do we use to explore the night sky?
- How does light change our ability to see stars?

Earth Systems

- How can environments be explored?

Social Studies

- How can sharing cultures and histories build connections between people?
- How can people work together in groups?

Before the Program

Pre-program preparation

- Students should have a journal or clipboard with blank paper.

Program Outline: 1.5 Hours

5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction, Land Acknowledgement Washroom visit
35 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation on the night sky and how we use our senses to explore it.• Activity: How light changes how we see the sky
40 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using storytelling to connect cultures• Activity: stories from the sky
10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wrap up Discussion

Activities

- Presentation on the night sky
- Light pollution activity where students learn how different brightnesses and colours of light affect how we view the world around us.
- Storytelling: Star stories from around the world are shared to show how we can use stories to learn and connect to each other and develop a sense of place in the community.

Weaselhead History

The Weaselhead area has a name shrouded in mystery. Like so many Indigenous stories, how the Weaselhead got its name has been lost over time. What we do know is that although there are weasels that call this area home, the name has nothing to do with actual weasels! Weaselhead is a traditional Blackfoot last name, so the name may be related to someone from the Blackfoot Confederacy. There is written history of a man with the name Weazel Head on the Tsuut'ina reserve as well, but little is known about where he originated. Early settler Sam Livingston, whose house is now part of Calgary's Heritage Park, was the first European to settle in the Elbow River valley, now known as the Weaselhead.

Between 1910 and 1990, Tsuut'ina reserve and parts of the Weaselhead were used for military training exercises. Foxholes and signs warning of ordinances possibly left behind remind us of this history, even today. The last time an exploded device was found was during the floods of 2013.

The City of Calgary bought what is now the Weaselhead from the Tsuut'ina Nation in 1929 to build the Glenmore Reservoir, which still provides roughly 40% of Calgary's drinking water.

Today, this protected area spans 404 hectares (989 acres) and is bursting with diverse habitats. Wander through dense White Spruce forests, leafy Balsam Poplar groves, and colourful wildflower meadows. The Elbow River winds through it all, with floodplains, beaver ponds, and wetlands teeming with life.

As you explore, you'll uncover clues to the area's rich history. Fossils in sandstone cliffs date back 35 million years, and traces of ancient river paths still shape the landscape. You can find evidence of Indigenous campsites and buffalo hunts, as well as remnants of a military training base that once operated here.

With over 480 plant species, including rare ones like the Western Wood Lily, the Weaselhead is a wildlife haven. Frogs, salamanders, and more than 200 bird species thrive here, while larger animals like moose, bears, and even cougars visit throughout the year.

The Weaselhead is a living tapestry of Calgary's natural and cultural history, offering a rich, engaging experience for all who visit.