Ponder A Pond
Pre-visit Activities
4th- 6th Grade

The activities included in this pre-visit packet have been designed to help you and your students prepare for your upcoming program at the St. Joseph County Parks. By becoming familiar with this information, your students will have a better understanding of the activities that we will conduct with them at the park.

Pond Animal Secrets
Discover some surprising secrets about a few wetland animals.
Use the code to fill in the solutions for each secret.

| a | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | i | j | k | l | m | n | o | p | q | r | s | t | u | v | w | x | y | z |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |

1. Native Americans once made whistles from this bird’s wing bones.

   ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
   19  1  14  4  8  9  12  12  3  18  1  14  5

2. This kind of insect has been around for about 300 million years!

   ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
   4  18  1  7  15  14  6  12  25

3. This water animal scoots backward through the water with a flip of its tail.

   ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
   3  18  1  25  6  9  19  8

4. This bird’s coloring earned it the nickname “bridal duck.”

   ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
   23  15  15  4  4  21  3  11

5. This water animal catches food with its tongue.

   ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
   6  18  15  7

6. This is the most common duck in North America.

   ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______ ______
   13  1  12  12  1  18  4

Activity adapted from: *Wetland Wild Activity Book from Duck’s Unlimited*
What Kinds of Plants & Animals Can You Find in a Pond?

Unscramble the words below and write them in the spaces provided to discover just a few plants and animals that live in a pond. Then read down through the letters in the boxes to discover the secret message.

ilyl dpa  __ __ __ __  □□__ __

sutmoqoi  __ □ __ __ __ __ __

nisla     __ □ __ __ __

yefsladml □ __ __ __ __ __ __

fycisrah  __ __ __ __ __ __ □ __

hkwa      __ □ __ __

rconaoc   □ __ __ __ __ __ __

rltue     __ __ __ __ __ __ __ □

lcatita   □ __ __ __ __ __ __

gofr      __ __ □ __

lwoliw  erte □ __ __ __ __ __ __

yalmfy    __ __ __ __ □ __

The secret message is: ____________________________
Through this creative writing activity, students will create a poem to show their understanding of ponds and the animals that live there. There are a number of ways in which to write a poem, but one way that is fun and easy for students is called *Nouning*.

```
Noun Title
Two Adjectives
Three Verbs
Phrase
Repeat Noun
```

**Example:**

```
Great Blue Heron
quiet, patient
flying, wading, catching
searching for a tasty meal
Great Blue Heron
```

Students should understand the concepts of noun, adjective, verb and phrase. Work on a classroom-wide poem first on the board. Be flexible on subject matter allowing students to choose a specific species (plant or animal) or ponds in general for their poem.

**Materials Needed:**
- paper
- pencil
- poem format described above

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**Dragonfly Match**

Circle the two dragonflies that are exactly the same.
Ponds are Plentiful

algae    frog
bloodworm  leech
clam      mayfly
coontail  minnow
crayfish   mosquito
damsel    scud
daphnia    snail
dragonfly  tadpole
duckweed   waterstrider
During your visit to the park, you will scoop in the pond with a small strainer. What do you think you will catch? Here are a few things that you might see wiggling in your scoop! Many of the creatures you will find are the young (baby or teenage phase) of different insects.

**Dragonfly (nymph) (teenage phase):**
They are predators (eat other animals) and will especially eat other insects in the water.

**Damselfly (nymph) (teenage phase):**
It has three leaf-shaped gills at the tip of its abdomen (end of its body.)

**Tadpole:**
Some kinds of tadpoles turn into an adult frog or toad after only 12 days. Other kinds live as tadpoles for three years!

**Predaceous Diving Beetle (adult):**
Its shiny, flattened, oval shaped body is generally black to brownish black.

**Mayfly (nymph) (teenage phase):**
It has three, featherlike tail flaps at the end of its body.

**Giant water bug (adult):**
It uses its first pair of legs for grabbing prey.
### Answer Sheet

**for**

**Ponder A Pond**

**Pre-visit Activities**

4th-6th Grade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pond Animal Secrets</th>
<th>What Kind of Plants &amp; Animals Can You Find in a Pond?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. sandhill crane</td>
<td>- lily pad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. dragonfly</td>
<td>- mosquito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. crayfish</td>
<td>- snail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. wood duck</td>
<td>- damselfly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. frog</td>
<td>- crayfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. mallard</td>
<td>- hawk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Dragonfly Match

- Dragonfly 1
- Dragonfly 2
- Dragonfly 3
- Dragonfly 4