

Discovery of Desert Animals & Plants



Star W Project 2003-2004

Public School No. 3  
West New York, NJ  
Grade 3 Room 104

*Marion Renner-Tracey*  
May 28, 2004

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*Discovery of Desert Animals and Plants*  
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Project Title: *Discovery of Desert Animals & Plants*

Overview of Project

The reason I choose desert animals and plants was based on my last few years of teaching in the third grade.

Eight and nine year old students become very excited about almost any topic in science, but I have found this to be especially true when it comes to the unit on habitats. Animals hold a special interest for them. Studying where an animal lives, how he survives, and the food he eats opens the door to discovery of the unknown.

This year we were able to take a trip into the Sonoran Desert via technology. My students were able to read about and view on the internet, varied types of animals and plants indigenous to the Sonoran Desert. It truly was a thrill!

Using the wireless, laptop computers several times per week became the highlight of our classroom experience. We used the Inspiration Program and Microsoft Word to help us complete our project. On average we were able to use the wireless, laptops from the cart three times per week for an average of 80 minutes each time.

All the students were able to complete their own individual books containing the materials we covered in this unit. It was a great learning experience! Try it. You'll be amazed at what can be accomplished!!

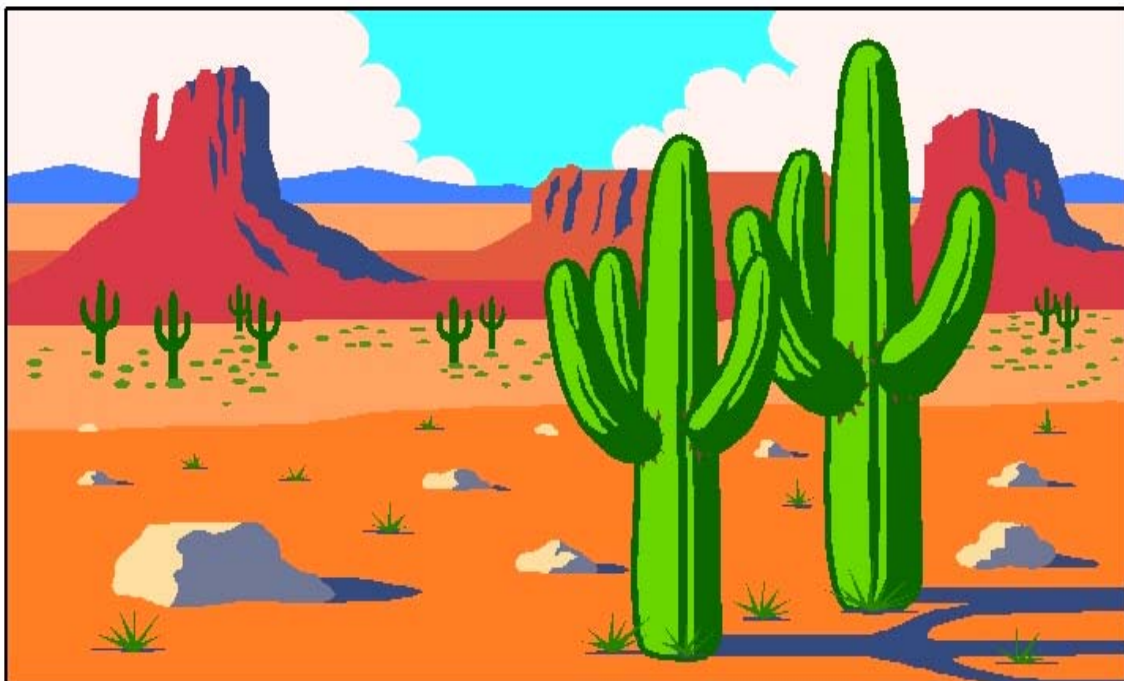
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- 8. Desert Diorama Picture with Acrostic Poem**
  - a. Handout
  - b. Sample of Student Writing ( Scanned & Typed ) that includes a Photo of Student Taken with the Digital Camera
  
- 9. Desert Project Cover**
  - a. Lesson Plan
  - b. Sample of Student's Work

# Star - W Desert Project Checklist

- \_\_\_\_\_ Desert Cover
- \_\_\_\_\_ Desert Animals & Plants
- \_\_\_\_\_ Desert Animals with Notes
- \_\_\_\_\_ My Desert Animal (picture & paragraph)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Venn Diagram (desert & forest)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Forest & Desert Picture (colored by students,  
scanned - small paragraph)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Desert Habitat ( with student picture & acrostic  
poem - DESERT)



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**Lesson Plan- One**

**Lesson Title:** Desert Animals Struggle to Survive

**Subject/Grade:** Science/ Language Arts

**Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS):**

Language Arts - 3.1 through 3.5

Science – 5.1 through 5.12

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will create a list of desert animals and plants.

**Materials:** Scott Foresman Science Textbook Grade 3, Chapter 1.2  
Science Journal

**Procedure:** Students will:

1. Orally read and discuss Chapter 1.2
2. Teacher will model list of animals & plants on blackboard
3. Students will review text and enter names of animals & plants into their science journals.

**Evaluation:** Teacher will collect science journals and check lists for accuracy. ( Final Desert Project will be evaluated by teacher created rubric)



# Desert Animals & Plants

g i l a

saguaro cactus

woodpecker

barrel cactus

elf owl

creosote bushes

mice

spiny lizard

wildflowers

gecko

desert tortoise

mesquite trees

bats

ground squirrel

palo verdes

kangaroo rat

kit fox

ocotillas plants

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**Lesson Plan -Two**

**Lesson Title:** Animal and Plant Graphic Organizer

**Subject/Grade:** Science/Language Arts Grade 3

**Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS):**

Language Arts- 3.1 through 3.5

Science – 5.1 Through 5.12

**Lesson Objectives:**

Students will list desert animals and plants indigenous to the Sonoran Desert. Students will create a picture web with a text box and label said box.

**Technology Objectives:**

To insert a picture from the symbol palette

To identify text symbol and create a text box

To insert text in a word web

**Materials:** Computer with installed Inspiration Program

Printer

Procedure for students to follow

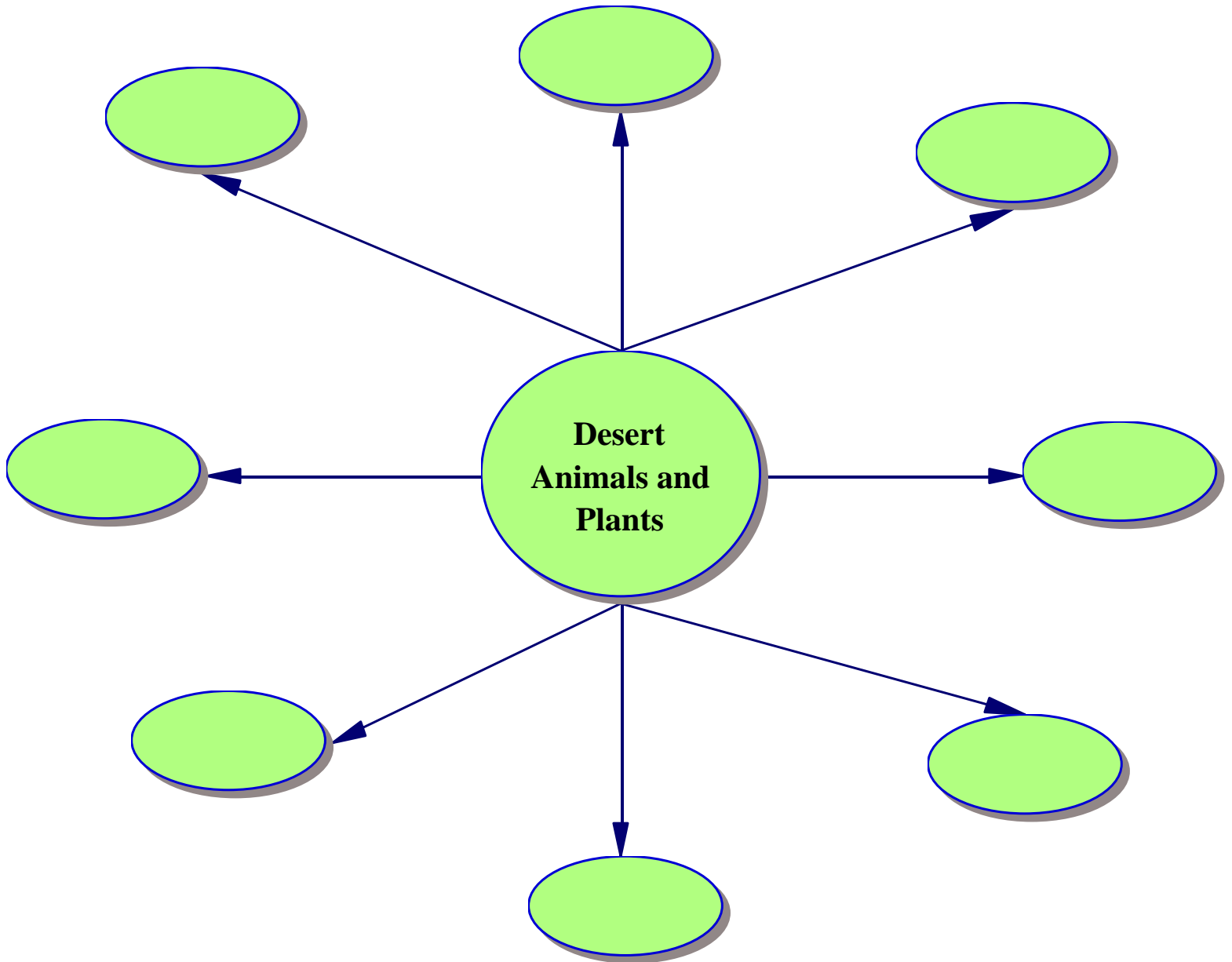
**Procedure:** Students will:

1. Open Inspiration Program and display symbol palette
2. Select a library in the category of animals/plants. Click on animals /plants.
3. Select animal or plant and fill in web
4. Find the text box and type in name under picture.
5. Type your name at the bottom of the web.
6. Print your work.

**Evaluation:** Teacher observation of students while using laptops and accessing Inspiration Program. Teacher will review printed work and grade accordingly. ( Final project evaluated by teacher created rubric)**Desert**

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**Animals and Plants-Graphic Organizer Template**



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**Lesson Plan - Three**

**Lesson Title:** Plant and Animal Notes Using Inspiration Program

**Subject/Grade:** Science/Language Arts Grade 3

**Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS):**

Language Arts – 3.1 through 3.5

Science – 5.1 through 5.12

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will write notes into Graphic Organizer created in Lesson 2 using the Inspiration Program.

**Technology Objectives:**

To insert notes from handout into main idea box.

To use Inspiration Program

**Materials:** Laptop with installed Inspiration Program  
Teacher made handout (notes on desert animals & plants)  
Printer

**Procedure:** Students will:

1. Open Inspiration Program to graphic organizer.
2. Click on Notes Icon.
3. Type in notes from handout in Main Idea box.
4. Type your name at bottom of page.
5. Print your name.

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**Evaluation:** Teacher observation of students while using laptop computers and working with Inspiration Program. Teacher will review printed work and grade accordingly. ( Final project evaluated by teacher created rubric)

**Lesson Plan - Four**

**Lesson Title:** Animal Research

**Subject/Grade:** Science/Language Arts

**Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS):**

Language Arts – 3.1 through 3.5

Science – 5.1 through 5.12

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will research desert animals and plants by using information from their textbook, Chapter 1, Lesson 1.2. and by using internet explorer and going to the San Diego Zoo web site, [www.sandiegozoo.org](http://www.sandiegozoo.org).

**Technology Objectives:** Students will create a word document with the information obtained in Chapter 1 of their textbook and from the San Diego Zoo website.

**Materials:**

Folder for each student

White composition paper

Science textbook

Wireless laptop computers

**Procedure:** Students will read and discuss information and record specific information in their journals. Students will then go to the website specified to obtain additional information specific to the desert animal that they have chosen to research.

**Evaluation:** Teacher will observe students while using the laptop computers and accessing the internet. The teacher will help in the editing process in

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journals. The teacher will grade the word document. ( Final project evaluation made by teacher created rubric)

**Lesson Plan - Five**

**Lesson Title:** Desert Animal Template

**Subject/Grade:** Science / Language Arts

**Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS):**

Language Arts – 3.1 through 3.5

Science – 5.1 through 5.12

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will create a word document with information from their journals using the wireless laptop computers.

**Technology Objectives:** Students will insert a desert animal picture from Clip Art using a pre- constructed Print Shop Ensemble III Template. Students will type information from their journals into the text box below the picture. Students will choose their own font and type in font size 16. Students will save their work on the H-Drive and print to the laser jet printer.

**Materials:**

1. Folder for each student
2. Black and white notebook
3. Wireless Laptop Computers

**Procedure:** Each student will be given a wireless laptop computer. Students will log on and access The Desert Animal Template in Microsoft Word. Students will then create a word document by using their journal information. Students will save on the H-Drive and print to the laser jet printer.

**Evaluation:** Teacher will help in the editing process in student's journals. Teacher will observe students while working on the wireless laptop

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computers and accessing the template in Microsoft Word. Teacher will grade completed document.( Final project evaluated by teacher created rubric)

**Lesson Plan- Six**

**Lesson Title:** Venn Diagram Kidspiration Activity

**Subject/Grade:** Science / Language Arts

**Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS):**

Language Arts – 3.1 through 3.5

Science – 5.1 through 5.12

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will create a Venn Diagram comparing The Forest with The Desert using the wireless laptop computers.

**Technology Objectives:** Students will access the Venn Diagram in the Kidspiration Program. Students will type in the selected areas information comparing the desert and the forest. Students will choose their own font style and size. Students will save their work on the H-Drive and print to the laser jet printer.

**Materials:**

1. Folder for each student
2. Black and White notebook journal
3. Wireless laptop computer

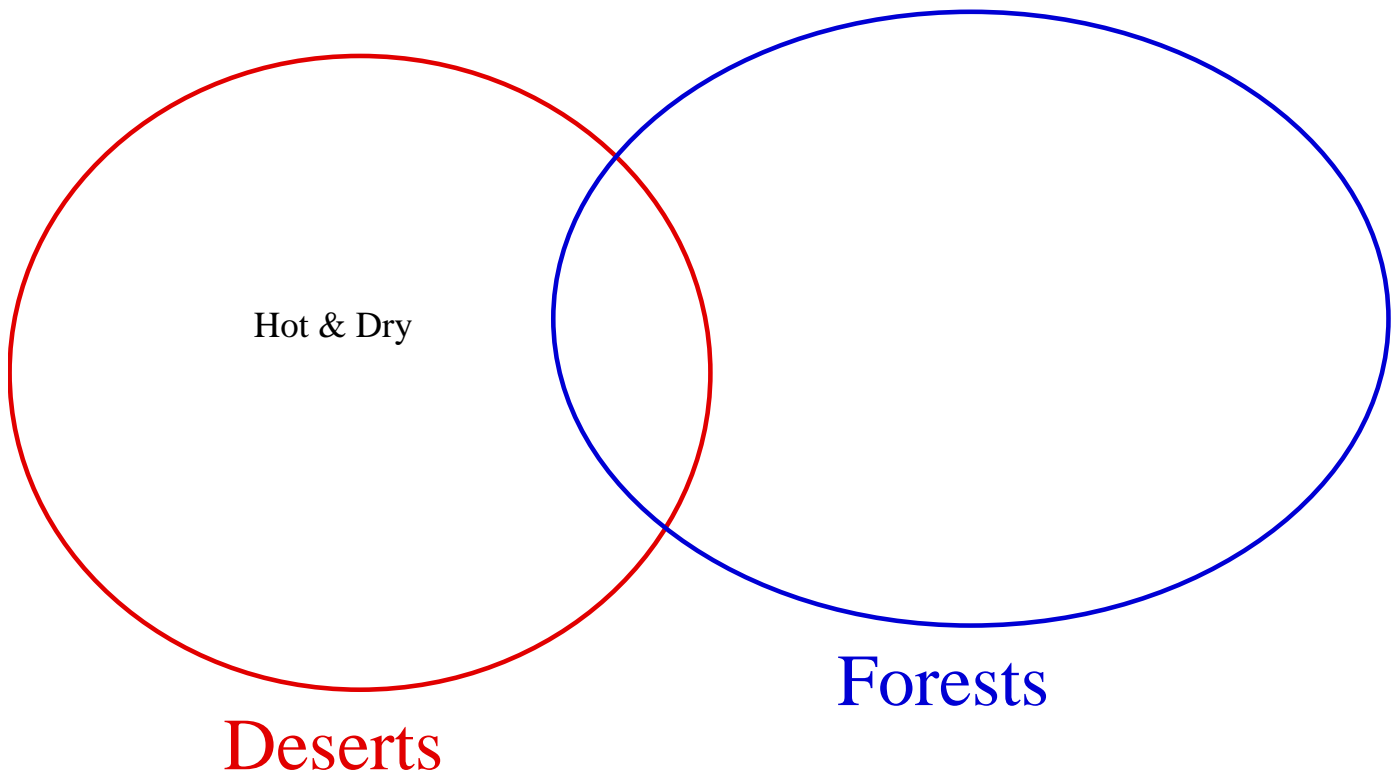
**Procedure:** Students will be given a wireless laptop computer with installed Venn Diagram. Students will log on and access the Kidspiration Program/Venn Diagram. Students will insert in the designated area information from their journals in order to complete the Venn Diagram. Students will choose their own font size and style. Students will save their work on the H-Drive and print to the laser jet printer.

**Evaluation:** Teacher will help in the editing process in journals. Teacher will guide and observe students while using the wireless laptop computers.

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and accessing the Venn Diagram previously installed from the Kidspiration Program. The teacher will grade the completed do



**Venn Diagram Template**

**Lesson Plan - Seven**

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**Lesson Title:** Desert and Forest –Scanned Picture with Paragraph  
**Subject/Grade:** Science /Language Arts

**Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS):**

Language Arts – 3.1 through 3.5  
Science – 5.1 through 5.12

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will create a word document incorporating their own scanned pre-colored drawing of the desert and the forest using the wireless laptop computers.

**Technology Objectives:** Students will access their own drawing of the desert and forest on the wireless laptop computers. They will create a word document using information from their journals.

**Materials:**

1. Folder for each student
2. Black and White notebook journal
3. Wireless laptop compute

**Procedure:** Students will each receive a wireless laptop computer. Students will log on and click on Mrs. Tracey’s folder to access The Desert and Forest Drawing. Students will create a textbox below the picture. They will choose font size 16 and their own font style. Students will type two short paragraphs beneath their drawing. Students will save on the H-Drive and print to the laser jet printer.

**Evaluation:** Teacher will help in the editing process in journals. The teacher will guide and observe students while using the laptop computers. The teacher will grade the document. ( Final project evaluated by teacher created rubric)

**Lesson Plan - Eight**

**Lesson Title:** Desert Habitat Diorama with Acrostic Poem

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**Subject/Grade:** Science / Language Arts

**Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS):**

Language Arts – 3.1 through 3.5

Science – 5.1 through 5.12

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will create an acrostic poem. This poem will be typed below the scanned, digital picture of each student's individual Desert Habitat Diorama.

**Technology Objectives:** Students will import their desert habitat diorama pictures. Students will create a word document by typing their acrostic poem below their digital, scanned picture using the wireless, laptop computers.

**Materials:**

1. Folder for each student
2. Black and white notebook journal
3. Wireless laptop computers

**Procedure:** Students will each be given a wireless laptop computer. Students will log on and click on Shortcuts / Mrs. Tracey's folder to access their own digital diorama photo. Students will type their acrostic poem beneath the picture. Students will choose their own font size and style. Students will save on the H-Drive and print to the laser jet printer.

**Evaluation:** The teacher will help in the editing of the acrostic poem. The teacher will guide and observe students while using the wireless, laptop computers. The teacher will grade the completed document. ( Final project evaluated by teacher created rubric)

**Lesson Plan - Nine**

**Lesson Title:** Desert Project Cover

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**Subject/Grade:** Science /Language Arts

**Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS):**

Language Arts – 3.1 through 3.5

Science 5.1 through 5.12

**Lesson Objectives:** Students will create their own individual Desert Project book cover using the Print Shop 15 Program.

**Technology Objectives:** Students will access Print Shop 15 on the wireless, laptop computer. Students will create their own design by making preselected choices in the file.

**Materials:**

1. Folder for each student
2. Wireless, laptop computer for each student
3. Rough sketch of student's intended design

**Procedure:** Students will be given a wireless laptop computer. They will log on and click on the start / programs icon. They will then find and click on Print Shop 15. They will choose Book Report Design and proceed to find the cover titled "The Sea" from the choices given in the library. Students will be instructed to replace the wording in the textbox. They will select Desert Animals and Plants to replace the sea creatures from the library of choices.

**Evaluation:** Teacher will observe students while using the wireless, laptop computers and give direction where needed. Teacher will grade completed document. ( Final project evaluated by Teacher created rubric)

**Lesson Plan Outline**

**Lesson Title:**

**Grade Level :**

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**Grade / Subject:**

**Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS):**

**Lesson Objectives:**

**Technology Objectives:**

**Materials:**

**Procedure:**

**Evaluation:**

	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>Value</i>
<b>Paragraph &amp; Poem Accuracy</b>	Includes main idea, details, & conclusion. No errors.	Well constructed, includes main idea. Some errors	Main idea not stated. Unclear topic. Many errors.	Main idea not stated. Unclear topic. Many errors.	_____

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<b>Star-W Folder/ Desert info.</b>	Folder includes all required work in proper sequence.	Missing one required page. Neat Folder.	Missing several pages. Folder unacceptable.	Missing most required pages. Folder unacceptable.	_____
<b>Desert Diorama Project</b>	Followed project outline consistently. Excellent presentation of desert habitat.	Partially followed outline. Good example of desert habitat.	Fair construction of desert habitat. Little evidence of outline being followed.	Poor construction. Did not follow outline.	-----
				<b>Total</b>	
<b>Teacher Comments</b>					

**Rubric Score Equivalent**

**4 = A = 90 to 100**

**3 = B = 80 to 89**

**2 = C = 70 to 79**

**1 = D = 65 to 69**

**Evaluation of the Star-W Project**

I feel that the Star-W Project has truly been a very successful venture for both the students and teachers who have participated thus far. The numerous programs that have

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been implemented in the classroom have become an invaluable element in the learning process.

We (the teachers) received training to advance us into the world of the unknown (for some). Personally speaking it was the equivalent of “Beam me up Scotty!” Little did I realize my students and I truly were taking off into the next galaxy of education.

It now excites me when I observe my third graders becoming more and more proficient while accessing websites, typing in a textbox, or completing their own graphic organizer using the Inspiration Program. (A program that last year I nicknamed “Desperation.”) Where once I viewed the desktop computers in my classroom as enemy territory, I now have surrendered the flag and joined the enemy forces-Hey it feels great!

I think the most significant part of implementing the wireless, laptop computers in the classroom has been that the students and I have had a shared learning experience. We exchange information and they seem to understand that we’re in it together. Don’t get me wrong, I’m still the teacher, the guide, but every once in a while they can step into the spotlight and shine.

In closing, I must say “Thank You” to all the responsible parties for pushing, shoving, and cajoling me into the next era of instruction. It’s been a lot of hard work, but as I said after my first parasailing experience-“When can we do it again?”