READING WITH SWIMMY:
Teaching Core Knowledge Goals Through Literature

Grade Level: Pre-Kindergarten
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Length of Unit: Ten Lessons

I. Abstract
Foster an early love for literature by introducing pre-kindergarten students to sea life and the ocean by reading Swimmy and other relevant children’s literature. Classroom activities will encompass the use of music, movement, pictures and manipulatives. Students will be taught in small and whole group activities, through the use of centers, in cooperative groups and in independent activities. At the end of the unit, students (and parents) will participate in a culminating activity.

II. OVERVIEW
A. Concept Objectives
   1. Function and work constructively in a group setting, using appropriate social skills.
   2. Develop independent work habits.
   3. Listen to stories read aloud.
   4. Participate in stories read aloud.
   5. Develop a notion of “story schema.”
   6. Develop the fine motor skills and strokes used in writing.
   7. Sort and classify objects or pictures of objects.
   8. Demonstrate an initial understanding of the living world.
   9. Quantify groups of objects.
   10. Demonstrate an initial understanding of elements of the material world.
   11. Attend to visual detail of objects and images.
   12. Explore and create, using various art forms, media, and techniques.
   13. Develop memorization skills.
   14. Listen to and sing songs.
   15. Use the body expressively.
B. Core Knowledge Sequence Content
   1. Movement and Coordination
   2. Autonomy and Social Skills
   3. Work Habits
   4. Oral Language
      Nursery Rhymes, Poems, Fingerplays and Songs
   6. Storybook Reading and Storytelling
   7. Emerging Literacy Skills in Reading and Writing
   8. Mathematical Reasoning and Number Sense
   9. Scientific Reasoning and the Physical World
   10. Music
   11. Visual Arts
C. Skills
   1. Listen to finger plays and respond with appropriate gestures.
   2. Act out a simple pantomime.
   3. Carry out certain chores that contribute to the well being and functioning of the group.
   4. Take turns using toys, share materials.
5. Complete an activity or project in conjunction with a small group.
6. Work with other children to create a collective work of art such as a large mural.
7. With the assistance of an adult as needed, organize and plan what is needed to carry out a project or task: materials, tools, process (what steps and what techniques.)
8. Identify outcomes (what happened) and possible causes.
9. Memorize and recite independently a simple poem or song.
10. Attend and listen to picture books with storylines (30 minutes.)
11. Retell a story that has been read aloud: include character(s), setting (time, place), the plot (central idea) of the story, the sequential events and an ending.
13. Write his or her first name.
14. Given a sample object/picture and verbal description of the selection criteria, sort object/picture according to a single criteria.
15. Given an oral number, create or represent a group with the correct number of objects.
16. Classify images of animals according to the habitat or environment in which they generally live: lake/river, ocean, farm, forest (woods), jungle.
17. Listen to, sing and perform children’s songs and fingerplays individually or with others.
18. While listening to the recitation of a familiar fingerplay, perform the associated hand and body gestures that have been previously taught.
19. Memorize and recite a simple fingerplay.
20. Sing a round for two groups.
21. Identify from memory the color of objects from nature, when not in view.
22. Create representational works, such as printing, painting, drawing, collage and sculpture.

III. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
A. For teachers:
B. For students, basic knowledge of:
   1. Colors
   2. Numbers/counting
   3. Cutting
   4. Coloring
   5. Painting
   6. Name recognition
   7. Forest animals

IV. RESOURCES
B. Realia - sea life puppets, stuffed animals, plastic animals, felt seashore story board, posters, pictures, a whole trout (purchased from grocery store)
C. Manipulatives: shells, sand, plastic sea life
D. Recording/Art Materials: pencils, crayons, paints, scissor, butcher paper, liquid starch, powdered Tempra, water colors (blue & yellow), word cards, markers, blue & green tissue paper, brushes, paper plates, silver/metallic wrapping paper, glue
E. Miscellaneous: plastic tarp, stickers (two per student of sea life and land animals), Cheerios, small goldfish crackers, gummy fish

V. LESSONS
Lesson One: Swimmy

A. Daily Objectives:
1. Lesson Content:
   a. Literature selection, *Swimmy*

2. Concept Objective:
   a. Listen to a story read aloud.
   b. Participate in a story read aloud.
   c. Understand and use language to think: organize, relate and analyze information.
   d. Develop a notion of “story schema.”

3. Skill Objectives:
   a. Attend and listen to a picture book with a story line.
   b. Identify outcomes (what happened) and possible causes.
   c. With teacher guidance, retell the story that has been read aloud, including characters, setting, the plot of the story, the sequential events and the ending.

B. Materials:
1. *Swimmy* by L. Lionni
2. Felt story board of seashore (ocean, beach and sea life depicted)
3. Word cards (can be pre-made with target vocabulary)
4. Markers
5. Word card holder

C. Key vocabulary:
1. Ocean, land, water, fish, seashore, air, school of fish

D. Procedures/Activities:
1. Working on rug with whole group, teacher shows students felt picture of seashore.
2. While leading discussion, teacher writes and labels ocean, water, beach, sky, seashore, etc. on word cards.
3. Place word cards on chart; refer to cards throughout unit.
4. Teacher introduces the unit by telling students they will be learning about the ocean and the animals that live in it.
5. Show students the book, *Swimmy*, and tell them the story concerns a school of fish with a problem. Ask students to pay attention to how the problem is solved.
6. Teacher reads story aloud, occasionally asking questions to check for comprehension.
7. Students are asked to identify the problem the fish faced and what they did to solve it.
8. Teacher guides the student retelling of the story by turning the pages of the book and asking students to identify outcomes and causes.

E. Evaluation/Assessment:
1. Students are able to verbally identify both the problem the school of fish faced and the solution.
2. Students are able to orally retell story sequentially including setting, characters, plot and the ending.

Lesson Two: Our School of Fish

A. Daily Objectives:
1. Lesson Content:
   a. Retelling of *Swimmy*  

2. Concept Objectives:
   a. Develop a notion of “story schema.”
   b. Explore and create, using various art forms, media and techniques.
   c. Participate in stories read aloud.

3. Skill Objectives:
   a. Retell a story that has been read aloud.
b. Use various tools and techniques in completing art projects.

B. Materials:
1. *Swimmy* by L. Lionni
2. Felt story board of seashore
3. Word cards
4. Sea animal puppets or stuffed animals
5. Parent note (Appendix A - sent a few days before activity)
6. Copy of *Swimmy* fish, one per student (Appendix B)
7. Scissors
8. Pencils or crayons

C. Key Vocabulary:
1. Ocean, land, water, air, fish, school of fish, seashore

E. Procedures/Activities:
1. Working on rug with whole group, teacher asks students if they remember the *Swimmy* story from the previous day.
2. While guiding discussion, teacher shows students *Swimmy* book, turning pages to help students recall story. Word cards generated in previous lesson should be displayed on word chart; teacher can refer students to words as they are discussed.
3. Students use sea animal puppets or stuffed animals to act out the story.
4. Tell students that they will pretend to belong to a school of fish and will make their own “ocean” in the next few days.
5. Divide students into small groups. Give each student a copy of a fish to cut out; adults will cut out the small circle and insert the student’s picture at a later time.
6. Students should write their name on the front of their fish.
7. Tell students that their fish will be used in another activity the following day.

F. Evaluation/Assessment:
1. Students are able to verbally recall the major events in the story.
2. Students are able to dramatize the story.
3. Students are able to cut out fish and print name on fish.

Lesson Three: Our Ocean

A. Daily Objectives:
1. Lesson content:
   a. Art work: ocean mural
2. Concept Objectives:
   a. Develop independent work habits.
   b. Function and work constructively in a group setting, using appropriate social skills.
   c. Explore and create, using various art forms, media, and techniques.
3. Skill Objectives:
   a. With the assistance of an adult as needed, organize and plan what is needed to carry out a project or task: materials, tools, process.
   b. Create a representational work of art.
   c. Complete an activity or project in conjunction with a small group.
   d. Carry out certain chores that contribute to the well being and functioning of the group.
   e. Work with other children to create a collective work of art, a large group mural.
   f. Take turns sharing materials.

B. Materials:
1. Pictures of the ocean and sea life
2. Felt story board of ocean
3. Butcher paper for mural (size determined by teacher)
4. Liquid starch
5. Yellow and blue powdered Tempra paint
6. Large plastic tarp or shower curtains (to protect floor)
7. Blue and green tissue paper
C. Key Vocabulary:
1. Ocean, water, sea life, seaweed, sand, mural
D. Procedures/Activities:
1. Briefly review Swimmy, showing students pictures and stressing the underwater environment.
2. Briefly review underwater felt board scene, again stressing ocean environment.
3. Tell students they will be working in small groups to make an ocean mural (large picture.)
4. Divide students into groups for center time, with only one group at a time at the mural center.
5. Develop rules for working on mural with the students’ help; example: hands only, must be on “knees” at all times, etc.
6. Students should participate in all decision making for mural. Spread butcher paper on plastic covered floor, with corners secured to avoid curling.
7. Guide students as they sprinkle blue and yellow Tempra on paper.
8. Teacher squirts liquid starch over Tempra.
9. Kneeling at edge of butcher paper, students mix and spread colors with palms until butcher paper is covered with paint and no “white” shows through.
10. Allow mural to dry. After the mural is dry, students can work with the teacher’s guidance to attach the following to the mural:
   - vertical strips of tissue paper to represent seaweed
   - students’ fish (made in lesson #2), arranged in the shape of one large fish (teacher can make a black fish for the eye.)
   - other sea life made by the students
F. Evaluation/Assessment:
1. Teacher observation of students discussion and participation checking for cooperative behavior.

Lesson Four: Look at us move!
A. Daily Objectives:
1. Lesson Content:
   a. Sea life pantomimes
2. Concept Objective:
   a. Use the body expressively.
3. Skill Objective:
   a. Act out a simple pantomime of crab, jellyfish, clam and scallop.
B. Materials:
1. Books
2. Pictures
3. Puppets
4. Stuffed animals and/or plastic animals of a clam, scallop, crab and jellyfish
C. Key Vocabulary:
1. Clam, crab, scallop, jellyfish, sea life
D. Procedures/Activities:
1. Using the realia, teacher identifies each creature by name, one at a time.
2. Ask students to help describe each individual creature.
3. Place an example of a clam, scallop, crab and jellyfish on a table in front of the children.
4. Teacher describes physical characteristics of each animal, one at a time, and asks for a student volunteer to come up and give it to her.

5. This continues until all four animals are identified by students with teacher supplying names of animals.

6. Teacher tells students that these animals not only look different, but move differently as well. Ask students to spread out on rug so they can imitate the way each animal moves.

7. Clam - has two shells and uses a “foot” like feature to drag itself through the sand. It also uses another tongue-like feature to pull in food. Pantomime: Students sit on rug, curled up into a ball, as if inside a shell. Students extend one foot and use it to move forward. Students can now extend a hand to use as the “tongue” to suck in food.

8. Scallop - moves and eats differently than clam, although it also has two shells. Uses shell in a forceful open and close movement, forcing water out, to move in opposite direction. Pantomime: Open arms wide at side; as the arms are quickly clapped shut, students move in opposite direction.

9. Jellyfish - floats in the water, looking like a transparent umbrella with strings hanging out. Pantomime: Students stand with immobile feet, arms slightly extended and curved in front of body. Students inhale as the arms are gently raised to shoulder level, maintaining the curved arms. Arms are gently lowered as students exhale.

10. Crab - is shaped like a slightly rounded plate with 10 legs. It moves by scurrying sideways and burying itself in the sand when it detects danger. Pantomime: Sitting on rug, students lean back slightly, resting on hands behind back. Feet are planted shoulder length apart in front of students with knees bent. Students try to raise rump, while sustaining body weight on hands and feet (face and stomach are facing ceiling). Once students can accomplish this without giggling too much, have them try to move sideways...oh, oh, here comes danger. Move faster and hide under the sand!

F. Evaluation/Assessment:
1. Students are able to describe the four different animals.
2. Teacher observation of student participation and movement.
3. Note: Movements can be modified according to the ability of students or teacher (crab movement can be done with hands.)
4. Crab song (Appendix C)

Lesson Five: Rainbow Fish

A. Daily Objectives:
1. Lesson Content:
   a. Rainbow Fish by M. Pfister
2. Concept Objectives:
   a. Develop independent work habits.
   b. Listen to stories read aloud.
   c. Develop the fine motor skills and strokes used in writing.
3. Skill Objectives:
   a. Attend and listen to picture books with storylines.
   b. Use moon motif as a design.
   c. Write his/her first name.
   d. Carry out oral directions: multi-step directions followed by a preliminary demonstration

B. Materials:
1. Rainbow Fish
2. Trout
3. Roll of silver/metallic gift-wrap or paper (rainbow of colors reflected as paper is shifted in sunlight)
4. One paper plate per child
Crayons/pencils

Key Vocabulary:
1. Scales, fish, gills, fins

Procedures/Activities:
1. Teacher reads Rainbow Fish to students, asking questions to check comprehension.
2. Teacher writes key vocabulary on word cards and adds to previous list.
3. Students examine trout while teacher guides discussion of the scales and color of fish, as well as other features, again focusing on key vocabulary.
4. Have students sit at tables. Give each student a paper plate with a “pie slice” previously drawn by adult. Students cut out “pie slice.”
5. Students glue pie slice on opposite end of plate to depict tail fin; cut out section becomes mouth of fish.
6. Students draw an eye and color their fish.
7. Teacher demonstrates how to use moon writing stroke to cover fish with scales.
8. Students draw scales on their fish.
9. Teacher gives each student a “scale” cut from the metallic paper. Students glue a rainbow scale on their fish.

Evaluation/Assessment:
1. Teacher checks for correct writing strokes on fish.
2. With assistance and feedback of an adult as needed, students describe and evaluate own work, identify and correct errors, refining their work.

Lesson Six: Habitats

Daily Objectives:
1. Lesson Content:
   a. Elements of the material world
2. Concept Objectives:
   a. Sort and classify objects or pictures of objects.
   b. Demonstrate an initial understanding of the living world.
3. Skill Objectives:
   a. Classify images of animals according to the habitat or environment in which they generally live.
   b. Given a sample object/picture and verbal description of the selection criteria, sort object/picture according to a single criterion.

Materials:
1. Posters or large pictures of the ocean and sea life and the forest and its inhabitants
2. Puppets or stuffed animals
3. Small plastic animals
4. Habitat handout (Appendix D)
5. Animal stickers (2 each, per student, of ocean and forest animals)

Key Vocabulary:
1. Forest, ocean, water, walk, swim

Procedures/Activities:
1. Display two posters depicting the ocean habitat and forest habitat.
2. Ask students to name the animals that might live in each environment.
3. Teacher chooses one plastic animal and asks individual student to place it in front of appropriate habitat picture.
4. Class is included in discussion of appropriate placement and why.
5. Play continues until students grasp concept.
6. Divide students into groups and give each student a copy of the handout.
7. Discuss the two habitats illustrated on the handout.
8. Ask students to color each of the habitats.
9. Place stickers in tray and ask students to choose two animal stickers for each
environment. *Note: Students need to be previously taught what stickers are and how to use them.

10. Students place two animal stickers on each environment.

E. Evaluation/Assessment:
   1. Teacher observation of animal placement and student discussion.

Lesson Seven: Octopus

A. Daily Objectives:
   1. Lesson Content:
      a. Counting
   2. Concept Objective:
      a. Quantify groups of objects.
   3. Skill Objective:
      a. Given an oral number, create or represent a group with the correct number of objects.

B. Materials:
   1. Octopus picture
   2. Plastic octopus
   3. Octopus handout (Appendix E)
   4. Cheerios
   5. Glue

C. Key Vocabulary:
   1. Octopus, suckers, tentacles, ink

D. Procedures/Activities:
   1. Display octopus realia.
   2. Students count tentacles on each octopus displayed, until they come to the realization that an octopus has 8 tentacles.
   3. Teacher describes movement of octopus and function of suckers on tentacles.
   4. Divide students into groups and give each student a copy of the handout.
   5. As teacher says a number from 1-8, students glue the correct number of Cheerios on each tentacle.

E. Evaluation/Assessment:
   1. Teacher observation

Lesson Eight: Personal Beach

A. Daily Objectives:
   1. Lesson Content:
      a. Visual Arts
   2. Concept Objectives:
      a. Attend to visual detail of objects and images.
      b. Explore and create, using various art forms, media and techniques.
   3. Skill Objectives:
      a. Identify from memory the color of objects form nature, when not in view.
      b. Create representational works by printing, painting, drawing, creating collages and sculptures.

B. Materials:
   1. Construction paper
   2. Blue and yellow water colors
   3. Brushes
   4. Clean sand
   5. Small shells
   6. Goldfish crackers or gummy fish
   7. Cotton balls
   8. Glue

C. Key Vocabulary:
Lesson Nine: “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”

**A. Daily Objectives:**

1. **Lesson Content:**
   - Song, “Row, Row, Row Your Boat”

2. **Concept Objectives:**
   - Develop memorization skills.
   - Listen to and sing songs.

3. **Skills Objectives:**
   - Listen to, sing and perform children’s songs and finger plays individually or with others.
   - Sing a round for two groups.
   - Memorize and recite independently a simple song.

**B. Materials:**

1. Large chart of song, “Row, Row, Row Your Boat” (Appendix F)
2. Recording of song (optional)
3. Small plastic rowboat

**C. Key Vocabulary:**

1. Row, boat, stream

**D. Procedures/Activities:**

1. Teacher introduces song by asking students what the boat is and what is it for. Has anybody been on a boat? What can you do on a boat? What is a sailboat and what is a rowboat?
2. Teacher introduces charted song and sings song while explaining vocabulary and using hand signal at start and finish.
3. Teacher continues singing while encouraging students to join in.
4. Once students feel comfortable with the song, class can be divided with one adult leading one group and other adult leading the second group.
5. The two groups should practice singing the song with their adult leader, each group at a time while the other group listens.
6. Leaders should use a hand signal for the group to start and finish singing.
7. Tell students to keep their eyes on their leader and sing along with her/him.
8. Sing song in rounds; leaders use hand signals and eye contact to indicate when each group sings.*Note: do not seek perfection!

E. Evaluation/Assessment:
1. Teacher observation of student participation.
2. Copy of song should be added to students song/rhyme book and sent home for practice.

Lesson Ten: Fish Alive!

A. Daily Objectives:
   1. Lesson Content:
      a. Finger play, “Fish Alive!”
   2. Concept Objectives:
      a. Listen to fingerplays and respond with appropriate gestures.
      b. Develop memorization skills.
   3. Skills Objectives:
      a. While listening to the recitation of a familiar finger play, perform the associated hand gestures that have been previously taught.
      b. Listen to, sing and perform children’s songs and finger plays, individually or with others.
      c. Memorize and recite independently a simple finger play.

B. Key Vocabulary:
   1. Fish, alive, on the right

C. Materials:
   1. Charted song, “Fish Alive”

D. Procedures/Activities:
   1. Teacher introduces charted song. Sings and explains vocabulary.
   2. Teacher continues singing song while adding hand movements. Students are encouraged to sing and move.
   3. Students can be asked to perform song individually or in groups in front of classmates.

E. Evaluation/Assessment:
   1. Teacher observation of student participation.
   2. Copy of finger play should be added to students song/rhyme book and sent home for practice.

VI. CULMINATING ACTIVITY

A. Field trips - Class trip to Cabrillo Beach or Long Beach Aquarium (Southern California) or other appropriate destination where students can observe sea life.

B. Beach Day - Parent letter (Appendix H) is sent home to give parents necessary information. On Beach Day, the students wear their bathing suits and sandals and bring towels, sunglasses and sunscreen. Parents are also asked to attend. The students spread out their towels and “sunbathe,” as well as participating in the following activities:
   1. get wet from a water hose “water fall”
   2. splash in a small swimming pool
   3. “fish” with plastic pole and magnet fish, while sitting in small beach chairs
   4. play with “sink or float” center
   5. play “golf” with plastic sea life theme equipment
   6. play with felt ocean story board
play with stick and peel plastic ocean and sea life

dig for sea paraphernalia buried in sand tub

dance to “Limbo Rock” and other music associated with the beach and ocean

help mix tuna and mayonnaise for sandwich snack

eat blue Jell-O with gummy fish “floating” in Jell-O

recite poems and songs

Parents are encouraged to accompany and talk to their child about each activity. Teacher can share folder of student work with each parent.

VII. HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS

Appendix A: Parent letter requesting student picture
Appendix B: Student fish
Appendix C: Crab song
Appendix D: Ocean/forest habitat
Appendix E: Octopus
Appendix F: Row, Row, Row Your Boat
Appendix G: Parent letter - Beach Day

VIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Please help! We need a picture of your child that will fit in this circle. We will be cutting it to fit, so please don’t send us important family pictures.

Thank-you,
Mrs. Melero

Por favor ayudenos! Necesitamos una fotografía de su hijo/a que este del tamaño de ese circulo. Vamos a cortar la foto, así que por favor no manden fotos importantes a la familia.

Gracias,
Mrs. Melero
I SAW A CRAB
(Sung to the tune of “Clementine”)

I went walking,
I went walking,
and saw a crab right on the beach
Saw a crab,
Saw a crab,
Walking this way with his feet!
swim
Ocean
walk
Forest
Row, Row, Row Your Boat
Row, row, row your boat,
Gently down the stream.
Merrily, merrily, merrily,
Life is but a dream!
APPENDIX G

FISH ALIVE!
(As heard on Barney)

One, two, three, four, five! Count with fingers of right hand
I caught a fish alive.
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten! Continue counting on left hand
I let him go again. Pretend to toss fish
Why did I let him go? Shrug shoulders, raise hands in questioning motion
Because he bit my finger so. Pretend to take a big bite
Which finger did he bite? Shrug shoulders, raise hands in questioning motion
The little finger on the right. Point to pinky on right hand
Dear Parents,

Tomorrow is our long anticipated “Beach Day”! Students must come to school wearing their uniforms and school shoes and socks. Students should wear their bathing suits under their uniform. We will be playing water games and getting wet. Please send the following with your child tomorrow:

C large towel
C bathing suit **worn under uniform**
C beach shoes or sandals
C sun screen
C a bag to carry everything!

Students that do not come prepared for beach day will not be allowed outside and will have an alternate activity inside the classroom. We do not want any sad children so please remember to send your child prepared for Beach Day!!

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Estimados padres,

Mañana por fin será nuestro esperado “Día de Playa”. Los estudiantes deben venir a la escuela con su uniforme, zapatos escolares y calcetines. Los estudiantes deben usar sus trajes de baño abajo de su uniforme. Estaremos jugando con agua y nos vamos a mojar. Por favor manden lo siguiente con su hijo/a mañana:

! toalla **grande**
! traje de baño **debajo del uniforme**
! zapatos de playa o chanclas
! protector solar
! una bolsa para cargar todo!

Los estudiantes que no vienen preparados para participar en nuestro día de playa no se les va permitir salir para afuera y tendrán una actividad alternativa dentro del salón. No queremos tener niños/as tristes asi que por favor recuerden de mandar a su hijo/a preparado para el “día de playa”!!