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Virtual Field Trip Reflection

The virtual field trip that I used for this assignment was geared towards third graders. The science standards state that students in third grade should know that organisms have adaptations that help them survive in their habitats. The virtual field trip to the rainforest by *Digital Frog International* is a great resource to use in order to teach students about animal adaptations. Since this resource has many links on it, I decided that I would narrate it and lead students through the virtual field trip so that they would not become overwhelmed with all the information available.

I conducted this activity in the computer lab with third grade students in a variety of ways: independently, using whole group instruction, and in small groups. Before students began the virtual field trip, I told them the learning objective and the guiding question. The learning objective for this lesson was: *Learners will be able to show how an organisms' adaptations help them survive in their habitat.* The guiding question was: How does having an adaptation help an animal survive in their habitat? Each student was sitting in front of the computer screen. I gave them each a graphic organizer to take notes. Students put on their headsets and listened to the narrated field trip independently. As they followed along, they were instructed to take notes about the different animals that they encountered during the field trip and the adaptations that they have. Students were allowed to pause the field trip whenever they needed to in order to take notes.

When all students finished the narrated virtual field trip and their notes, they were placed in groups of three. They were given directions to construct a PowerPoint presentation together in which they picked three animals that they encountered during the field trip. In their presentation,

they had to include what the animal adaptations are and how those adaptations help them survive in the rainforest. The completed PowerPoint presentation is the assessment tool/strategy that I used to determine whether or not students met the learning objective. If students are able to describe the adaptations and how it helps them survive in their PowerPoint presentation, then they have met the learning objective.

Overall, this virtual field trip lesson was a great learning experience. All students were engaged during the presentation and took very useful notes. Working together to complete the PowerPoint presentation, gave students the opportunity to collaborate with each other and share their notes. I used Office 365 so that all students could work on the same presentation at the same time and thus complete it faster. Using the finished presentation as an assessment was great because it really showcases what they learned during the virtual field trip. The use of technology helped students go “outside of the classroom” and discover a part of the world that they will probably not encounter in their lives. I believe that students learned a lot more from this activity than reading about animal adaptations from a book. I look forward to finding other opportunities to incorporate virtual field trips in the classroom.