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# Lesson Plan: Wild Paws & Tame Paws - A Canine Research Adventure

## Materials Needed:

- Several sheets of plain or lined paper (about 6-7 sheets per booklet)
- A stapler or a hole punch with string/ribbon to bind the booklet
- Pencils and an eraser
- Colored pencils, crayons, or markers
- Access to age-appropriate research materials:
  - Kid-safe internet search engines (e.g., Kiddle, KidzSearch)
  - Non-fiction books about dogs, wolves, coyotes, etc.
  - Nature documentaries (optional)
- Scissors and a glue stick (optional, for adding printed pictures)

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## Lesson Overview

This project is designed as a series of connected lessons where the student will create their very own research booklet. Each step below corresponds to creating a new page or section of their "Canine Research" booklet. The goal is to move beyond just listing facts and encourage creative thinking and application of new knowledge.

### Lesson 1: Sparking Curiosity & Designing the Booklet

**Objective:** To activate prior knowledge and create an engaging cover for the research project.

#### Activity Steps:

1. **Assemble the Booklet:** Stack the sheets of paper and fold them in half to create a booklet. Staple or tie the folded edge.
2. **Create the Cover Page:** On the front of the booklet, the student will design their cover. Encourage them to:
  - Write a title, such as "Wild Paws & Tame Paws" or "My Dog Research Journal."
  - Write their name as the "Lead Researcher."
  - Draw pictures of different kinds of dogs—wild and domestic. What do they imagine they look like?
3. **Page 1 - What I Know & Want to Know:** On the first inside page, create two columns.
  - **Column 1 Title:** "What I Already Think I Know..."
  - **Column 2 Title:** "What I Want to Find Out!"
  - **Discussion:** Talk with the student about what they already know. Ask questions like, "What makes a pet dog different from a wolf?" or "What do you think they have in common?" Have them write or draw their ideas in the first column.
  - **Brainstorm Questions:** In the second column, help them brainstorm questions for their research. For example: "Do wolves play fetch?" "Why do dogs live in our houses but coyotes don't?" "What is the biggest wild dog?"

## Lesson 2: Researching the Domestic Dog

**Objective:** To gather, organize, and record information about a specific domestic dog breed.

### Activity Steps:

1. **Choose a Subject:** Have the student choose one domestic dog breed to be their "research subject" (e.g., Golden Retriever, Pug, German Shepherd, etc.).
2. **Page 2 - Domestic Dog Profile:** Title this page with the name of the chosen breed. The student will use their research tools (books, safe search) to find and record the answers to these questions.
  - o **My Breed's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - o **What does it eat? (Diet):** \_\_\_\_\_
  - o **Where does it live? (Habitat):** \_\_\_\_\_
  - o **A Cool Fact:** What job was this dog originally bred for? (e.g., herding, hunting, companionship) \_\_\_\_\_
  - o **How does it behave with people?:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - o **My Scientific Drawing:** Leave a large space for the student to draw a detailed picture of the dog breed.

## Lesson 3: Researching the Wild Dog

**Objective:** To gather, organize, and record information about a specific wild canine.

### Activity Steps:

1. **Choose a Subject:** Have the student choose one wild canine (e.g., Gray Wolf, Coyote, Dingo, African Wild Dog).
2. **Page 3 - Wild Dog Profile:** Title this page with the name of the chosen wild dog. The student will research and record the answers to these questions.
  - o **My Wild Dog's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - o **What does it hunt or eat? (Diet):** \_\_\_\_\_
  - o **Where in the world does it live? (Habitat):** \_\_\_\_\_
  - o **A Cool Fact:** How does this animal survive? (e.g., hunts in a pack, is very fast) \_\_\_\_\_
  - o **How does it behave with its family (pack)?:** \_\_\_\_\_
  - o **My Scientific Drawing:** Leave a large space for a detailed drawing of the wild dog in its natural habitat.

## Lesson 4: Compare & Contrast

**Objective:** To analyze the collected research and identify key similarities and differences between the two animals.

### Activity Steps:

1. **Page 4 - Venn Diagram Showdown:** Draw two large overlapping circles on this page.
  - o Label the left circle with the name of the domestic dog.
  - o Label the right circle with the name of the wild dog.
  - o Label the overlapping section "Both."
2. **Fill the Diagram:** Using the information from the previous two pages, help the student sort the facts.

- **Domestic Only:** Lives in a house, eats dog food, was bred for a job.
- **Wild Only:** Lives in a forest/savanna, hunts for food, lives in a pack.
- **Both:** Are mammals, have fur, have four legs and a tail, are carnivores (or omnivores).

## Lesson 5: Creative Application - A Day in the Life

**Objective:** To synthesize research into a creative narrative, demonstrating a deeper understanding of the animal's life.

### Activity Steps:

1. **Page 5 - A Day in My Paws:** The student will choose ONE of the animals they researched and write a short story from its point of view.
  - **Prompt:** "Imagine you wake up as the [animal's name]. Describe your day from morning until night. What do you see? What do you eat for breakfast? Who do you play with? Where do you sleep?"
  - Encourage them to include at least three facts they learned during their research in the story. For example, if writing as a wolf, they could describe meeting up with their pack to hunt. If writing as a Golden Retriever, they could describe going to the park to play fetch.
  - They can add an illustration to their story.

## Lesson 6: Conclusion & Presentation

**Objective:** To reflect on the learning process and share the completed project.

### Activity Steps:

1. **Page 6 - What I Learned:** This is the final page of the booklet. Have the student answer the following reflection questions:
  - **The most surprising thing I learned was...**
  - **The biggest difference between my two dogs is...**
  - **One big thing they have in common is...**
  - **A new question I have is...**
2. **Present Your Research:** The final step is for the "Lead Researcher" to present their booklet to the family. Encourage them to:
  - Show the cover and explain their design.
  - Share 2-3 key facts from each profile page.
  - Explain their Venn diagram.
  - Read their "A Day in My Paws" story aloud.

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