



Dragonfly Tales

Introduction

In the book *Jo MacDonald Saw a Pond*, author Mary Quattlebaum introduces children to the planets and creatures of a pond ecosystem. In this activity and its related connections, children focus on the green darner dragonfly and dramatize, draw, and write about its growth cycle and pond experience.

Materials Needed

- ◆ Several pieces of paper
- ◆ Colored markers or Crayons

Key Concepts

- ◆ The environment must supply the needs of organisms.
- ◆ Plants and animals have life cycles.
- ◆ Each organism has different structures for different functions.

For standards correlation please see our website.

Procedure

1. Ask children to find the dragonfly in every picture in the book. What is it doing?
2. Explain that although the book's pictures only show the adult dragonfly, the dragonfly's life cycle includes three stages of growth: eggs, larvae (called *nymphs*), and winged adults. (This information is included in the *Green Darner* description at the back of the book.)
3. Show children pictures of these three stages from other books or the internet. How do the eggs, nymphs, and dragonflies move? What body parts allow them to move that way? What do they eat?
4. Have children act out the different stages (still eggs, swimming nymphs, flying adults).
5. Ask children to draw a picture of each growth stage.
6. Invite children to write and illustrate a story about the adult dragonfly. What does it see at the pond? What other creatures does it meet? What does it do when it meets a predator, like a hungry fish?

Nature Connections

- ◆ Invite children to write and illustrate a story from the perspective of a hungry fish that is looking for something to eat. What does it see at the pond? What creatures does it meet? What does it do when it sees a dragonfly?
- ◆ The Green Darner dragonfly is the State insect of Washington. What is your State insect? http://statesymbolsusa.org/Washington/insect_dragonfly.html

Additional Resources

Dragonfly Life Cycle

<http://www.dragonfly-site.com/dragonfly-life-cycle.html>

Dragonflies and Damselflies

<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/resource/distr/insects/dfly/index.htm>

Dragonfly Society of the Americas

<http://odonatacentral.org/>

BioKids: Dragonflies

<http://www.biokids.umich.edu/critters/Anisoptera/>

