

# Oxbow Phenomena: Alligators Bellowing

Male American Alligators in the wild will bellow or make a deep sound to attract a female mate in the wild. Oxbow has no male alligators, so one of our six female alligators assumes the dominant role. Though Oxbow does not house both male and females, the chorus of alligators is an inherited behavior that allows them to communicate amongst each other and our alligators have been observed vocalizing before rainstorms or in response to simulated thunder type sounds from Fort Benning.

Grade	Standard	Guiding Question(s)	How to include in lesson?
K	SKL1. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about how organisms (alive and not alive) and non-living objects are grouped.	What things in the exhibit are living? What things in the exhibit are non-living?	-Use to discuss habitat requirements of alligators, turtles, and other wetland wildlife -Use to discuss communication between individuals or groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen to various animal sounds, such as a rattlesnake and a treefrog</li> </ul>
	SKL2: Students will compare the similarities and differences in groups of organisms.	Why are the alligators making these sounds?	-Use to distinguish between how alligators communicate similarly or differently than other various animals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try to communicate in a new way, for example not opening your mouth or only hand gestures</li> </ul>
1st	S1L1. Students will investigate the characteristics and basic needs of plants and animals.	What do the alligators need to survive?	-Use to discuss types of communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a new way to communicate, for example not opening your mouth or only hand gestures</li> </ul> -Use to discuss how the alligator exhibit has space, water, food, and shelter (or cover) for the animals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw an alligator exhibit with all four basic needs</li> </ul>
2nd	S2L1. Students will investigate the life cycles of different living organisms	How is an alligator born? How would an alligator locate a mate?	-Discuss direct development and egg laying <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw what you think an alligator hatchling looks like</li> </ul> -Use to brainstorm ways an alligator could communicate with another alligator

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4th	S4L2 Students will identify factors that affect the survival or extinction of organisms such as adaptation, variation of behaviors (hibernation) and external features (camouflage and protection).	How does this noise help alligators in survival? Do other animals make noises that help them survive?	<p>-Discuss behavioral adaptations that affect behaviors such as mating, evasion of predators, and alerting of weather conditions, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a list of 10+ animal noises and how they help with survival</li> </ul> <p>-Can use to analyze how the structure of the alligator's body helps it to vocalize.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write or draw how you think the alligator makes that sound</li> </ul>
5th	S5L2. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information showing that some characteristics of organisms are inherited and other characteristics are acquired.	How is this behavior inherited or acquired?	<p>-Use to differentiate between anatomically and behaviorally different traits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drawn an alligator and label its anatomy and how it uses its body parts for certain behaviors</li> </ul> <p>-Use to discuss different types of communication; and whether they are acquired or inherited behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design a new way to communicate with peers or family</li> <li>• Develop a new language or written alphabet that you teach to another person (using a key or code to reference)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How did you teach them the characters or words? What methods or strategies were successful or unsuccessful?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>