**Florida Black Bear Curriculum
Lesson 1 – 10 Summaries**

**Lesson 1: What makes a bear a bear?**

Key Question: How are bears different from other animals?

Main Topic: Major distinguishing characteristics of bears

Format: Observation and writing activity

Description: Students compare and contrast pictures of Florida black bear and Florida panther bodies, including skulls, teeth and feet, and use their observations to determine the major distinguishing features of bears.

**Lesson 2: the world of bears**

Key Question: Where do the bears of the world live? How is the Florida black bear different from other bears?

Main Topic: Distribution, characteristics and status of the world’s bear species

Format: Mapping and classification activity

Description: Students use descriptive information to map the geographic and habitat distributions of the world’s bear species. They also classify the world’s bear species into groups based on attributes such as status and food preferences.

**Lesson 3: bear dilemmas**

Key Question: How do different kinds of people view Florida black bears? What are the main ways people interact with Florida black bears?

Main Topic: Cultural views of bears and attitudes toward Florida black bears

Format: Values clarification and discussion activity

Description: Students use scenarios based on real-world issues to explore and discuss their attitudes toward Florida black bears and wildlife in general. They also identify potential actions that can be taken related to Florida black bear issues.

**Lesson 4: it’s a bear’s life**

Key Question: What is the life of a Florida black bear like?

Main Topic: Life histories and life cycles of male and female Florida black bears

Format: Board game

Description: Students play a pathway board game to learn about the significant events affecting Florida black bears at each stage in their life cycle. They also compare and contrast the life histories of male and female Florida black bears.

**Lesson 5: the black bear necessities**

Key Question: What do Florida black bears need to survive?

Main Topic: Habitat requirements and types of food eaten by Florida black bears

Format: Role playing game

Description: Students participate in a role-playing game to learn about the types and relative amounts of different types of food eaten by Florida black bears. As part of the game, they also determine how limiting factors such as food can affect the carrying capacity of a habitat.

**Lesson 6: bear barriers**

Key Question: How do human activities affect Florida black bear populations?

Main Topic: Influence of natural and human-caused factors on Florida black bear survival rates

Format: Role-playing game and math activity

Description: Students participate in a role-playing game to learn about the factors that contribute to Florida black bear mortality. They also solve simple math problems to compare and contrast the mortality rates of male and female Florida black bears at different stages of their life cycles.

**Lesson 7: tracking bears**

Key Question: Where do Florida black bears go during a year?

Main Topic: Seasonal movements and activities of male and female Florida black bears

Format: Mapping and math activity

Description: Students use clues to plot the monthly movements of male and female Florida black bears on a map and compare and contrast the home ranges, seasonal activities and movements of male and female bears.

**Lesson 8: bear neighbors**

Key Question: What other animals live where Florida black bears live?

Main Topic: The role of Florida black bear as an umbrella species for other species of plants and animals

Format: Reading and art activity

Description: Students use clues to insert pictures of common, rare, threatened and endangered animals into a mural depicting three major plant communities used by Florida black bears. They then discuss the concept of Florida black bear as an umbrella species.

**Lesson 9: population problems**

Key Question: How does the growth of Florida’s human population affect bear populations?

Main Topic: Impact of human population growth on Florida black bear mortality rates, especially due to road kills

Format: Math and graphing activity

Description: Students interpret data tables and construct line graphs illustrating the relationship between human population growth and road kills of Florida black bears over time. They also construct bar graphs to investigate seasonal differences in male and female Florida black bear road kills.

**Lesson 10: oh where, oh where is Florida’s black bear?**

Key Question: Where are black bears found in Florida?

Main Topic: Distribution of black bear populations in Florida

Format: Reading and mapping activity

Description: Students locate Florida black bear habitat on a map and compare and contrast key characteristics of these areas. They also explore the impact of habitat fragmentation due to development and urbanization on Florida black bear populations.