Title: Alligator Eyes

Grade Level: 3-5

Time: one week

Concept: Observation of life on a back Florida river

Objectives: Students will:
1) Use good listening skills
2) Brainstorm descriptive information
3) Research Florida river life
4) Create a Florida river dictionary
5) Draw a map
6) Create a poem about the habitat of the river

Materials:
Oonawassee Summer by Melissa Forney
Computer, Internet sites
Books on Florida
Guest speakers
Brochures on Florida Rivers from Tourist Information Center
Post Cards showing scenes from Florida Rivers
Chart paper, markers, crayons, construction paper,
Copy of glossary page125 from Oonawassee Summer
Florida Rivers 2001 poster

Background: Oonawassee Summer is a fiction book written about the life on a Florida river. Oonawassee River is a fictitious river with all the “real” life of a Florida river. According to the copyright for the book, Oonawassee Summer, the publisher, Barker Creek Publishing, Inc., says in their copyright information: “If you are employed as a school teacher or as an institutional worker, you have the publisher’s permission to photocopy the text and illustrations to the extent necessary for use in your classroom to accompany your lessons. Purchase of this book does not entitle reproduction of any part of the book for an entire school, district, or system. Such use is strictly prohibited.”

Procedures:

Initiating Activity: Ask the students what would they see if they floated down a Florida river? Make a list of their answers.

Strategies:
1. Read Oonawassee Summer. Discuss and list what is seen and done along the Oonawassee River.
2. Research by book, Florida Rivers 2001 poster or computer life on a Florida river for more background information.
3. Using the alligator as the observer, have the students write what it would be like to be the alligator floating down the river. What would it see, what would it do, and how would it behave?

4. Share the students’ stories in oral readings.

5. Show the students the glossary in Oonawassee Summer. Have them create a picture glossary using the things that were seen as they floated down the river in their writing. Publish this in a book.

6. Create a map of the Oonawassee River. Include a legend, compass rose, and a scale.

7. Create a poem on the river habitat

**Culminating Activity:**
Have the students write the author, Melissa Forney, and describe their understanding of the river life. Also, have students write thank you notes to the speakers who come into speak to the class.

**Evaluation:**
1. Observation
2. Writings
3. Picture glossary
4. Letter

**National Geography Standards:**
Standard 1: How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.
Standard 2: How to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context.
Standard 3: How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth’s surface.

**Sunshine State Standards:**
LA.A.1.3: uses the reading process effectively.
LA.B.1.3.1: organizes information before writing according to the type and purpose of writing.
LA.B.1.3.3: produces a final edited document.
LA.B.2.3: writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.
SS.B.2.1.1: identifies some physical and human characteristics of places.
SS.B.2.3: understands the interactions of people and the physical environment.
SC.D.2.3.3: knows the positive and negative consequences of human action on the Earth’s systems.
SC.G.2.3.1: learns that some resources are renewable and some are nonrenewable.

**Resources:**
Speakers on rivers and life on the river.  Suggested areas: Florida Freshwater Fish and Wildlife Commission, local state water district, or a parent.

**Web Sites:**
- [http://www.dogpile.com](http://www.dogpile.com)
- [http://www.askjeeves.com](http://www.askjeeves.com)
- [http://www.northernlight.com](http://www.northernlight.com)
- [http://www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)
- Florida Segments
  - [http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/rtca/nri/Fl.htm](http://www.ncrc.nps.gov/rtca/nri/Fl.htm)
- All Along A River

**Examples of Poetry Forms**

**Acrostic poetry form**
- Can
- Really
- Open
- Students’ minds
- Imaginative ways that they
- Can present their new knowledge.

I feel the warm humid breeze.
I see the returning of the birds and fish.
I hear the noises of the floodplains.
I taste the fish I now can catch.
I smell the fresh air.
I touch the mud in the restored floodplain.

**River**
- Slow, meandering
- Birds, fish, floodplains
- KISSIMMEE