

July 19, 2018

Mr. Mike McDiarmid
Assistant Superintendent, Bulkley Valley School District
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Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

Video Conference with Wolves

At SWELL Wolf Education Centre in Nanaimo, BC, we conduct wolf education sessions for schools and community groups.

School classes attend our educational centre or Tundra and I visit their school. In the past ten years, Tundra and I have visited over 200 schools in BC (mainly on Vancouver Island and Lower Mainland) and educated over 35,000 students and teachers.

In addition, we have conducted community presentations at the Royal BC Museum (3 occasions), Uvic Law School, VIU Sociology Department and participated in two National Aboriginal Day ceremonies. In April 2017, we had the privilege of meeting Dr. Jane Goodall for a thirty minute private session. Dr. Goodall met Tundra and interacted with her, while we talked about wolves and the need for their protection and conservation.

Due to geographic challenges, I cannot visit every school district in BC, even though we would love to come. But with advances in technology, SWELL Wolf Education Centre can attend your classrooms by video conference.

How is it done?

I use Google Hangouts as the video conference platform (I find it better than SKYPE). I connect my iPad with a school computer that has Google Hangouts installed. This computer is then connected to a Smartboard or a TV through a HDMI cable. This way the students can watch the wolves on a big screen.

I connect with the teacher before scheduling an educational session. I ensure that they have Google Hangouts installed and we conduct a trial run to work out any bugs. We then schedule a session involving the teachers class.



Preparatory Work

Prior to the educational session, I ask the teacher and students to visit my website, www.whospeaksforwolf.com to view the three very high content wolfdogs I have. Tundra is the lowest content at 90% wolf and Nahanni and Mahikan are above 95% wolf. I also give the teacher resources on wolves that they can study. The class sends me questions prior to the session, so I can answer them. As well the students get to ask me questions live.

Which Schools would Benefit?

Both elementary and high school students will find these sessions very educational. I have instructed students from young grades to university level.

First Nations Component

I regularly work with First Nations schools, elders and community groups. We have visited many First Nations schools and regularly visit two schools each year. From this repeated involvement many First Nations people tell me their legends, true stories of their involvement with the wolf, and what the wolf means to their people. As your school curriculum emphasizes knowledge about their culture, these stories I tell will show how the First Nations people revered the wolf in their culture.

Cost

Absolutely free! Our mission at SWELL Wolf Education Centre is to educate people about wolves and to dispel the misinformation about wolves in the public domain. There is no cost to us so we do not charge for this service.

Testimonies

“Due to scheduling issues, we were not able to have Gary come to our school to teach about the wolves, however he was kind enough to offer to do a video conference. This conference was unlike any other that our students have experienced. They were able to communicate with Gary and ask questions while viewing the wolves. With technology emerging more and more in our curriculum this is a perfect opportunity to discuss video conferencing and how it can be used as a tool to communicate with people all around the world. The students were thoroughly engaged and were excited to be able to speak with someone so



Knowledgeable. We especially appreciated the inclusion of some Indigenous stories about the importance of wolves as there is a major focus on this in the BC curriculum. This is a wonderful opportunity for students all over the province to get a chance to learn more about how incredibly important wolves are to our ecosystems. It is an opportunity that I would suggest all teachers take if given the chance.”

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/gBVybhvvpJsocL742>

Thanks very much,
Merryl Scott and Mary Boulton
Torquay Elementary School, Victoria, BC
School District #61

My friend, Rebecca Laurin at Quadra Elementary School in Victoria wrote this about the video conference that I did with her school:

“Well the students loved you and of course Tundra, Nahanni and Mahikan ... we only had one student cry when they realized we weren't going up to visit in person so she could pet Tundra. Thank you so much for everything! It was wonderful having you today!”

What is included in the Video Conference?

The students and teachers will experience the following:

1. An explanation of how important wolves are to developing and maintaining healthy ecosystems. Resources and references will be provided to students and teachers to research further after the video conference.
2. Will relate many stories and legends of the First Nations peoples about wolves and why this animal was so important to their culture.
3. Observe Tundra who resides in our home with my wife and I.
4. Filming Nahanni (Arctic wolf) and Mahikan (Black wolf) out in their enclosure. They will be fed treats and you will watch them play.
5. Will get wolves to howl and explain how and why wolves communicate through howling.
6. Opportunity to ask me questions about the wolves and wolf behaviour and wolf biology in general.
7. Students and teachers can email me further questions after the video conference as they research wolves further.



If you would be so kind to distribute this letter and offer to any or all schools in your district that you think might want to participate.

I know they will find this program to be extremely educational for their students.

Sincerely,

Gary R. Allan
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