



WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE
THERE'S ONE IN ALL OF US.
OCTOBER 16TH



www.wherethewildthingsare.com



GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS AND PARENTS

"WE'LL HELP YOU FIND IT!" WWW.BEOUTTHERE.ORG

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

Innovative director Spike Jonze collaborates with celebrated author Maurice Sendak to bring one of the most beloved books of all time to the big screen in **Where The Wild Things Are**, a classic story about childhood and the places we go to figure out the world we live in.

The film tells the story of Max, a rambunctious and sensitive boy who feels misunderstood at home and escapes to Where The Wild Things Are. Max lands on an island where he meets mysterious and strange creatures whose emotions are as wild and unpredictable as their actions.

The Wild Things desperately long for a leader to guide them, just as Max longs for a kingdom to rule. When Max is crowned king, he promises to create a place where everyone will be happy. Max soon finds, though, that ruling his kingdom is not so easy and his relationships there prove to be more complicated than he originally thought.

Warner Bros. Pictures presents, in association with Legendary Pictures and Village Roadshow Pictures, a Playtone/Wild Things Production of a Spike Jonze film: **Where The Wild Things Are**, starring Max Records, Catherine Keener, Mark Ruffalo, Lauren Ambrose, Chris Cooper, James Gandolfini, Catherine O'Hara and Forest Whitaker.

Where the Wild Things Are is directed by Spike Jonze from a screenplay by Spike Jonze & Dave Eggers, based on the book by Maurice Sendak. It is produced by Tom Hanks, Gary Goetzman, Maurice Sendak, John Carls and Vincent Landay, with Thomas Tull, Jon Jashni and Bruce Berman serving as executive producers.

About National Wildlife Federation

National Wildlife Federation (NWF) inspires Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future. For more than 70 years, NWF has been connecting people of all ages with nature through award-winning education programs and resources, including the children's magazines **Wild Animal Baby**®, **Your Big Backyard**®, and **Ranger Rick**®.



National Wildlife Federation is proud to be an education promotional partner for **Where The Wild Things Are**. Believing that a daily dose of the outdoors is essential to the physical, mental and emotional health of America's children, NWF is mobilizing families, educators, healthcare practitioners, corporate leaders, policymakers, and the media to get children outside to play, learn, and rediscover nature. NWF knows that time outside can turn an ordinary day into a wild rumpus day of rollicking fun! Find out more at www.beoutthere.org.

National Wildlife Federation has teamed up with the film **Where The Wild Things Are** to extend its lessons and to launch a national campaign to get kids and families outside. Join the Be Out There movement to connect kids with nature! This guide will help you explore the film's themes, with activities designed for grades 2-5 and extensions for younger & older students. These activities meet national standards for English/Language Arts, Science, Social Studies, and Visual Arts.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sail Away	3
Wild Things Around the World	4
Wild Things Around the World <i>work sheet</i>	5
Wildlife Inventory	6
Wildlife Inventory <i>work sheet</i>	7
Your Special Place.....	8
Out in the Community	9
Language and Visual Arts Activities	10
Organize a Wild Rumpus Day.....	11
Note to Parents.....	12
Note to Educators.....	13
National Education Standards.....	14

This guide was developed by **National Wildlife Federation**.

Written by: Carey Stanton, Kate Hofmann

Internal review by: Kevin Coyle, Becky Garland, Ashleigh Poff, Shell Rumohr.

Art design by: Joe Warwick

External Reviewer: MaryKay Sexton, Environmental Educator

© 2009 National Wildlife Federation. Permission granted for non-commercial educational uses only. All other rights reserved.



ACTIVITY ONE:

SAIL AWAY

Set students' imaginations adrift as they design their own island "kingdoms."

SUBJECTS: Geography, Language Arts, Visual Arts

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. To use standard map features such as a key and scale bar to convey information symbolically.
2. To consider how landscape elements and living creatures interact in an ecosystem.
3. To effectively use descriptive language to evoke an imagined world.

MATERIALS:

- Chalkboard or whiteboard
- Drawing paper
- Art supplies (crayons, colored pencils, pens, markers, watercolors, etc.)

WHAT YOU DO:

1. In *Where The Wild Things Are*, Max sails away to an island inhabited by Wild Things. Ask students to describe Max's island and how he reached it. With students' input, draw a map of the island on the board, adding any distinct geographical features the group recalls.
2. Demonstrate how to add symbols to the map to represent these features and a key explaining what the symbols mean. Discuss the concept of scale and add a scale bar.
3. Then ask students to imagine that they could sail to their own special islands. What geographical features would they find? (Forests, beaches, mountains, waterfalls, etc.) What animals or plants (real or imaginary) live there? How would they reach the island, and what landmarks would they pass to get there from their home?
4. Have each student draw a map of his or her imagined island, including a key, scale bar, and any other map features you introduce. Provide art supplies such as colored pencils or markers and encourage students to create polished final versions of their maps.
5. Invite students to share their maps and describe their islands to the rest of the group. Ask them to recall the rich visual details about Max's island conveyed in the film, and then demonstrate how they can use descriptive language—sensory images such as colors, textures, sounds, and scents—to help other students experience what they have imagined.

ADAPTATIONS:

For Younger Students: Rather than having students start their maps on a blank page, make copies of the [Island Ahoy!] worksheet from the Kids Activity Guide (available at www.beoutthere.org). Or simply have students draw a scene from their imagined island instead of a map.



ACTIVITY TWO:

WILD THINGS AROUND THE WORLD

Challenge students to classify animals into groups based on their distinct characteristics.

SUBJECTS: Science

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. To understand that animals are classified into groups based on their characteristics.
2. To be able to name several animal species that fall into each of the major groups.

MATERIALS:

- Chalkboard, whiteboard, or large sheets of paper
- Optional: Photos of a wide variety of animal species

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Ask students to think about how the Wild Things in the film compare with real-life wild creatures. What do they have in common? What are some differences?
2. Discuss how we group animals together based on their characteristics. For example, what do all mammals have in common? All birds? For each category (such as mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects, spiders, mollusks, fish), designate a section of the board or a large sheet of paper.
3. Have students brainstorm a list of characteristics for each category, as well as representative species. For "Mammals," they might list items such as "have hair or fur, breathe air, produce milk for young" and species including dog, cat, squirrel, deer, lion, elephant, whale, and human.

Students can record this information on the [Wild Things Around the World worksheet](#) on the following page.

ADAPTATIONS:

For Younger Students: Instead of making lists, do a photo sort. Gather pictures of many different kinds of animals. Have students sort the photos into categories based on the animals' characteristics. For example, they might choose body coverings and sort by fur, feathers, scales, or smooth skin; they might choose number of legs and sort by eight, six, four, two, or none. Then discuss how the sorted piles correspond with different animal groups. Outdoors, work together to create one class inventory of the animals you see instead of individual lists.

For Older Students: Discuss the concept of adaptations. Adaptations are physical characteristics and behaviors that help living things to survive in their habitats. These adaptations have evolved over long periods of time due to the pressures of natural selection.

WILD THINGS AROUND THE WORLD WORKSHEET

ANIMAL GROUP	CHARACTERISTICS	SPECIES
Mammals	<i>hair or fur</i>	
Birds		
Reptiles		<i>snake</i>
Amphibians		
Fish	<i>scales</i>	
Mollusks		<i>clam</i>
Crustaceans		
Insects	<i>exoskeleton</i>	<i>dragonfly</i>
Spiders		



ACTIVITY THREE:

WILDLIFE INVENTORY

Sharpen students' observation skills as they compile a list of local living things.

SUBJECTS: Science

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. To discover animals and animal signs through careful observation.
2. To compile a species list and organize it into categories.
3. To formulate questions and use reference materials to find the answers.

MATERIALS:

- Clipboards and pencils
- Optional: Field guides

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Discuss with students the kinds of Wild Things Max encountered on his island. Explain that, although those creatures are imaginary, many other real wild creatures live in our own neighborhoods—and if we keep our eyes and ears open, we can find them, watch them, and learn about their lives.
2. Give each student a clipboard and head outside to conduct an inventory of the “wild things” that live near you. As you take a walk around the schoolyard, neighborhood, or a local park, have each student list all the species he or she can see (or hear or otherwise find evidence of) in the surrounding area. Remind students to look for small creatures (insects under rocks or logs, worms in the soil) as well as larger, more obvious animals such as squirrels and birds.
3. As a group, combine students' lists. If you have completed Activity Two, arrange the species into categories such as mammals, birds, and insects.
4. Encourage students to use field guides or other reference materials to look up more information about the animals they saw or to find answers to specific questions they have.

*Students can record this information on the **Wildlife Inventory worksheet** on the following page.*

EXTENSIONS

To find nearby natural areas where you might choose to conduct your inventory, go to www.naturefind.com and enter your zip code. After you have a species list, report your findings online at **National Wildlife Federation's Wildlife Watch**. Visit www.nwf.org/naturefind for details.



ACTIVITY FOUR:

YOUR SPECIAL PLACE

Where do you go to feel peaceful and happy?

SUBJECTS: Language Arts, Visual Arts

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. To consider the connection between specific places and the feelings they evoke.
2. To use language and visual arts to communicate those feelings.

MATERIALS:

- Writing paper or computers
- Shoeboxes or other small boxes
- Paper, cardboard, modeling clay, natural objects, and other art materials

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Max was having a difficult time at home before he escaped to the island of the Wild Things. Ask students to close their eyes and picture an outdoor place that makes them feel peaceful and happy—a place to which they'd like to escape during difficult times. Is it a tree house? A mountaintop or lakeshore? A stream in the forest? Encourage them to choose a real place they know well; if they can't think of one, it could be a place from their imagination.
2. Ask students to write short stories describing their places. What do they see and do there? How do they feel in this place?
3. Then have students create dioramas of their special places. Provide shoeboxes and materials for 3-D construction such as heavy paper, cardboard, wire, modeling clay, sand, pebbles, twigs, and other objects.
4. Invite students to read their stories and show their dioramas to the rest of the group.
5. Discuss the value of having a special place and how each person's place may be different.

ADAPTATIONS:

For Younger Students: Instead of writing their stories, students could dictate them to a parent or teacher to transcribe. Or they could describe their special place and how it makes them feel as they share their dioramas with the rest of the group.



ACTIVITY FIVE:

OUT IN THE COMMUNITY

Students volunteer in their community in ways that bring Wild Things, wild creatures, and wild places to others.

SUBJECTS: Social studies, Language arts, Community service

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. To compare and contrast a book with its film interpretation.
2. To participate in one of a variety of community service projects.

MATERIALS:

- **Where The Wild Things Are** picture book by Maurice Sendak
- Materials for crafts or nature activities, depending on what you choose to do

WHAT YOU DO:

1. Explain to students that the film **Where The Wild Things Are** is inspired by a picture book written many years ago (1963) by Maurice Sendak. Read the book to students and invite them to note similarities and differences between the book and the film.
2. Then organize a community service project around reading the book to others. Older students could read to younger kids in a preschool, daycare center, library, boys and girls club, or other setting. Younger students could read to elders at a senior center or retirement home.
3. Engage students in planning both the reading element and perhaps a follow-up activity such as playing a game, singing a song, or doing a craft that relates to the story.

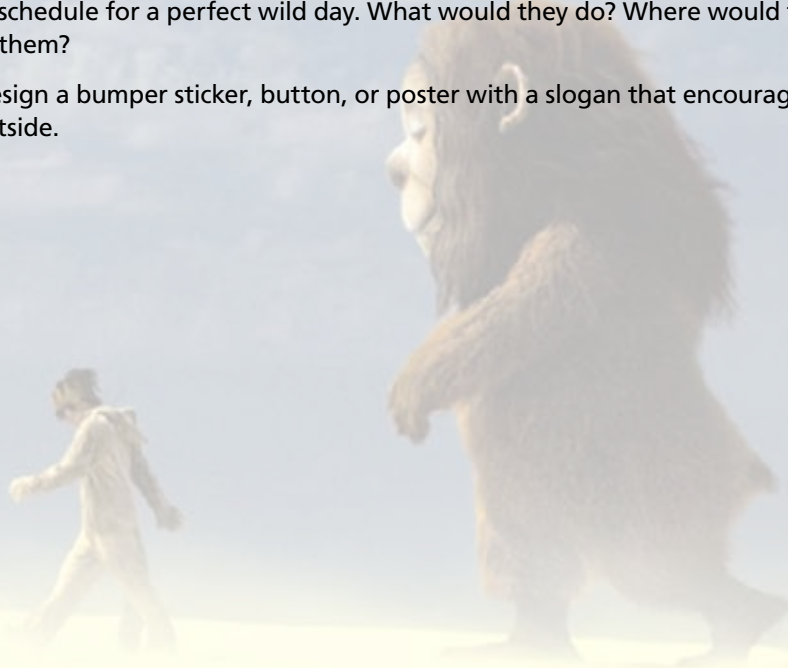
EXTENSIONS:

Instead of, or in addition to, reading to others, students' service project could be one that gets other people outdoors to enjoy the benefits of time outside. For example, older students could take younger kids on a nature walk or help them plant a tree.

LANGUAGE AND VISUAL ARTS ACTIVITIES

Both the film version of *Where The Wild Things Are* and the classic picture book that inspired it are imaginative, visually striking works of art. They provide ideal starting points for students to embark on artistic endeavors of their own. Here are some ideas for language and visual arts connections.

- Read the original *Where The Wild Things Are* picture book by Maurice Sendak and compare the book with the movie. How does the movie expand on things that are just suggested in the book? Can students think of other ways they might take the original story and turn it into a full-length movie?
- Stage a play or puppet show based on the book.
- Have students design a bookmark inspired by images or ideas from the film.
- Invite students to turn themselves into Wild Things by making masks. (One simple option is to use a paper plate for the mask base and decorate it with construction paper cutouts, paint, etc.) Then take your Wild Things on parade!
- Use a theme from the film as a jumping-off point for a writing assignment, a class discussion, or a creative work such as a video or a collage. For instance:
 - Imagine you could join Max and the Wild Things on their island for a day. What would you do there? What would you tell people when you got back to your real life? How would you be different?
 - Max is made king of the Wild Things. What if you were in charge for a day, as king (or queen) of your school or your family? What decisions would you make? What would you enjoy about being in charge? What would be difficult?
- Have students write a conversation between one of the Wild Things and themselves, or invent an interview with one of them.
- Ask students to create a schedule for a perfect wild day. What would they do? Where would they go? Who would they want to join them?
- Challenge students to design a bumper sticker, button, or poster with a slogan that encourages other kids to explore and have fun outside.



ORGANIZE A WILD RUMPUS DAY

Where The Wild Things Are is a celebration of childhood and the importance of imagination. Max stands in for kids everywhere, reminding us just how essential wild creatures and wild places are. Why not turn this reminder into a playful outdoor event? Whether it is a neighborhood gathering, a school function, or a community-wide festival, join the fun with your own Wild Rumpus Day!

WILD RUMPUS DAY PLANNING CHECKLIST

- Identify your intended audience
- Choose a date and time
- Decide on a location and reserve the space
- Decide what activities will be included
- Decide on any other elements, such as food or beverages to be served
- Hire musicians, storytellers, puppeteers, and other talented performers
- Recruit volunteers to lead crafts and games
- Secure sponsors and donations
- Advertise on flyers, in newsletters and the local newspaper, on the radio, and wherever else you might reach your intended audience
- Gather all materials and equipment
- Set up for the day
- Have fun!
- Be sure to recruit a clean-up crew to help with take-down afterward

ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR YOUR WILD RUMPUS DAY

Strive for activities that embody the spirit of childhood—active, joyful, and imaginative, maximizing fun while minimizing the number of materials needed and the set-up/clean-up time required. For example:

- Collaborate on a sidewalk-chalk mural
- Make a crown and scepter
- Blow bubbles
- Fly kites
- Make mud pies or splash in mud puddles
- Play tag and other running games
- Invite local musicians and encourage dancing and singing along
- Make instruments from household materials or recycled items and play along with the band
- Make “Wild Things” masks and have a parade

For more planning details, and to share photos and notes after your Wild Rumpus Day, visit www.beoutthere.org



NOTE TO PARENTS

DEAR PARENTS:

Many of your favorite childhood memories probably involve outdoor play: climbing trees, riding bikes, playing tag, swimming, building sand castles, constructing forts, exploring the world around you and imagining your way into new worlds.

But did you know that outdoor time for kids has decreased by more than 50%, on average? Meanwhile, time spent inside and plugged into electronic media has stretched to more than six hours per day. Today's children are the first generation ever to grow up isolated from nature.

What are the consequences of an indoor childhood?

- Decreased creativity and concentration and a decline in social skills
- Doubling of the childhood obesity rate (with an annual cost of \$100 billion to our public health system)
- Heightened aggression and an inability to cope with stress
- Increased use of antidepressants to treat American children

What are the benefits of restoring outdoor play in childhood?

- Daily unstructured free play improves children's physical and mental health
- Children who play outside are more physically active, more creative, less aggressive and show better concentration
- Outdoor experiences and education enhance children's ability to learn and retain knowledge
- Outdoor experiences build a conservation ethic and concern for the natural world

The new film *Where The Wild Things Are*, and the classic picture book that inspired it, remind us that there's a wild thing inside us all—a creature that needs fresh air, grass and trees, wide open space to run and play, and a wild rumpus of outdoor fun!

National Wildlife Federation's Be Out There program encourages families to explore the outdoors and set off together down a path of physical and emotional well-being. Learn more at www.beoutthere.org. And, for helpful tips and seasonal activities for a daily **Green Hour**[®], visit www.greenhour.org.

Enjoying the outdoors with your child is a wonderful way to spend time together. You have our permission—go on out and play!



NOTE TO EDUCATORS

DEAR EDUCATORS:

The new film ***Where The Wild Things Are***, and the classic picture book that inspired it, remind us that there's a wild thing inside us all—a creature that needs fresh air, grass and trees, wide open space to run and play, and a wild rumpus of outdoor fun!

But did you know that outdoor time for kids has decreased by more than 50%, on average? Meanwhile, time spent inside and plugged into electronic media has stretched to more than six hours per day. Today's children are the first generation ever to grow up isolated from nature.

What are the consequences of an indoor childhood?

- Decreased creativity and concentration and a decline in social skills
- Doubling of the childhood obesity rate (with an annual cost of \$100 billion to our public health system)
- Heightened aggression and an inability to cope with stress
- Increased use of antidepressants to treat American children

What are the benefits of restoring outdoor play in childhood?

- Daily unstructured free play improves children's physical and mental health
- Children who play outside are more physically active, more creative, less aggressive and show better concentration
- Outdoor experiences and education enhance children's ability to learn and retain knowledge
- Outdoor experiences build a conservation ethic and concern for the natural world.

Help spread the word about the many benefits of outdoor time for children. Here's how you can join the movement:

- Visit **National Wildlife Federation's Be Out There program** at www.beoutthere.org to learn more about the importance of outdoor play and learning.
- As much as possible, **incorporate outdoor time** into your own students' school day. Use the schoolgrounds and surrounding community to enhance learning through hands-on, direct experience with the natural world.
- Strive to increase all students' outdoor experiences; **advocate for recess and environmental education** at your school.
- Discuss the importance of time outdoors with your students' families, and **invite parents to take an active role** in promoting outdoor play both at home and at school. To start the conversation, you could send home the Note to Parents from this guide or include it in a school newsletter.

NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS

ACTIVITY ONE SAIL AWAY

Geography: NCGE

Standard 1: Using maps

Social Studies: NCSS

Standard III: People, places, and environments

Science: NSES

Grades K-4 Standard C: Life Science

Characteristics of organisms, Organisms and environments

Grades 5-8 Standard C: Life Science

Populations and ecosystems

English/Language Arts: NCTE/IRA

Standard 4: Communication skills

Standard 6: Applying knowledge

ACTIVITY TWO

WILD THINGS AROUND THE WORLD

Science: NSES

Grades K-4 Standard C: Life Science

Characteristics of organisms, Life cycles of organisms, Organisms and environments

Grades 5-8 Standard C: Life Science

Regulation and behavior, Diversity and adaptations

English/Language Arts: NCTE/IRA

Standard 4: Communication skills

ACTIVITY THREE

WILDLIFE INVENTORY

Science: NSES

Grades K-4 Standard C: Life Science

Characteristics of organisms, Organisms and environments

Grades 5-8 Standard C: Life Science

Diversity and adaptations

Grades K-8 Standard A: Science as Inquiry

Abilities necessary to do scientific inquiry

English/Language Arts: NCTE/IRA

Standard 7: Evaluating data

Standard 8: Developing research skills

ACTIVITY FOUR

YOUR SPECIAL PLACE

Social Studies: NCSS

Standard IV: Individual development and identity

English/Language Arts: NCTE/IRA

Standard 4: Communication skills

Standard 5: Communication strategies

Visual Arts: CNAEA

Standard 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

ACTIVITY FIVE

OUT IN THE COMMUNITY

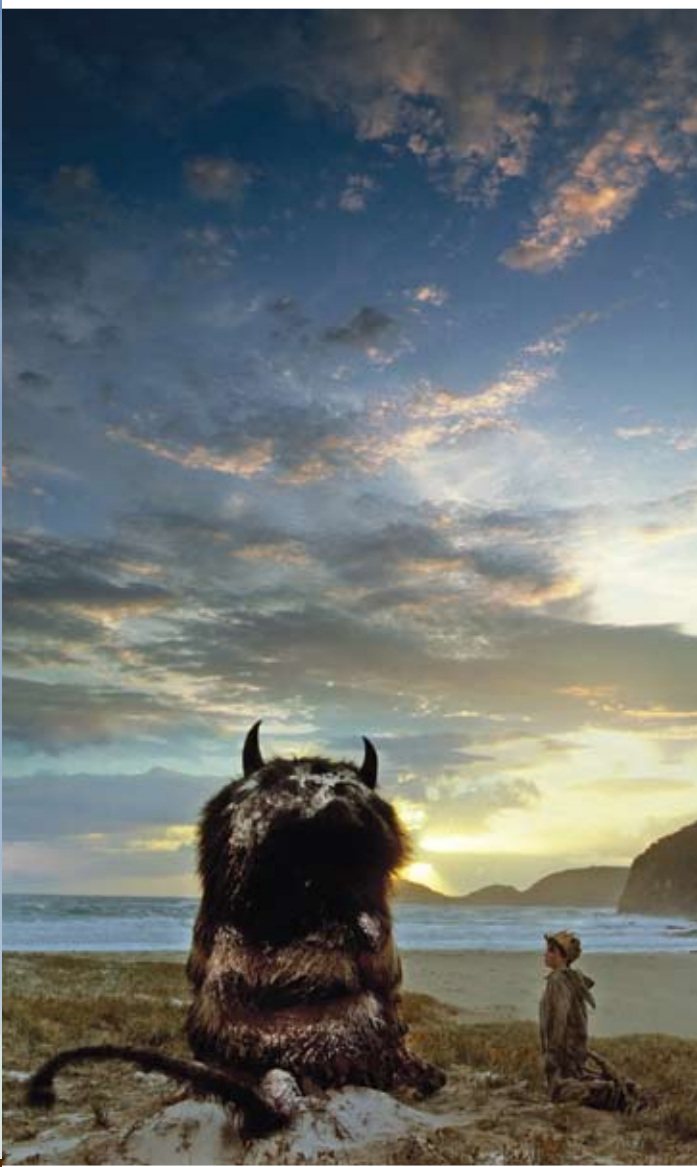
Social Studies: NCSS

Standard X: Civic ideals and practices

English/Language Arts: NCTE/IRA

Standard 1: Reading for perspective

Standard 2: Understanding the human experience



WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE

THERE'S ONE IN ALL OF US.



IN THEATERS OCTOBER 16TH



www.wherethewildthingsare.com



"WE'LL HELP YOU FIND IT!" WWW.BEOUTTHERE.ORG