

Talk Circle: Half Lizard, Half Beaver — or All Platypus?

A Platypus, Probably - Grade 1 - Short lesson

TIME

OBJECTIVE

PRODUCT

8 minutes Participate in a text-based discussion by stating a claim, citing a page, and responding to another speaker. One supported discussion turn plus one response to a classmate. Essential question: Is comparing the platypus to other animals a useful way to meet it, or unfair to what it really is?

Materials

- The book
- Discussion starter card Text to mark
- Opening - half-lizard/half-beaver comparison
- Feature pages - bill, eggs, milk, fur, and other uniquely platypus functions
- Ending - the answer returns to “A platypus? Probably.”

Lesson sequence

1 Set the norms - 2 min Set three rules: one voice at a time, every claim points to the book, and each new speaker agrees or disagrees with the previous speaker before adding a reason. 2 Find your footing - 2 min Choose a side and mark one supporting page: comparison helps us picture it, or the later features show it is fully itself. 3 The circle - 4 min Run the question. Each student gives one supported turn and responds to one previous speaker before the class closes by recalling the ending.

Teacher key

Both positions can be supported. A strong response uses the opening comparison or a later feature as evidence and responds to another speaker rather than simply repeating a claim. Support & extension

Support:

Use the frame: “I think the book’s comparison is useful/unfair because this page shows ____.” Extension: Switch sides after speaking once and make the best text-based case for the other position.

Assessment

- States a clear position
- Points to or names a supporting page/detail
- Responds to another speaker’s idea

- Follows the turn-taking norms

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