

# WEARING OUR HABITATS OUT

Project CEED  
University of New Orleans, College of Education  
Urban Waste Management and Research Center, UNO  
The Audubon Institute, Office of Environmental Policy

Global warming - ozone depletion - hazardous waste - nuclear holocaust. All of these potential environmental disasters dominate human concern, but the question is always asked: "What can I, alone, do to help the environment?" Humans tend to see the global issues as something that they can't control, yet they want to do something. It is incumbent upon universities, nature centers and other environmental educational centers to address that need and it is best answered by 1) educating people about ecosystems and how they work and 2) getting them involved, even tangentially, with decision-making and solutions.

It is the intent of Project CEED activity books to involve our children in environmental issues while they think they are involved in normal educational and recreational ventures: making buttons, designing t-shirts and bumper stickers, social action, writing poetry, learning thinking skills, etc.

We are most pleased to offer you this opportunity to make environmental learning fun and dynamic!

Yours for the Earth,

Robert A. Thomas, Ph.D.  
Vice President for  
Environmental Policy  
The Audubon Institute  
P.O. Box 4327  
New Orleans, LA 70178-4327

Mary Banbury, Ph.D.  
Principal Investigator, Project CEED  
Department of Special Education  
University of New Orleans  
Lakefront  
New Orleans, LA 70148

Ken McManis, Ph.D.  
Director  
Urban Waste Management &  
Research Center  
University of New Orleans  
Lakefront  
New Orleans, LA 70148

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors wish to thank the following for their contributions in finalizing Project CEED curricular materials: Dr. Al Knecht, Resource Manager, Urban Waste Management and Research Center; Carol Giffin-Jeansonne, Program Manager, Urban Waste Management and Research Center; and Dr. Robert A. Thomas, CEO, Society for Environmental Education. Special acknowledgement goes to Dorothy L. Haller, who served as Layout Design Coordinator.

The contents of this document reflect the findings and views of the authors. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the University of New Orleans, Urban Waste Management and Research Center or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This document does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation.

#### Proper Citation:

Wieberg, D.G., & Banbury, M.M. (1992). *Wearing our habitats out*. New Orleans: The Audubon Institute, Office of Environmental Policy.

# WEARING OUR HABITATS OUT

## AUTHORS

Diana Griffin Wieberg  
Little Woods Elementary School

Mary M. Banbury, Ph.D.  
University of New Orleans  
Principal Investigator, Project CEED

## ILLUSTRATOR

Karen Smith-Gratto, Ph.D.

Supported by a grant from:

Urban Waste Management & Research Center  
University of New Orleans - Lakefront  
New Orleans, LA 70148

through a cooperative agreement with the  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Published by The Audubon Institute, Office of Environmental Policy, New Orleans, LA 70178-4327  
(originally published by the Louisiana Nature & Science Center)

©Project CEED 1993  
University of New Orleans  
College of Education

## WEARING OUR HABITATS OUT

### Objectives:

The student will:

1. identify various endangered species and animals that live in the wetland environment.
2. describe animals that live in the wetlands.
3. list endangered species that live in the wetlands.
4. explain the importance of wetlands as animal habitats.
5. discuss ways that children and adults can help save wetland animal habitats.
6. design a T-shirt to inform others of the importance of wetland environments as animal habitats.

### Background Information for the Teacher:

Habitats such as fresh water marshes, salt marshes, and coastal mangrove swamps make up millions of acres of the United States called "Wetlands". Thirty-five percent of all animals classified as threatened or endangered species make their homes there. Thousands of other types of animals also live in these natural habitats. The wetlands provide food, shelter, and water. They also act as huge wildlife nurseries for all types of wildlife, and they function as fishing havens for thousands of species of fish. Although many wetlands border mainly along the nation's coasts, others are found inland acting as "refueling spots" for migrating birds as they make their long journey twice a year through the southern coastal wetlands to the more northern marshes. These wetlands are havens to deer, wading birds, fish, raccoons, bears, otters, alligators, snakes, turtles, and thousands of other species.

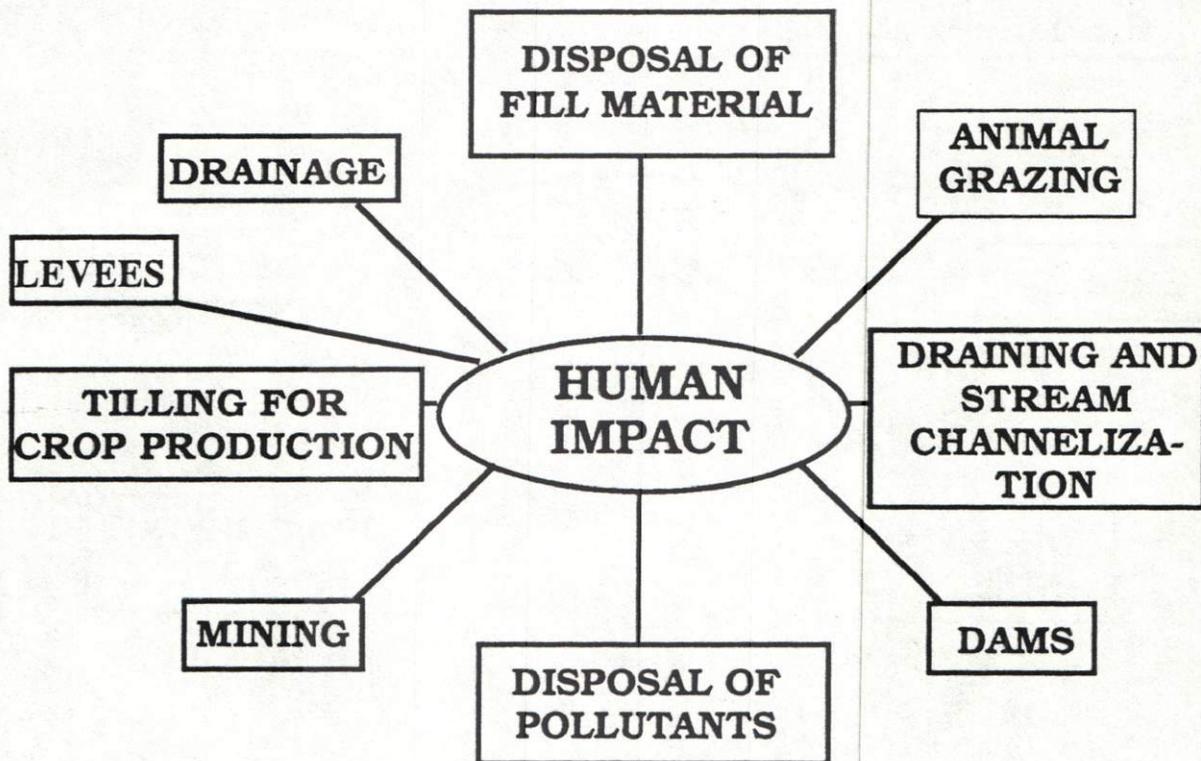
At the present time, newly created federal laws protecting these valuable resources are being threatened. This creates a major problem in the battle against wetland destruction.

Since America was first settled, we have lost over 50 percent of our natural wetland habitat. Currently, we are losing our wetlands at the rate of 300,000 to 500,000 acres a year. In southern Louisiana, a million acres of wetlands have disappeared since the 1900's from a broad expanse between the Atchafalaya and Mississippi rivers. Natural threats as well as human activity are the primary reasons for the disappearance of our wetlands. Rising sea levels, subsidence, storms, hurricanes, and the loss of barrier islands are natural threats to the survival of our wetlands. Human activity, such as the building of levees, the dredging of channels and canals, and developmental projects are filling and draining wetlands to make way for human inhabitants (Transparencies #1 and #2 may be used to instruct students about the natural and human causes of wetland loss). If the loss of wetlands continues at present rates, they may become extinct, and, along with them, thousands of species of wildlife will go the way of the Dodo bird. To help save the wetlands, the animals that make their homes there, and ourselves, we need to teach our students about the value of the wetlands, the importance of saving them, and we need to enforce state and federal regulations for wetland conservation.

If wetlands disappear, we will not only lose wildlife, we will also lose a major source of commercial and recreational fishing in the United States. The wetlands provide a link in the natural food chain and produce foods for many species used to sustain people. It has become clear to us that no combination of technological fixes will enable us to continue living in and developing wetland areas as we do today. All the recycled Christmas trees used to form sediment traps to build wetlands, concrete sea walls, or truck loads of replacement sand for beaches will not solve all the vast problems of wetland destruction. The answer lies in the people who inhabit the earth. We are the caretakers. It is important to take action now!

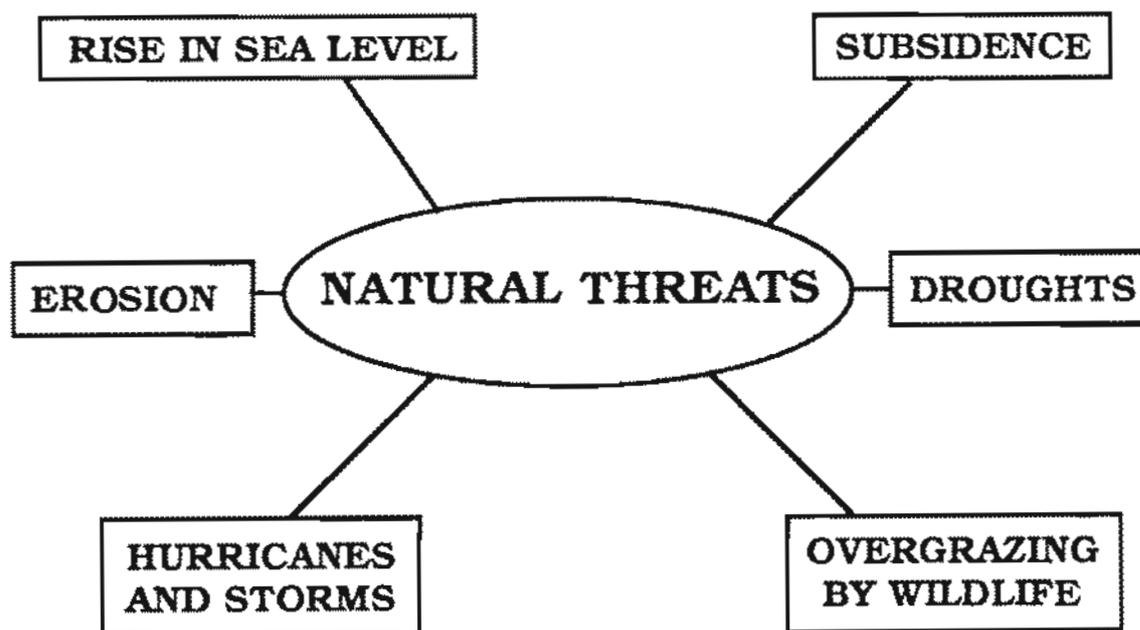


# MAJOR CAUSES OF WETLANDS LOSS: HUMAN IMPACT



PROJECT CEED

# MAJOR CAUSES OF WETLANDS LOSS: NATURAL THREATS



## References

### Books

Laycock, G. (1978). *Exploring the Great Swamp*. New York: David McKay Company, Inc.

Lockwood, C.C. (1984). *The Gulf Coast*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.

Lyons, J. and S. Jordan (1989). *Walking the Wetlands*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

### Books for Children

Scott, J. D. (1984). *Alligators*. New York: Putnam.

Cortesi, W. W. (1976). *Explore a Spooky Swamp*. New York: National Geographic Society.

Grisewood, J. (1985). *Dictionary Encyclopedia*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Goetz, D. (1961). *Swamps*. New York: William Morrow and Co.

Koebner, L. (1991). *For Kids Who Love Animals*. Los Angeles: Living Planet Press.

### Information Sheets

Thomas, R.A. "Worthless Wetlands? Think Again! *Enviroinfosheet #4*," Louisiana Nature and Science Center, Inc., New Orleans, Louisiana 70187-06710.

Thomas, R.A. "How We Manage Our Coastal Marshes. *Environinfosheet #5*," Louisiana Nature and Science Center, Inc., New Orleans, Louisiana 70187-06710.

"*Environmental Backgrounder*," United States Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Public Affairs (1-101), Washington, D.C. 20460, November 1988.

### Magazine Articles

(August 10, 1987). "Where's the Beach?" *Time*, 40.

(October 1989). "South Padre's Magic Shrinking Beaches." The Saturday Evening Post, 84.

### Teacher Guides

Banbury, M.M., London, K., Lyons, S.E., Reaves, D., Simmons, L.N., Smith-Grato, K., Thomas, R.J., & Weiberg, D.G. (1991). *Welcome to the Wetlands: An Activity Book for Teachers*. New Orleans: Louisiana Nature and Science Center.

National Wildlife Federation (1989). *Wading Into Wetlands*. Washington D.C.: National Wildlife Federation.

### Organizations

Association of Nature Center Administrators, P.O. Box 870610, New Orleans, LA 70187-0610.

Louisiana Nature and Science Center, P.O. Box 870610, New Orleans, Louisiana 70187-0610.

National Wildlife Federation, 1400 Sixteenth Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-266, 1-800-432-6564.

National Audubon Society, 950 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10022.

World Wildlife Fund, 1250 24th Street, N.W., Washington D.C. 20037  
Attn: Public Information.

## **ACTIVITY #1: ATTRIBUTES, HOUSES, HABITATS, AND HOMES**

Use the background information and selected references as a springboard for brainstorming and researching the wetlands as natural habitats for animals. Use the following Creative Problem Solving technique to motivate students to know more about wetland habitats. Guide them through the research and lead them into designing T-shirts to further their cause of wetland preservation.

### **ATTRIBUTE LISTING**

Attribute listing joins together two very different ideas through forced relationships and analogies which stimulate creative thinking and lead to creative problem solving. Students may complete the following charts individually, with partners, or in small group settings. Afterwards the teacher may wish to share the resulting creativity through collectively brainstorming the answers on the chalkboard.

#### **Materials:**

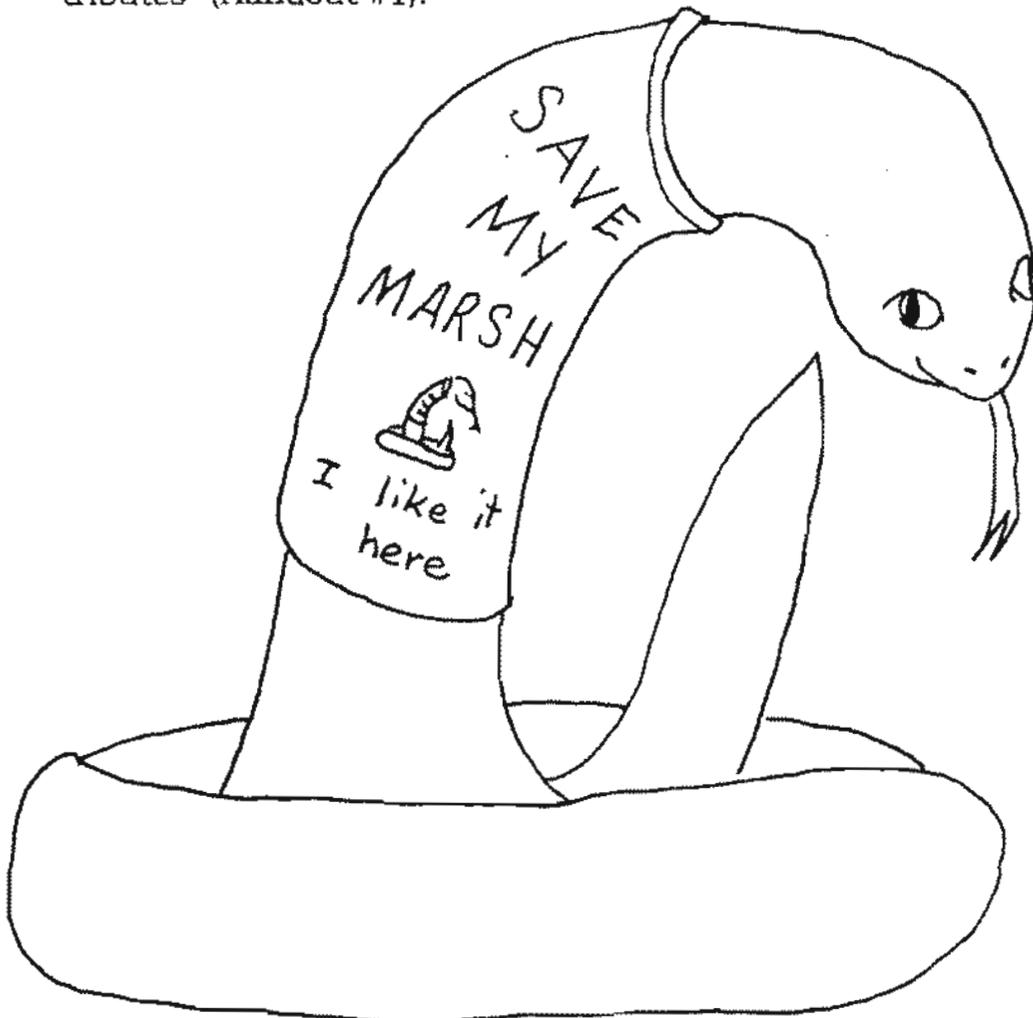
- ☞ "Habitat Attributes" (Transparency #3)
- ☞ "Habitat Attributes" (Handout #1)
- ☞ Pencils
- ☞ References

#### **Getting Ready:**

- ☞ Allow students time to research and discuss the animals that live in the wetlands.

**Process:**

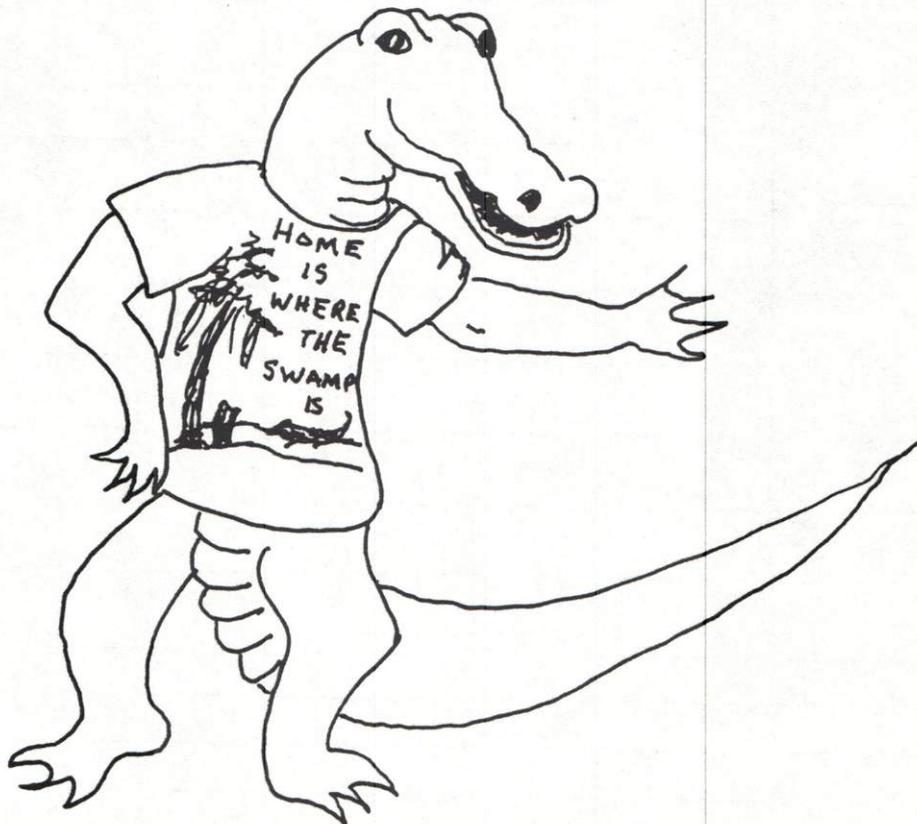
1. Define attribute. (see glossary)
2. Ask students to list attributes of houses, habitats, gator holes, suburban homes, cypress trees and a child's bedroom.
3. Ask students to compare two things that are alike. Example: houses and habitats
4. Using Transparency #3, "Habitat Attributes," ask students to compare the two habitats. Explain to students how to complete the charts using the example "In what ways is a gator hole like a suburban home?"
5. Ask students to complete the student work sheet on "Habitat Attributes" (Handout #1).



## HABITAT ATTRIBUTES

**In what ways is a gator hole like a suburban home?**

ATTRIBUTE	GATOR HOLE	SUBURBAN HOME
Interior	wet, murky	dry, warm
Exterior	trees, grass, sky	trees, grass, sky
Storage Area	in the hole	in closets, cupboards, garages
Inhabitants	fish, alligators,	humans, pets other species



## HABITAT ATTRIBUTES

1. In what ways is a Cypress tree like a child's bedroom?

ATTRIBUTE	CYPRESS TREE	CHILD'S BEDROOM
Sleeping		
Recreational		
Entertaining		
Eating		
Learning		

A cypress tree is like a child's bedroom because \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. In what ways is \_\_\_\_\_ like \_\_\_\_\_?

ATTRIBUTE		

A \_\_\_\_\_ is like a \_\_\_\_\_ because  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## ACTIVITY #2: OH WHERE, OH WHERE, HAVE THE HABITATS GONE?

The second activity involves the use of Creative Problem Solving techniques. Students will research and identify the problems of the disappearing wetlands through fact finding. They will select one problem to solve, develop ideas to help solve the problem, brainstorm various solutions, determine criteria, evaluate solutions, and describe a plan for implementing a solution. These activities may be assigned to individual students or partners.

For an entire class project, divide the students into small groups and assign each group to one section. Begin with the sharing of fact finding information and continue through the problem solving process.

### Materials:

- ✍ Handout #2, pages 1-3
- ✍ Pencils
- ✍ References

### Getting Ready:

- ✍ Allow students time to research animals that live in the wetlands.



**Process:**

1. Teach Creative Problem Solving to your students using the following process model:

**Creative Problem Solving**

Fact-Finding.....Gathering Information

Problem-Finding.....Looking at information; stating it in many different ways

Idea-Finding.....In what ways might I . . .

Solution-Finding.....Use criteria

Acceptance-Finding.....Specific plan of action to put ideas into use

2. Discuss each of the steps in the "Creative Problem Solving" process that are outlined in Handout #2, pages 1-3:



# Creative Problem Solving

**Topic:** I am really interested in wetlands as animal habitats.

## 1. Fact Finding

Brainstorm a list of questions that will help you find out about the wetlands and animal habitats. A sample list includes:

What do I already know about wetland habitats?

---

---

What books, examples, etc. do I already have?

---

---

What problems do the wetland habitats have in surviving?

---

---

What might anyone else want to know about wetland habitats?

---

---

What's in the library (school/local nature center) about wetlands/wetlands as habitats?

---

---

Who might be able to help me?

---

---

When must I have the information ready?

---

---

What are some places I might visit?

---

---

# Creative Problem Solving

## 2. Problem Solving

- A. Generate a list of problems that you thought about during your fact-finding mission. Use the format, "In what ways might I . . .?" A sample list includes:

In what ways might I present the importance of natural wetland habitats?

---

---

In what ways might I illustrate the different animals that live in wetlands?

---

---

In what ways might I teach people about the wildlife found in wetlands?

---

---

In what ways might I illustrate the importance of animals' habitats to society?

---

---

In what ways might I teach people how to save wetland habitats?

---

---

In what ways might I complete a project on how to save wetland habitats from further destruction?

---

---

- B. Select one problem from your list and solve it.

# Creative Problem Solving

## 3. Idea Finding

Brainstorm ideas to solve your targeted problem. A sample list includes:

Develop a "Save Animals' Homes" Club.

Design a poster to help save the wetlands.

Design a T-shirt to help draw attention to wetlands habitat destruction.

## 4. Solution Finding

Develop a list of criteria that will help you select the best idea to solve your problem. A sample list includes:

Will I enjoy this? \_\_\_\_\_

What will I learn that's new for me? \_\_\_\_\_

Will other students like wetland habitats? \_\_\_\_\_

What time/space/money materials will be needed? \_\_\_\_\_

Will the school/teacher/principal allow me to do this? \_\_\_\_\_

## 5. Acceptance Finding

Develop an action plan and implement your solution such as:

Who will support this? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will object to this project? \_\_\_\_\_

What might go wrong? \_\_\_\_\_

Plan of action:

Step #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Step #2 \_\_\_\_\_

Step #3 \_\_\_\_\_

# HOW TO



# MAKE T-SHIRTS

## READ MY T-SHIRT

### Materials:

- ☞ References
- ☞ Various pictures/posters of animals found in wetland habitats
- ☞ Planning My T-Shirt (Handout #3)
- ☞ T - shirt designing plate (Handout #4)
- ☞ Markers, colored pencils, or crayons
- ☞ Samples of slogans, sayings, quotes dealing with various causes connected to the wetlands (Transparency #1)

### Getting Ready:

- ☞ Visit the library and use the card catalog, Readers Guide, or ask the librarian to find information about wildlife habitats, wetlands, and endangered species.
- ☞ Check out books, magazines, etc. and bring to class for students to use.
- ☞ Take students to your local nature center or library and let them check out their own books, periodicals, and journals.

### Process:

1. Make a list of appropriate slogans, sayings, and quotes that may make people think about the importance of the wetlands.
2. Choose slogan, saying, or quote and design an accompanying picture or logo.
3. Transfer the slogan and picture to the T-shirt design page (Handout #3).
4. Review, critique, refine, then proceed to the making of your T-shirt (Refer to the next lesson "Designing Your Habitat T-shirt").

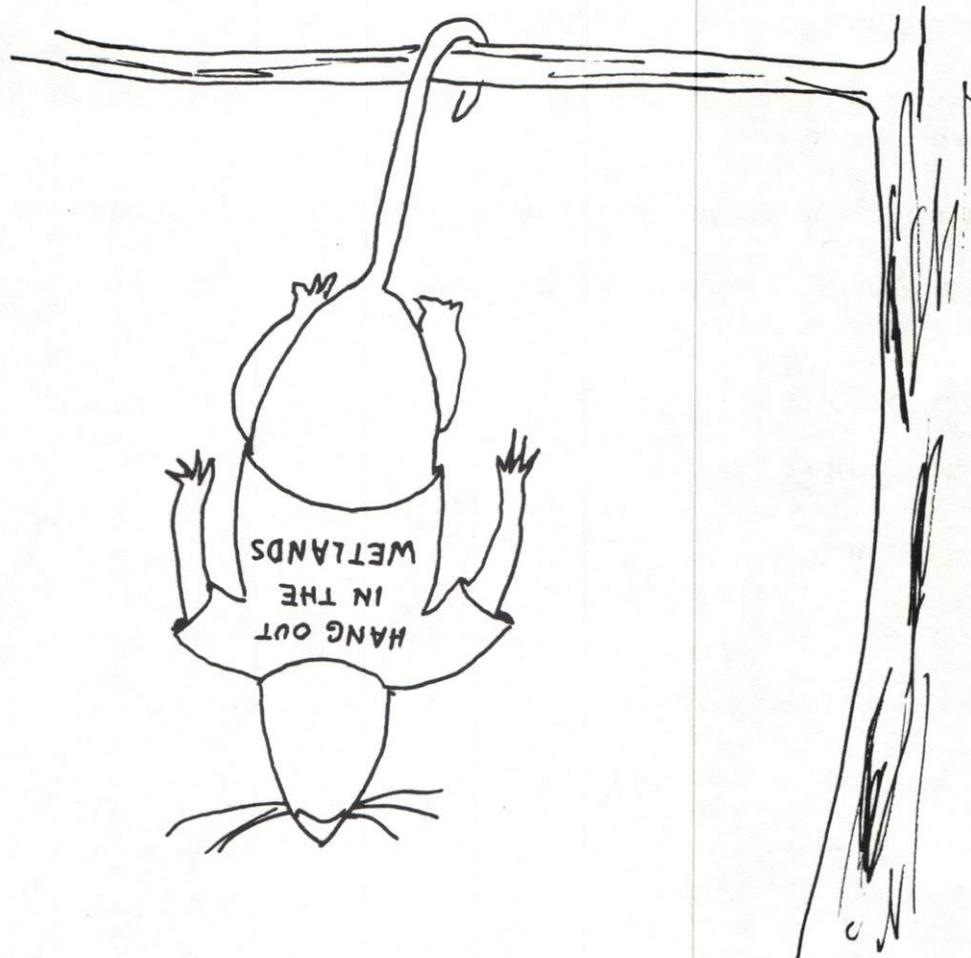
**Extensions:**

1. Visit a local wetland, nature center, aquarium, or zoo.
2. Check school audio visual catalog for related videos, movies, posters, charts, etc. about wetland habitats.
3. Write poetry from various animals' points of view to plead their case to help save their homes.
4. Hold a mock "trial" with animal and human characters as lawyers, witnesses, jurors, and magistrates to determine what will happen to animal habitats. Entitle the production, "W.L. Law." Be creative! Characters could be "Mrs. Ima Nutria, Mr. Al E. Gator, etc."
5. Make a video commercial to help save animal habitats in the wetlands.
6. Write a radio spot, catchy song, or rap to draw importance to the saving of wetlands for animals.
7. Design a bumper sticker for wetland habitat awareness.
8. Write letters to the editor of your local newspaper questioning adults' role in the conservation and preservation of the wetland environments.



### Family/Community Participation:

1. Participate in "Beach Sweep" or "Coastal Clean-up" activities. Pass out flyers at church, school, community centers, neighborhoods, etc. End the outing with a picnic. Call local newspaper, radio, and T.V. stations to request media coverage.
2. Become a self-conscious family who lowers water usage, recycles, attends animal related events at local nature centers, wetlands, lakes, rivers, etc. that support wetland conservation. Check local newspapers for times and dates of these events.
3. Bake some "wetland goodies" such as cookies, cupcakes, candy, cakes, brownies, etc. and sell them to neighbors, church members, youth groups, after school activities, races, etc. Display signs indicating that the money earned will go to the local nature center, wildlife refuge, national park, etc. Donate the money in the name of a favorite animal or animals, animal habitat, or animal refuge. Write your state's Wildlife and Fisheries Department to find out where to send the money.



## Designing Your Habitat T-Shirt

After learning about animal habitats, have students design a shirt on the T-shirt design page with pencil. Discuss appropriate slogans, sayings, quotes, etc. Have students color designs with markers, crayons, or colored pencils. Students may wish to enlarge designs onto white paper for tracing on tracing paper or tulle.

### Materials:

- ☛ Clean T-shirt
- ☛ High-quality washable fabric paints. Ask your favorite craft store clerk to help you. Select a variety of colors. Don't forget to try metallic or glitter variations. (Some may have "squeeze bottle" tops. Brushes may not be needed with these.)
- ☛ Brushes in various sizes.
- ☛ Tulle may be used to transfer the pre-drawn pattern to shirt. (Transfer directions are in the "Process" section.)
- ☛ Wonder Marker may be used to transfer patterns since it will wash out with water.
- ☛ Permanent Marker for outlining. Test it on the fabric first.
- ☛ Cardboard covered with plastic wrap or waxed paper to be placed inside the shirt to make a solid painting surface.
- ☛ Spray Bottle
- ☛ Straight Pins
- ☛ Masking Tape
- ☛ Tracing Paper
- ☛ Palette or small tin for mixing paints (optional).
- ☛ Fine point permanent marker
- ☛ Iron on pencil

## Getting Ready:

- ☞ Wash and dry shirt.
- ☞ Place cardboard covered with plastic wrap or waxed paper inside shirt.

### Process:

1. Transfer, trace or draw design on shirt. (Choose the method most appropriate to your grade level and expertise.)

#### a. **Transfer Design**

1. Trace design on tulle with permanent marking finepoint pen.
2. Tape tulle onto shirt in location desired.
3. Retrace with Wonder Marker Pen so design will be on shirt.

#### b. **Trace Design**

1. Trace design onto tracing paper.
  2. Draw over lines on reverse side with iron on pencil.
  3. Iron design onto shirt according to instructions.
2. Pin excess material out of your way.
  3. Mix any paints needed.
  4. Paint design according to original drawing on T-shirt page. Paint one area at a time.
  5. When dry, add detail with fine point permanent marker.
  6. Heat set - after paint has dried, set iron to correct fabric setting. Iron on wrong side until paint feels hot (about 30 seconds). Continuously move iron, or cover painting with pressing cloth or brown craft paper. Move iron over each area for 30 seconds. This will "set" the paint and allow for washing. Always wash shirts inside out for long lasting designs.

### Extensions:

1. Add sequins, beads, pearls, rhinestones, etc. for the "dazzle" effect. Use hot glue to add these. (They make nice "eyes" for animals or highlights for focus point.)
2. Use pre-cut sponges shaped into various animal and wetland shapes to print T-shirt designs or cut your own sponge shapes for printing using your imagination or metal cookie cutters. Dip the precut sponges into the fabric paint and stencil onto shirt.
3. Write to the Association of Nature Center Administrators, P.O. Box 870610, New Orleans, LA 70187-0610.
4. Write to the National Wildlife Federation, Department NB, School Programs Division, 8925 Leesburg Pike, Vienna, VA 22184-0001, and ask for further information about wetland conservation.
5. Write the National Institute for Urban Wildlife, 10921 Trotting Ridge Way, Columbia, MD 21044, and ask for further information on wetlands, wetland conservation, and wetland awareness groups, clubs, or organizations in your area.
6. Ask a local shopping mall to sponsor a "Wetlands Day." Have your class wear their T-shirt art and talk to visitors about the wetlands and why they are important as animals' homes. Pass out brochures from local conservation organizations.



### Family/Community Participation:

1. Have the entire family design shirts with a message that can only be read when the whole family is together.
2. Design "families of animals" for displaying on T - shirts.
3. Auction a handmade T-shirt at school, church, or community affairs (Ask permission first!). Donate the money earned to a local nature center, wildlife refuge, or wetland area. Contact The Association of Nature Center Administrators to find out where the money may be sent or save the money and go on a wetland field trip.
4. Write your local Councilperson, State Representative, State Senator, State Governor, US Representative, US Senator, even the President of the United States about the importance of preserving the wetlands. Collect signatures "petition style" to support your letter.
5. Plan a family outing to a wetland near you. Try to visit a coastal wetland area as well as an inland wetland area.



## Glossary

<b>Analogy:</b>	similar in some way.
<b>Attribute:</b>	a characteristic or quality of a person or thing.
<b>Barrier island:</b>	islands along the coast that block the coastal areas from waves, storms, and hurricanes.
<b>Beach sweep:</b>	a litter campaign along the coastal lands.
<b>Brainstorming:</b>	the offering of ideas by all members of a group in order to solve a problem.
<b>Cypress tree:</b>	a tall deciduous water loving tree with light green fern-like foliage.
<b>Endangered species:</b>	an animal species in danger of becoming extinct.
<b>Environment:</b>	all the conditions in a surrounding area.
<b>Extension:</b>	lengthen the learning activity.
<b>Extinct:</b>	no longer existing.
<b>Gator hole:</b>	a small water area inhabited by an alligator or alligators.
<b>Habitat:</b>	the area in which a species makes its home.
<b>Inhabitants:</b>	species that live in an area.
<b>Migrate:</b>	movement from one part of the world to another usually during specific seasons.
<b>Palette:</b>	a special board used by artists to mix paints.
<b>Suburban:</b>	the outlying areas of a town where people live.
<b>Survival:</b>	remain alive through difficult times.
<b>Tulle:</b>	thin transparent material used to make face veils.
<b>Wetlands:</b>	lands where saturation with water is the dominant factor.

## PLANNING MY T-SHIRT

1. What message about the wetlands do I want to deliver?

---

---

---

2. What "catchy" slogan, quote, or saying will I use to grab the reader's attention?

---

---

---

3. What illustrations or pictures will I use to enhance my message?

---

---

---

4. What colors will I use to highlight my message?

---

---

---

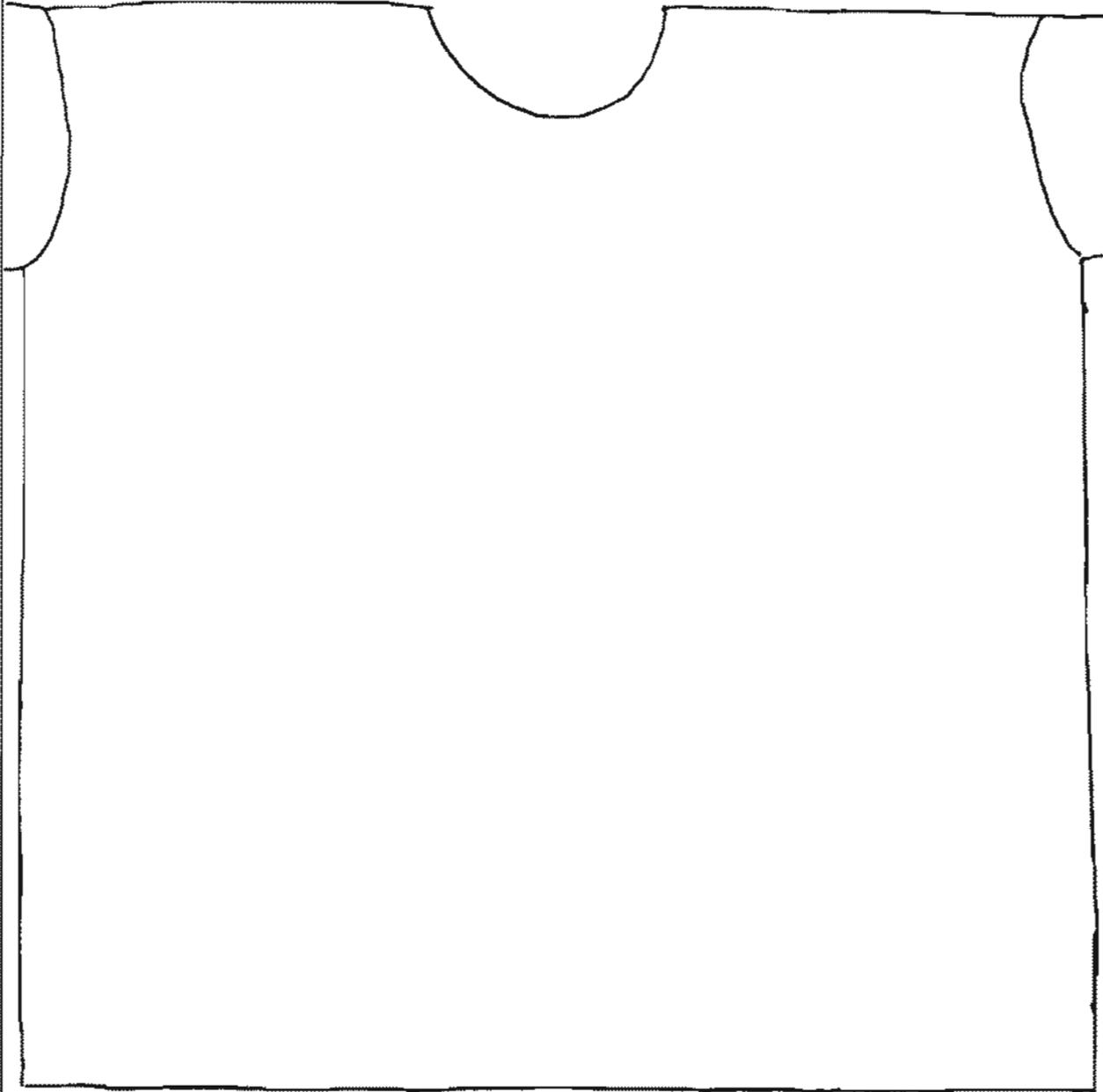
5. What other design elements will I use to get people to "Read My T-Shirt?"

---

---

---

# T-SHIRT

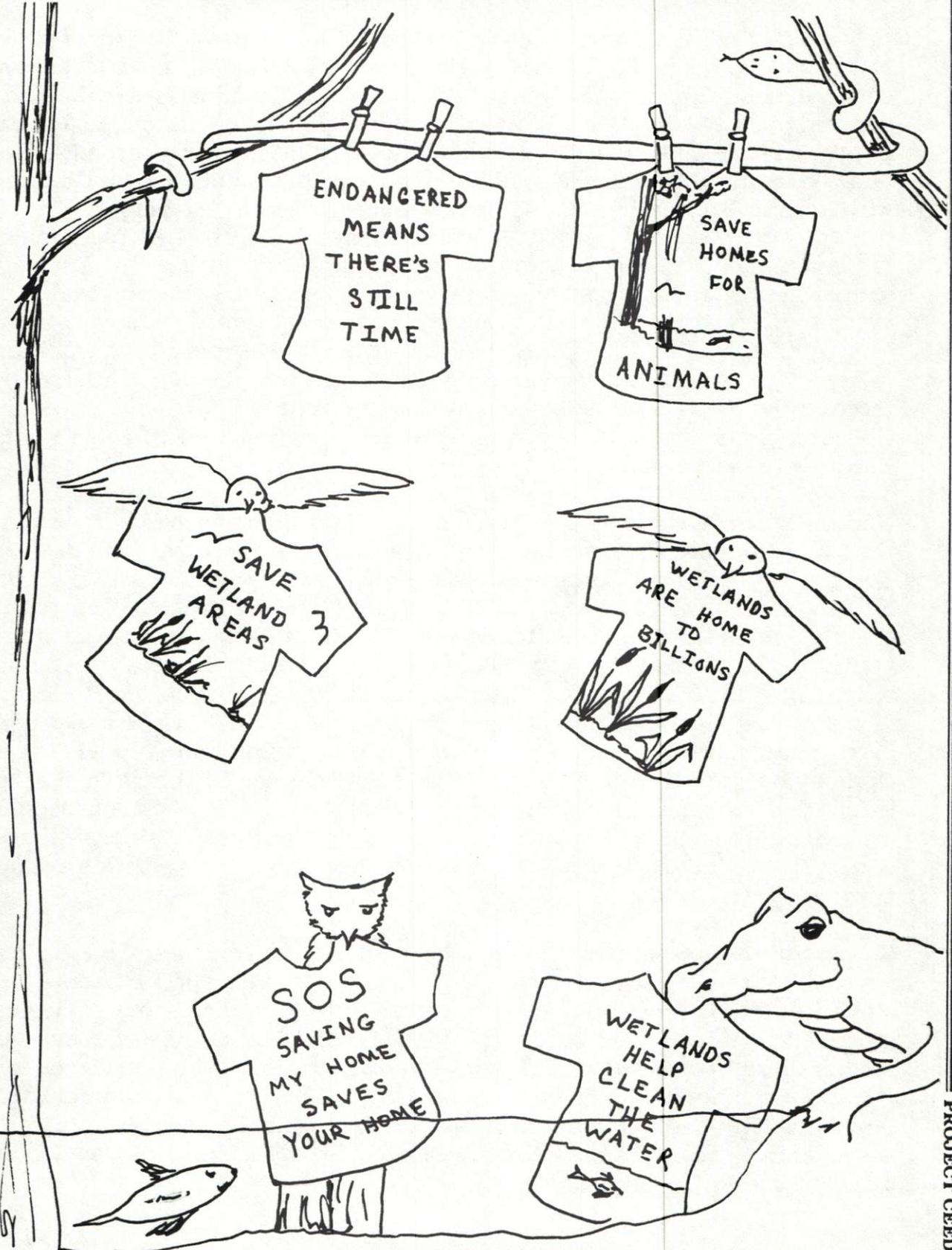


PROJECT CEDD

## DESIGN PAGE

Handout #4

# EXAMPLES AND SAMPLES



## CONTRIBUTORS

**Mary M. Banbury**, Ph.D., has worked extensively in the field of special education for the past twenty years. In addition to teaching classes in the areas of gifted and mild/moderate handicapping conditions, she has edited a book, published three monographs, six book chapters, and numerous articles. Her film "The ACBs of Learning Disabilities" funded by the Foundation for Children with Learning Disabilities" and the American Federation of Teachers shows how to modify instructional methods, curriculum, materials, and the environment to accommodate the special learner. Recently, Dr. Banbury has coordinated a federal grant developing an alternative science curriculum for children with exceptionalities. She is presently the principal investigator for the state grant "Project CEED: Coastal Education for Economic Development." Dr. Banbury has received awards for her community service and her teaching. She recently received the first Outstanding Faculty Award from the College of Education, University of New Orleans. Dr. Banbury is a research associate of the Louisiana Nature and Science Center.

**Diana Griffin Wieberg** has been an elementary school teacher in Missouri, Virginia, Georgia, and Texas. She has also taught for the Department of Defense European Division in Brunssum, The Netherlands. She has a Master of Education degree from Georgia State University in Atlanta and is currently teaching gifted students at Little Woods Elementary School in New Orleans, Louisiana. Diana is active in the New Orleans Academic Games League and coached the 1990 National Academic Games Elementary Sweepstakes Championship Team. She has taught at the University of New Orleans Mini-College, participated in the Louisiana State Department of Education's Model Career Options Program (MYCOP) for teachers rated Superior by the LaTip/LaTep Evaluation Program, and received numerous awards and honors throughout her teaching career. She is one of the contributing authors of *Welcome to the Wetlands - An Activity Book for Teachers* published by the Louisiana Nature and Science Center and Project CEED.

**Karen Smith-Gratto** received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Christopher Newport College in Newport News, Virginia and her Master of Education and Ph.D. from the University of New Orleans in New Orleans, Louisiana. She has taught elementary gifted students and high school computer literacy and programming in the New Orleans area. Karen was chosen as Teacher of the Year at George Washington Elementary School for 1991-1992. She has published several articles and is a member of the ASCD and the Louisiana Evaluators Association. She is currently Assistant Professor of Elementary Education at Quincy College, Quincy, Illinois.

