

AnimalWatch Fact Sheet

www.animalwatch.org

What is AnimalWatch? AnimalWatch is a web-based tutoring program for algebra readiness. Students solve colorful word problems about endangered species and environmental themes. Hints, video lessons and interactive examples guide students, and SkillBuilder modules build proficiency with basic fact facts. All resources are organized into Learning Objectives, aligned with the California Mathematics Content Standards. With a few clicks, teachers can assign a Learning Objective to the entire class, or customize topics to students to support differentiated instruction. Real-time reports allow teachers to track students' progress.

Does it work? AnimalWatch has been used by hundreds of students in California, Massachusetts and Arizona. Evaluation studies show that students who use AnimalWatch improve as much as students who receive tutoring from a math teacher. AnimalWatch is especially effective for students who are struggling in math, including English Learners. Students report that they like the connection of math with science, and that they like learning at their own pace through the video lessons, worked examples and explanations that are included in the program.

What do I need? AnimalWatch is a web-based program, so students need computers with Internet access. They also need headphones to access the video lessons. Once students are set up with a user account, they can use the program in class, after school or from home.

Does it cost anything? No; teachers and students can use the program free of charge. The AnimalWatch project is supported by research grants from the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education.

Who developed AnimalWatch? AnimalWatch started in 1997 at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, when Dr. Beverly Woolf and Dr. Carole Beal asked middle school teachers how to make math learning more engaging for both girls and boys. Teachers suggested connecting math with environmental science, and the first module "WhaleWatch" was launched with help from the New England Aquarium. Research grants from the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education helped us expand the program. AnimalWatch now includes material on many endangered species and covers most algebra readiness topics.

How do I get started? Teachers can request instructor and student accounts by email to support@animalwatch.org. Comprehensive user guides, lesson plans and Professional Development resources are available online.