

# Maria the Mockingbird



**Grades:** 4-6

**TEKS:**

4: 1B, 2A, 10A

5: 1B, 2B, 9A, 10A

6: 1B, 2A, 12E

**Topics:**

Basic Needs

Biotic (living) /Abiotic (nonliving)

Habitats and Ecosystems

Human Activity/Environmental Impacts

Natural Resources

Predator/Prey

Wildlife

**Methodologies:**

Critical Thinking

Poster/Visual Aid

Roleplay

**Setting:** Classroom

**Activity Time:** 45-60 minutes

**Additional Subjects:** Art, ELAR,  
Social Studies

**Objective:**

Students will identify basic needs of living things while recognizing stewardship actions as a way to manage land and wildlife.

**Materials:**

**Provided**

Script

Cutout pages

Scene

**Not Provided (optional)**

Banner paper (3ft x 5ft)

Paint, markers, or crayons

Scissors

Tape or glue stick

**Vocabulary:**

abiotic, basic needs, biotic, conservation, environment, habitat, living, nonliving, wildlife



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## Background:

Stewardship is defined as the responsible planning and management of resources such as land, water, and animals. The science of wildlife management attempts to balance the needs of wildlife with the needs of people using the best available science. Therefore, the two are closely related. As land stewards, we must accept responsibility for wildlife in a wide variety of ways that can benefit both the land and its wildlife. It does not matter if the land is owned by individual people or owned by the state; wildlife located throughout Texas belongs to us all.

## Activity Preparation:

- Project the provided scene onto a board or wall.
- Make a copy of the script and cut out each group paragraph.
- Make copies of the provided cutouts. Cut out the objects. If needed, write the corresponding word from the script on the back of each image. If copies are in black and white, color before using or allow students to do so.
- Follow the instructions below to complete the activity.

## Procedure:

### Discussion

1. Engage students by asking them if they have observed birds where they live or around the school. Next, ask if they have heard of or seen a mockingbird. Hold up the provided image of the mockingbird and tell students that this mockingbird's name is Maria. Explain that the Northern Mockingbird is the official state bird of Texas and lives in habitat across the state.
2. Maria is a type of wildlife that lives in Texas. Introduce or review the term "wildlife" as a plant or an animal that lives in nature without having caretakers.
3. Maria and other wildlife are also natural resources. Introduce or review the term "natural resources" as something found in nature including plants, animals, water, rocks, soil, trees, metal, gas, etc.
4. Tell students they are going to complete the story by role-playing the experiences of Maria the Mockingbird as she flies over her Texas habitat, which is the specific environment of the place where she lives.

### Activity

1. Arrange students into six groups.
2. Provide each group a paragraph from the script.
3. Provide each group with the cutouts correlating to their assigned paragraph.  
**Note:** The words highlighted in the story correlate with the provided cutouts.
4. Tell each group they are to role-play or act out what happens in their paragraph. One of the students will act as the narrator. Students can use the cutouts as part of their roleplaying. Challenge students to be creative with their acting and the materials they use. Remind

students of the scene, as they may want to incorporate it into their acting. Provide groups a set amount of time to prepare and practice.

5. Begin the story by reading the first two paragraphs. Place the cutouts from paragraph two onto the scene as you read aloud. Then, have the students narrate and act out their paragraphs in numerical order.

### **Wrap-up**

1. Once students have completed acting out the events in their assigned paragraph, ask the following questions.
  - Of the items described in the story (picture cutouts), which were living things and which were nonliving things? How are living and nonliving things different? (For older students use biotic and abiotic in place of living and nonliving.)
  - What were the basic needs mentioned?
  - What were the acts of stewardship in the paragraph?
  - Did the land benefit from stewardship actions? How?
  - Did wildlife benefit from stewardship actions? How?
  - Why are actions of stewardship important?
  - How is stewardship related to management?