

Making the Grade: School Program Menu for 4th Grades 2025-2026



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The following is a list of presentations offered to fourth grade classes in Jasper County. This is not a complete list, and for other options or questions about a program, please contact the naturalists. We work with teachers to fit our programming with their curriculum!

- All programs are free and materials will be provided unless otherwise noted.
- Although descriptions are for in-class, all programs can be adapted for outdoor locations.
- Please call or email at the beginning of the school year to guarantee your desired day and time.
- Plan for 30-40 minutes per program.
- Have your students come up with a list of questions for the naturalists before the scheduled program time.
- Please plan to sit with your class and enjoy the presentation along with them!

Design a Pollinator

Learn about plant parts and life cycles, pollination, and how animals interact with the plant community. If available, flowers will be brought in to the classroom for study. Students will discover that pollinators have adapted their mouth parts to collect nectar from specific types of flowers.

***4-LS1 -1, 4-LS1 -2**



Bison on the Plains

Travel back in time to when Lewis and Clark explored Iowa and imagine what they felt when they saw the great herds of bison on the plains. Students will learn how Native Americans utilized bison and how the population of these shaggy beasts was changed forever in America as people moved west. We will also create a life-size bison demonstration in the classroom! This activity is also offered at our Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve field trip (see back page).

***4-LS1 -1**

Soil Science

A discussion on what soil is, how it forms and why it is so important (and fascinating!) will be led with the class. A demonstration will be presented on the 3 components of soil and their properties (sand, silt, clay). Students will learn about problems in Iowa with soil erosion and will brainstorm ways to solve those problems.

***4-ESS3-2**

The Ice Age

Students will be introduced to (or review) what fossils are and how they are made. Using specific examples from the Ice Age, the students will explore fossils of teeth, look at pictures of extinct mammals, and compare themselves to the size of a giant beaver. We will also observe a mini glacier in the classroom and compare how a Snickers candy bar is like a glacier to gain a better understanding of how landforms were created by these massive ice sheets.



****4-LS1-1, 4-ESS1-1, 4-ESS2-1***

Geology Rocks!

Students will "dig" into our ever-changing earth and discover how geology rocks the world every day! The naturalist will introduce or review what the three types of rock are and show examples. Students will learn that the earth is always changing and that fossils are important tools in understanding Earth's history.

****4-ESS1-1***



Our Prairie: Past, Present and Future

Centered on the history of Iowa, the prairie, bison, geology, and paleontology. Field trips will be scheduled at Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve in the fall. Students will hike the trails, learn about the natural history of our largest mammal, the bison, and search for bison bones in our paleontology dig site.



Amazing Adaptations

Students will learn how certain adaptations help animals survive by studying animal furs, skulls and feathers in small groups. Adaptations the naturalist will cover include: warmth, waterproofing, coloration, camouflage, sight, smell, hearing, and bird beak adaptations.

****4-LS1-1***

Sugar Shack Field Trip

Visit the Sugar Shack at Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve to learn the entire process of how sap is tapped from maple trees and made into delicious syrup. This opportunity only happens in late winter/early spring, depending on weather conditions. Please contact Greg Oldsen to put your class on a list for field trip dates.



Wagaman Mill and Museum Pioneer Field Day

Students visit the "old mill" in Lynnville for an interactive day of experiencing milling and pioneer life. There are 8 different hands-on stations that include learning about the life of pioneers: clothing, cooking, school, rope making, sawing lumber, grinding grain and more! Please contact Katie Cantu for more info about this field trip.

