

FLICKA

Set Your Dreams Free



A facilitator's guide for youth leaders, educators and families to accompany the book, *My Friend Flicka* and movie, *Flicka*.

AGES 9-14

FLICKA

Set Your Dreams Free

Dear Group Facilitator

Set in the stunningly beautiful landscape of Wyoming, the film, *Flicka*, tells the story of Katy, a strong-willed teenage girl who finds and captures a wild mustang. In defiance of her father and with sheer determination, Katy befriends the horse, names her “Flicka” and trains her to become a riding horse. Katy is the only daughter in a long line of ranchers. She is smart, but an unmotivated student. She dreams of helping to run the family’s horse ranch instead of attending an exclusive boarding school and going away to college. Since Katy’s father wants her to perform well in high school and go to college, the story traces Katy’s pains to be understood by her father. In a parallel story, we learn that Katy’s older brother, who dutifully works the ranch, desires to leave Wyoming, go to college and experience the world. Nell—their mother, provides stalwart support to all of them. The father, mother, daughter, and son love each other deeply. As they struggle to make ends meet and to come to terms with themselves and each other, their love and devotion are shining qualities that keep them together.

The source material for the movie comes from the classic novel, *My Friend Flicka*, written in 1941. There are significant differences between the two versions—the main character of the movie is a 16-year-old girl, yet the main character of the book is a 10-year-old boy, Ken. The relationships between the daughter and father, as well as the sister and brother are depicted quite differently. Nevertheless, a true love of the West, the lifestyle of horse ranching and the rugged beauty of Wyoming are similarly conveyed by both the film and the book.

This guide, *Flicka: Set Your Dreams Free*, is structured for use before or after viewing the movie and/or reading the book. It offers group and individual activities for children ages 9-14. It is provided by the National Collaboration for Youth, an organization which provides a unified voice for its coalition of more than 40 national, nonprofit, youth development organizations. The 30-year-old organization concentrates on improving the conditions of youth in the United States and enabling youth to realize their full capabilities. As a result, youth empowerment and development play a central role in the activity guide for *Flicka*.

Prepare your group to experience *Flicka*.

NATIONAL
COLLABORATION
FOR YOUTH

An Affinity Group of the
National Human Services Assembly



FLICKA

Set Your Dreams Free

Steps for Youth to Take with the *Flicka: Set Your Dreams Free* Program

STEP 1: SEE THE FILM AND READ THE BOOK

THE MOVIE: *Flicka*, a 20th Century Fox picture, starring Alison Lohman and Tim McGraw, opens in theaters on October 20, 2006. Youth may also see the movie when it becomes available on DVD. Please note that there are older versions of the story available on DVD as well (from previous film and TV versions).

THE BOOK: *My Friend Flicka* by Mary O'Hara (first published in 1941) has been reprinted many times, most recently in 1988. It is widely available in libraries and book stores. It will also be re-released with the movie. Also available for youth to read is a new movie novelization of the film entitled *Flicka: The Movie Novel*, by Kathleen W. Zoehfeld.

STEP 2: PARTICIPATE

Take part in exciting reading, writing and role-play activities that address themes such as:

- Understanding freedom and responsibility
- Overcoming fear of failure
- Building partnerships
- Seeing events through the eyes of others
- Exploring some of the background facts behind *Flicka*
- Increasing awareness about species preservation and environmental stewardship

STEP 3: TAKE THE LEAD TO HELP OTHERS

Like the movie's lead character, Katy, young people are urged to learn to take on responsibility in partnership with adults, by designing and conducting a service project. Katy influences her family to establish a "Mustang Rescue" on their former quarter horse ranch. Youth are encouraged to learn about preserving the environment for animals, and the value of species preservation and animal rescue, as part of their experience with *Flicka*. Ideas inside.

Use the free, downloadable service-learning supplement to assist in the planning and managing of *Flicka* service projects. To access it, please visit <http://www.youthfilmproject.org/film/documents/ServiceLearningSupplement.pdf>

Go to the project Web site: www.youthFILMproject.org for more information on the film and the book.

Thank you for exploring the themes of *Flicka* in-depth—as a result, you and your group will experience many moments of sharing and learning.

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MODULE 1

Freedom and Responsibility

Notes for the Facilitator

The central theme of this module is to explore the struggle that the lead characters in *Flicka* (whether Katy in the movie or Ken in the book) have in developing their own sense of personal power, choice and responsibility. Katy (Ken) longs to be given the responsibility of caring for a colt of her own and to be recognized as a valuable part of the life of the McLaughlin family ranch. In a parallel struggle, Rob McLaughlin, her father, hesitates to give responsibility to his child who he sees as reckless and unable to handle independence and free choice.

Effective personal development throughout childhood and adolescence requires children and teens to take on increasing responsibility and independence—as well as to learn and demonstrate personal traits such as trustworthiness, reliability and a strong work ethic. Many children make mistakes on the pathway to gaining increasing responsibility and freedom. As a society we expect children and youth to learn somewhat through trial and error and, accordingly, phase-in responsibility. Adults typically expect that youth will gain greater ability to handle responsibility, choice and freedom as they mature and learn. Therefore, the focus of the activities in this module is to enable young people to start to recognize and marshal their own sense of responsibility and to reflect on what it takes to make trustworthy choices and to gain respect from others in their lives and their communities.

Importantly, please tailor the activities to the life circumstances of the children and youth in your group. Many of us have home or everyday situations that may be different from the somewhat idealized two-parent family depicted by the family in *Flicka*, the McLaughlins. Yet, many children, like the main character(s), will reach into their own hearts and into their close circle of support (parents, grandparents, family, friends, teachers and others) as they take on new challenges in life.

OBJECTIVES

Youth will identify some of the qualities that lead to increasing responsibility and independence.

Youth will identify some of the pros and cons of sharing secrets or confiding in others.

Youth will develop a greater sense of the elements that contribute to youth-adult or child-parent partnerships.

MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 1: Pathways to Responsibility and Choice

ACTIVITY TYPE: INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL GROUP

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

In the film *Flicka*, the lead character, 16-year-old Katy McLaughlin, grapples with personal issues related to freedom to live as she wants and to do as she believes. She is strong willed and determined, and at the same time fearful of disappointing her family, especially her father.

Her father, Rob McLaughlin, grapples with questions about whether his daughter is reckless and not capable of handling responsibility. He is very demanding and strict and seems to want her to simply be obedient and do things his way. Katy and her father are in conflict because they are both sure that they are right and that everything should be done the way they see it.

Katy's mother, Nell, reminds Katy's father that "there has to be a better way." In order for Katy to become responsible, he needs to trust Katy and give her a chance to help on the ranch and take on the responsibility of caring for a horse. But, Rob is slow to trust his daughter's judgment and character—mainly because he is afraid that she will hurt or even kill herself through dangerous behavior. In reaction, Katy sets out to prove that she is capable to herself and to her father. She makes many choices, some that are responsible and others that are not.



MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 1: Pathways to Responsibility and Choice

Below is a list of six qualities that youth develop, and adults help them to develop, as they become more responsible, trustworthy and independent. By exercising one or more of these qualities in reaction to tough and challenging situations, you may find pathways to greater freedom, choice and responsibility, and may set your dreams free.

- courage
- cooperation
- high self-esteem/belief in oneself
- desire to learn
- owning up to and solving problems
- setting goals and meeting them

The following is an exercise to help you to reflect on whether or not some of Katy's actions demonstrated these qualities, and to tune-in to a situation that may occur in your life when these qualities may be of help.

After you read each scenario, think about how a young person your age could demonstrate one of these qualities. There is also an extra box for you to create your own scenario to share with a friend.

MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 1: Pathways to Responsibility and Choice

Scenario 1

In an opening scene of *Flicka*, Katy and her horse are confronted by a mountain lion in the woods near her home, while riding in the early morning. Katy sees the lion, and smacks her horse to send it home, then runs and rolls away through the underbrush.

When Katy finally makes it home, she is scratched up and begins to tell her family the story of what happened. Her father does not listen, because he is upset with her about news he just received that Katy has failing grades in school.

- courage
- cooperation
- high self-esteem/belief in oneself
- desire to learn
- owning up to and solving problems
- setting goals and meeting them

Which of the above qualities are demonstrated?

Which are not?

Did Katy make responsible choices?

What is your advice for Katy?

MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 1: Pathways to Responsibility and Choice

Scenario 2

Katy defies her father and sneaks out of the house in the middle of the night because she wants to help Flicka, a wild mustang who is confined for the first time and constantly in a frenzy trying to get out of her fenced pen. Katy gradually befriends Flicka by singing to her, speaking to her soothingly and feeding her apples.

Eventually Katy is able to put a bridle on Flicka and ride her. Katy feels great because she has proved to her father that Flicka can be ridden—Katy's father had said that Flicka was worthless and that no one would ever be able to ride the mustang.

Doing all this was very tough on Katy. She was nearly trampled by Flicka and was thrown off the horse and hurt badly, suffering bruises and cuts, on many occasions.

- courage
- cooperation
- high self-esteem/belief in oneself
- desire to learn
- owning up to and solving problems
- setting goals and meeting them

Which of the above qualities are demonstrated?

Which are not?

Did Katy make responsible choices?

What is your advice for Katy?

MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 1: Pathways to Responsibility and Choice

Scenario 3

Tom saved his allowance money and purchased his own I-Pod when he was 13 years old. He takes it with him everywhere. He knows that if the sound volume is too high, it can cause temporary or even long-term hearing loss, so he keeps the volume fairly low.

Even though he knows he should not do so, Tom is often tempted to wear his I-Pod in school—even during classes. He also keeps it on when he does his homework. As a result his grades are dropping.

Tom is trying to get his I-Pod “addiction” under control, but he hates to give up his habit of wearing his I-Pod constantly. But, he has started to take it off when he’s in school in keeping with the school rules.

- courage
- cooperation
- high self-esteem/belief in oneself
- desire to learn
- owning up to and solving problems
- setting goals and meeting them

Which of the above qualities are demonstrated?

Which are not?

Did Tom make responsible choices?

What is your advice for Tom?

MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 1: Pathways to Responsibility and Choice

YOUR SCENARIO

Write a scenario on a separate piece of paper that challenges youth responsibility.

Have a friend fill out the rest.

Discuss.

- courage
- cooperation
- high self-esteem/belief in oneself
- desire to learn
- owning up to and solving problems
- setting goals and meeting them

Which of the above qualities are demonstrated?

Which are not?

What responsible choices did this person make?

What advice do you have for this person?

MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 2: Confiding in Others— Pros and Cons

ACTIVITY TYPE: GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

In the movie, *Flicka*, viewers come to see that Katy and Howard—teenage sister and brother—support each other and are fiercely loyal to one another. There is a very special bond between siblings, in which they share their deepest thoughts, feelings and confidences. Such bonds, whether between siblings or friends offer wonderful support throughout life. **Confiding** our deepest heartfelt thoughts, hopes, and feelings, and sharing secrets can be healthy and helpful. It can also sometimes cross a line into areas that are unwise or unsafe.

≈ KEY QUESTIONS ≈

What are the pros and cons of confiding in others?

What are examples of confiding in others or sharing secrets that are harmless or even helpful?

What are examples of confiding in others or sharing secrets that may be hurtful, unwise or potentially dangerous?

Why do you think many adults evaluate whether or not a young person is *trustworthy*, based on whether or not the youth is sensible about secrets?

MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 2: Confiding in Others— Pros and Cons

ACTIVITY TYPE: SMALL GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL

Be A Confidentialty Coach!

Rate the secrets Katy shares with her brother, Howard:

1. Katy and Howard talk about how difficult it is to communicate with their father.
 safe unwise potentially dangerous not sure
2. Katy tells Howard that she knows their father will be upset about her grades at school.
 safe unwise potentially dangerous not sure
3. Howard tells Katy that he really would like to leave the ranch, but that he does not know how to tell their father—because he fears their father will be disappointed.
 safe unwise potentially dangerous not sure
4. Howard convinces Katy to go swimming when their parents are away, even though Katy is supposed to be staying at home to do schoolwork.
 safe unwise potentially dangerous not sure
5. Katy sneaks out of the house in the middle of the night to try to train Flicka.
 safe unwise potentially dangerous not sure
6. Katy does not tell her mother about the injuries she gets after being thrown off of Flicka, while trying to train the horse.
 safe unwise potentially dangerous not sure
7. Katy convinces Howard to help her to illegally enter the “wild horse race” at a rodeo, because she is under age 18 and cannot sign up on her own.
 safe unwise potentially dangerous not sure

MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 2: Confiding in Others— Pros and Cons

Dear Katy and Howard

Use the results of the rating checklist on the previous page to write a note to Katy and Howard. Be sure to write it as a friend, suggesting ways to be more careful in giving advice to each other and to be safer in their choices about the secrets they keep to themselves. In your note, praise what you think they have done well to support each other. Also, let them know when you think they have or have not been trustworthy and sensible about secrets.

≈ KEY WORDS AND IDEAS ≈

Confide (to trust in another, especially by sharing secrets)

Trustworthy (dependable, worthy of trust, reliable)

Responsible (distinguishes right from wrong, one who others can count on, fixes mistakes).

Freedom (able to move, think, act, speak freely; able to exercise freewill)

MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 3: Group Discussion About Building True Partnerships

ACTIVITY TYPE: GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL

Link to the Film:

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

In the book, *My Friend Flicka*, Rob McLaughlin—a horse rancher who works very hard to make a good life for his family in the rugged terrain of Wyoming—speaks with his ten-year-old son, Ken, man-to-man:

“It’s this, Ken. I’m giving you a colt. Any colt you want. And yet, I’m not satisfied with the performance you’ve given this spring. You know that. Maybe you think it’s funny I give you the colt when what you deserve—for flunking all your exams and pulling that stunt yesterday—is a good hiding... I don’t want you to think I’m letting you off, I’m not. I haven’t gone soft—don’t get that into your head. I expect just as much of you as I ever did. And this isn’t any reward, because you haven’t won a reward,”

“What is it?,” asked Ken.

“It’s a **partnership**,” his father continued. “I’m going to need the help of both of you boys and you have to be trained so you’ll know how to give it. You’re going to train the **yearling**. I’ll give you a little help just with the first breaking, but you’ll train her, and she’ll train you. I want you to make a good pony out of her. I want her to make a man out of you. Get me?”

“Yes sir!” Ken looked up with a wide smile lighting his face.

* Excerpted from *My Friend Flicka*, pp. 85-86, Harper & Row Perennial Library, 1988.

KEY WORDS AND IDEAS

Yearling (an animal, typically referring to a horse, in its second year of life)

Partnership (joining into an activity with another person on equal terms; toward mutual benefit)

MODULE 1 Freedom and Responsibility

Activity 3: Group Discussion About Building True Partnerships

Group Discussion

KEY QUESTIONS

How does Rob McLaughlin—the father—make it clear that he has high expectations for his son? Why are high expectations important?

What makes this offer a partnership rather than just a challenge?

Examples might include—

- They are working together rather than Ken having to do it completely on his own
- After learning about caring for the yearling, Ken will be expected to take on even greater responsibility.
- Both parties (father and son) benefit from the arrangement.

Have you ever been offered a similar partnership? If so, what was it? If not, what would you like to be able to do in partnership with a parent or other adult?



MODULE 2

Through the Eyes of Others



Notes for the Facilitator

This module provides youth with opportunities to think about ways to view life experiences through various lenses or perspectives. Because the movie, *Flicka*, and the book, *My Friend Flicka*, have parallel lead characters in 16-year-old Katy (the movie) and 10-year-old Ken (the book), there are natural opportunities to compare and contrast their points of view. In this way, youth can consider the ways that people's life experiences are similar or different and how they shape one's point of view.

Point of view exercises such as these are designed to help youth to develop empathy and greater sensitivity and connection to others. As youth develop throughout the preteen and teen years, they become less ego-centric and more tuned into the needs and goals of their peers, adults and other people around them in their neighborhoods, communities and society at large. Such exercises encourage youth to expand their thinking to realize that human relationships are rich with a broad range of perspectives and points of view.

≈ OBJECTIVES ≈

Youth will compare and contrast experiences of story characters.

Youth will be able to identify different points of view as well as reasons why they may be different.

Youth will write their own scene based on ideas from *Flicka*.

MODULE 2 Through the Eyes of Others

Activity 1: How Does the Story Change?

Ken vs. Katy



ACTIVITY TYPE: INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL GROUP/PARTNER ACTIVITY

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

Flicka is a story that has been told and re-told, because it has been much-loved over many years. In the book, first published more than 50 years ago—the main character was a boy of 10 years, yet in the new movie, the main character is a girl of 16 years. The following passages from the book and the movie script describe some of the ways these two characters have similar or different experiences and points of view.



MODULE 2 Through the Eyes of Others

Activity 1: How Does the Story Change?

Ken vs. Katy



In the book, *My Friend Flicka*, ten-year-old, Ken, is at last allowed to claim a colt as his own to care for and train. His father, Rob, reluctantly agrees to let Ken choose a colt—at the urging of Ken’s mother, Nell.

“I’ll take that sorrel filly of Rocket’s; the one with the cream tail and mane.” Ken made his announcement at the breakfast table.

After he spoke there was a moment’s astonished silence. Nell groped for recollection, and said, “A sorrel filly? I can’t seem to remember that one at all—what’s her name?”

But, Rob remembered. The smile faded from his face as he looked at Ken. “Rocket’s filly, Ken?”

“Yes, sir.” Ken’s face changed too. There was no mistaking his father’s displeasure.

“I was hoping you’d make a wise choice. But, you know what I think of Rocket—of the whole line of horses—”

Ken looked down; the color ebbed from his cheeks. “She’s fast, Dad, and Rocket’s fast—”

“It’s the worst line of horses I’ve got,” Rob continued. “There’s never one among them with real sense. The mares are hellions and the stallions are outlaws; they’re untamable.”

Ken’s chest heaved.

“Better change your mind, Ken,” urged his father. “You want a horse that’ll be a real friend to you, don’t you? Well, you will never make a friend of that filly.”

Ken looked stubbornly at his plate.

“Change your mind?,” his brother, Howard, asked.

“No!” stated Ken.

“I don’t think she’s ever been named—I don’t remember seeing her this year,” Nell broke in.

“I’ve named her,” said Ken. “Her name is Flicka.”

“Flicka,” said Nell cheerfully. “That’s a pretty name.” She realizes her son has his heart set on this horse.

But Rob made no comment and there was a painful silence. Then he barked, “Well, it’s your funeral—or hers. Remember one thing. I’m not going to be out of pocket on account of this—every time I turn around you cost me money.”

Rob went on, “Time’s money, remember. I had planned to give you a reasonable amount of help in breaking and taming your colt. Just enough. But there’s no such thing as enough with those horses.”

And, the conversation ended.

Adapted from *My Friend Flicka*, pp. 126-127, Harper & Row Perennial Library, 1988.

MODULE 2 Through the Eyes of Others

Activity 1: How Does the Story Change?

Ken vs. Katy



In the movie, *Flicka*, 16-year-old Katy claims a wild mustang as her own—against the wishes and commands of her father. She goes into the forest to look for the two-year-old mustang that seems to be living on its own, apart from its herd. Then, unintentionally, Katy creates a huge scene with her father, Rob. The mustang gets nervous and causes a stampede among Rob’s tame herd of quarter horses that are out grazing on the range. Rob captures the mustang and brings it onto the ranch—placing it in a holding pen.

Jack, a ranch hand; Nell, Katy’s mother; and Howard, Katy’s brother, all watch. Katy mounts the fence to watch. Nell joins her. Rob leads the wild filly inside the pen and turns it loose. Jack swings the gate closed. They all watch silently. The young horse throws a fit. It’s frightening.

Nell: “Is this the horse Katy was talking about?”
Howard nods.

Rob: “This is a dangerous animal.”

Katy: “She’s just scared.”

Nell: “I’d say she’s about two years old.”

Rob: “That means two years wild. And, I’d bet most of it alone.”

The filly races around the pen in a tight circle, crying and whinnying.

Katy: “She’ll calm down once I start training her.”

Rob: “This horse will never be ridden. I’ll call Norbert to sell her after dinner.”

Katy: “No! Please! I can ride her.”

Rob: “No, you can’t! The wildness is in her blood. A horse like this has been fighting every day of its life. It’s crazy enough to kill somebody.”

Rob holds his hand up to stop the conversation, but then he continues: “Nobody, and I mean nobody, goes into this horse pen without my permission.”

He walks off. The horse’s rage seems unending. Katy is dying inside.

Katy speaks to the filly: “Calm down, Flicka, calm down...”

Nell turns to her daughter: “You named her?” She now realizes that her daughter has her heart set on this horse.

Adapted from *Flicka*, Yellow Draft, 04-04-05, Michael Blake et. al., Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

MODULE 2 Through the Eyes of Others

Activity 1: How Does the Story Change?

Ken vs. Katy



Compare and Contrast Points of View

Reflect back on the two passages that you have just read. These passages from the book and movie script describe parallel stories—or parallel experiences—of Ken from the book and Katy from the movie.

Try to imagine how they see things; imagine their points of view. How are they similar or different? Brainstorm as many ways as possible and fill in the chart below.

How are Ken and Katy's views the same?	How are Ken and Katy's views different?

FOLLOW-UP CONVERSATION: KEN, MEET KATY!

Based on the above, imagine that Ken and Katy are in the same room and wish to tell each other about their experiences. Write a short skit about what they would said to each other and how they would express the ways that their experiences are the same or different. Act it out with a partner or small group.

MODULE 2 Through the Eyes of Others

Activity 2: How Does the Story Change?

Sibling Rivalry vs. Sibling Support



ACTIVITY TYPE: INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL GROUP/PARTNER ACTIVITY

Link to the Film

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

As mentioned in Activity 1 of this module, *Flicka* is a story that has been told and re-told, because it has been much-loved over many years. In the book, first published more than 60 years ago—the main character, Ken, was a boy of 10 years, yet in the new movie, the main character is a girl of 16 years, Katy.

In both cases Ken and Katy have an older sibling—a brother named Howard. But, the way each of them relates with Howard is very different. It is the difference between “sibling rivalry” and “sibling support.” In one case the siblings are rivals—competing, trying to look better than each other, and untrusting. In the other case, the siblings are dear friends who trust and support each other and confide in one another—helping each other to think through things and to solve problems.



MODULE 2 Through the Eyes of Others

Activity 2: How Does the Story Change?

Sibling Rivalry vs. Sibling Support



In the book, *My Friend Flicka*, 10-year-old, Ken, does not get along with his teenage brother, Howard. He does not trust him and feels put down by him. When Ken is in trouble with their father, Rob, Howard makes it worse.

Ken's heart was beating hard because his father's face had its glaring look and Howard was smug. Howard always got good marks.

The two boys looked at each other across the table. Howard was considered the handsome of the two.

Ken was afraid to look at his father. Often Ken felt his own eyes reeling back from an encounter, and he would turn away or look down.

Rob picked up a card and a letter which was lying open beside his place at the table. "I suppose it will be no surprise to you to hear that you have not been promoted," he said to Ken and tossed the card over to Ken. "You might want to see your marks."

Ken took the card and tried to focus his eyes on it. He hated so to look; it was hard to see anything at all. After some time, he looked up and met his father's eyes.

Rob leaned toward Ken. "Just as a matter of curiosity, he said, "how do you get a zero in an examination; a 40 in history; a 17 in arithmetic? But a zero! Just as one man to another, what goes on in your head?"

"Yes, tell us how you do it, Ken," chirped his brother, Howard.

Then, Howard continues, "During the exam, Ken was looking out the window the whole time. I saw him." This brings Ken near tears.

Adapted from My Friend Flicka, pp. 11-13, Harper & Row Perennial Library, 1988.



MODULE 2 Through the Eyes of Others

Activity 2: How Does the Story Change?

Sibling Rivalry vs. Sibling Support



In contrast, in the movie, *Flicka*, 16-year-old Katy adores her older brother, Howard, and feels very much supported by him. She relies on Howard to listen and help her to figure out what to do whenever she is in conflict with their father. Howard does whatever he can to help.

When Katy returns home from boarding school and first sees Howard, she runs to him and gives him a hug.

As they all go inside—the brother and sister, and their parents—Katy and Howard hang back. She unties a Bandana from her wrist and puts it on Howard’s wrist.

Katy: “This is from your fan club.” But, from her half-smile Howard can tell something is troubling her.

Howard: “You OK?”

Katy, speaking softly: “He’s gonna’ kill me.”

Howard: “How bad can it be?”

Katy: “Worse!”

Howard, whispering: “You can tell me later...”

But, they do not get a chance to talk. The problem is revealed at breakfast.

Rob to Katy: “Is there something you need to tell me? About school?”

Katy looks at Howard instead of her father. Howard tries to give her a look of encouragement.

Rob digs into his pocket, unfolds a fax and holds it out to Katy.

Rob: “The headmaster at your school faxed this to us. Want to read it?”

Katy knows what it is and shakes her head.

Rob: “Help me understand, Katy. He said they gave you the topic for your final essay in advance. ‘How the West Was Settled.’you went and turned in a blank paper.”

Howard is quietly dying for his sister.

Rob continues: “Not one word, and two hours for the exam.”

Katy tries to explain: “I wrote it in my head... I just didn’t get a chance to put it down on paper. Wouldn’t have made a difference, any way. They just want us to spit back exactly what they want to hear. I have an opinion....it’s just not their opinion.”

Rob, furious: “Well, their opinion is you should repeat the year. Money down the drain!”

Adapted from *Flicka*, Yellow Draft, 04-04-05, Michael Blake et. al., Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

YOUR TURN

Privately reflect on the following questions and write out your answers on a piece of paper. Later, you may wish to talk about them in a group discussion.

1. What are some of the qualities that show how Ken and Howard are rivals?
2. How do their parents contribute to the problem?
3. What ways can you think of for them to become more supportive of each other, like Katy and Howard?

MODULE 2 Through the Eyes of Others

Activity 3: Write Your Own Story of Friendship with an Animal



ACTIVITY TYPE: INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

Link to the Film:

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

The heart connections that human beings form with animals are very powerful and can change the way we view the world, our lives and ourselves. Human relationships with animals are comforting, non-threatening and non-judgmental. This is one of the reasons that Katy, the main character in *Flicka*, cherishes her relationship with her horse. Katy and Flicka become like best friends. Katy talks with Flicka, sings to her, and holds high hopes and dreams for her. She also believes strongly that they are very similar. Katy bravely attempts to tell her father how much she and Flicka are alike.

Rob, Katy's father speaking to her: "You want something that doesn't exist...an animal wild as the wind but loyal to you. Well, she's neither. It's time you see her for what she is."

Katy: "I know what she is!"

Rob: "How do you know anything about that creature?"

Katy: "Because we're the same."

Adapted from *Flicka*, Yellow Draft, 04-04-05, Michael Blake et. al., Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

WRITE YOUR OWN STORY!

Some of the traits that Katy and Flicka have in common include:

- Strong-willed
- Fearless
- Rebellious
- Feels at home in the mountains of Wyoming
- Beautiful and young
- Resilient
- Free-spirited
- Not easily told what to do
- Loves to run and ride

Create your own story of a young person who holds a special bond with an animal. Show how they bonded and connected by friendship. Describe the ways in which the animal and the young person are the same and have similar things to learn or similar challenges in life. Share your story!

MODULE 3

The Fact and Fiction of *Flicka*



Notes for the Facilitator

The central theme of this module is enabling youth to make connections between the stories of *Flicka* and many forms of creative inspiration—to enable them to identify their own sources of inspiration, determination, personal power and resources. In this way, youth can embrace the dreams they have for their own lives, for others and for their communities.

The activities provide youth with opportunities to learn more about and reflect on the connections between the fictional stories of *Flicka* and real people and significant events that provided such a rich and realistic background for the stories. Youth will learn that Mary O’Hara, as an early female author of renown, and Tim McGraw, a now-famous country music star, had humble beginnings and pushed themselves to keep learning new things. In addition, youth will learn a bit more about the mustangs—one species whose existence is challenged by the development of human communities.

OBJECTIVES

Youth will explore some of the real-life connections and inspiration related to the story.

Youth will conduct research using various methods.

Youth will read from related materials of interest to them.



MODULE 3 The Fact and Fiction of Flicka

Activity 1: Who Was Mary O’Hara?



ACTIVITY TYPE: INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP READING



Reading that Takes You Behind the Scenes of *Flicka*

Mary O’Hara, the author of *My Friend Flicka*, was born in 1885 – more than 120 years ago. She grew up in the urban neighborhood of Brooklyn Heights, New York—far from the rural landscape of Wyoming depicted in her books. Like young Katy in the movie, she was a dreamer and set her sights on adventures and experiences that were rare and thought impossible for a woman of her day. Ms. O’Hara longed to be a writer and composer and earnestly pursued her dreams throughout her life—including through two marriages and divorces; continuing to write and compose until her death in her mid-90s.

More than 100 years ago, in 1905, Ms. O’Hara moved to California with her first husband and became a screen writer during the era of silent films. At that time, movies were just beginning to be developed. There were no speaking scripts, so screen writing involved writing detailed descriptions of actions, gestures, expressions, props and movement to tell a story. Everything was filmed in black and white and the movies were very short—usually slap-stick and funny.

Later in the 1920s, Ms. O’Hara moved to Wyoming with her second husband and began to write descriptive and emotional novels about the wild range country. First was *My Friend Flicka* (Lippincott, 1941), then a sequel to it, *Thunderhead* (Lippincott, 1943), and later, *Green Grass of Wyoming* (Lippincott, 1946). The novel, *My Friend Flicka*, has been translated and published in several languages and distributed in virtually all parts of the world.

Several motion pictures were produced from these books, very soon after: *My Friend Flicka* was filmed by Twentieth Century-Fox in 1943; followed by the sequel, *Thunderhead, Son of Flicka* in 1945. Three years later, *Green Grass of Wyoming* was also filmed by Twentieth Century-Fox. In 1957, ABC-TV produced a dramatic series for television also based on *My Friend Flicka*. Now again, many years later, Twentieth Century-Fox, has produced the modern version of *Flicka*.

Ms. O’Hara continued to write throughout the rest of her life. Her other books include: *Let Us Say Grace* (1930); *The Son of Adam Wyngate* (1952); an autobiographical work, *Novel-in-the-Making* (1954); *Wyoming Summer* (1963) based on her diary of sixteen years; and an autobiography, published after her death, *Flicka’s Friend* (1982).

Mary O’Hara was also a gifted pianist and composer. In 1961, she wrote a folk musical entitled, *The Catch Colt* that was performed in Washington, DC, and Cheyenne, Wyoming. Her great love for the piano also inspired her to compose many pieces of music that have been published and are still played today.

Information adapted from Mary O’Hara archives from at www.library.georgetown.edu/dept/speccoll/c1166.htm

MODULE 3 The Fact and Fiction of *Flicka*

Activity 1: Who Was Mary O'Hara?



Extend the Reading

- 1) How do you think Mary O'Hara's early career experiences, including writing screen plays for silent movies, contributed to her later ability to describe landscapes and interactions between people when she was writing books?
- 2) Have you ever gone into a new situation and had the experience of noticing everything with a keener eye and more sensitive powers of observation? How did this help Mary O'Hara when she moved to Wyoming after growing up in a city?
- 3) Can you write a short, silent story? Give it a try. Have other members of the group act it out. Did it turn out as you imagined?

MODULE 3 The Fact and Fiction of *Flicka*

Activity 2: Who Is Tim McGraw?



ACTIVITY TYPE: GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY



More Reading that Takes You Behind the Scenes of *Flicka*

In *Flicka*, the character of the father, Rob McLaughlin, is played by the famous country music singer, songwriter and actor, Tim McGraw. This is his second major motion picture.

Some aspects of his part in *Flicka* can be found in Mr. McGraw's real life. He is married to country superstar, Faith Hill, and lives on a horse farm near Nashville, Tennessee. Family is the center of his life, despite his fame and fortune—and he is father to three young daughters.

To enhance *Flicka*, Mr. McGraw's music is woven into the movie soundtrack. He has also produced a CD and music video connected with *Flicka*, featuring his song, *My Little Girl*.

The song beautifully tells of a father's devotion for his daughter, as she grows to become more independent. The lyrics reflect on her birth, her troubles and joys in childhood, and her future as she falls in love and moves away.

≈ MY LITTLE GIRL ≈

Gotta hold on easy as I let you go. Going to tell you how much I love you,
though you think you already know. I remember I thought you looked like angel
wrapped in pink so soft and warm. You've had me wrapped around your
finger since the day you were born.

Chorus: Beautiful baby from the outside in -- chase your dreams, but always know
the road that'll lead you home again. Go on, take on this old world, but to me you
know, you'll always be my little girl.

When you were in trouble that crooked little smile could melt my heart of stone.
Now look at you -- I've turned around and you've almost grown. Sometimes when
you're asleep, I whisper I love you in the moonlight at your door -- as I walk
away I hear you say "Daddy, love you more." Chorus

Someday, some boy will come and ask me for your hand. But I won't say
yes to him unless I know he's the half that makes you whole; he has a poet's
soul and the heart of a man's man. I know he'll say that he's in love,
but between you and me he won't be good enough. Chorus

MODULE 3 The Fact and Fiction of *Flicka*

Activity 2: Who Is Tim McGraw?



Mr. McGraw has made music for more than 20 years, but it has been in recent years that he has received outstanding recognition for his music. Throughout 2004 and 2005, his song, *Live Like You Were Dying*, was a smash hit, staying at #1 on the country music charts for a record-breaking ten weeks and winning every award for which it was nominated. Like *My Little Girl*, it is also a profoundly honest and touching song. During this same time, Mr. McGraw decided to take up the craft of acting, appearing to acclaim in *Friday Night Lights* and now, *Flicka*.

See www.timmcgraw.com for more information.

Extend the Reading

- 1) Why do you think it is easier sometimes to express strong emotions through a song, as Tim McGraw has with *My Little Girl*?
- 2) Why do you think that Mr. McGraw began an acting career recently, after having such a successful and widely recognized singing and recording career?
- 3) Think of a song that you enjoy today that you believe speaks about a relationship—between people who sometimes struggle to understand each other. Listen to it a few times, and reflect on the following questions. Which lyrics stir emotions in you and why? Record the lyrics that you believe are the most powerful or memorable.

MODULE 3 The Fact and Fiction of *Flicka*

Activity 3: What Happened to the Mustangs of the Western Plains?



ACTIVITY TYPE: GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY

Link to the Story

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

Katy—the main character in *Flicka*—relates strongly to the plight of the western mustangs. She calls them an “afterimage of the west.” Explaining, “Sometimes when the light disappears, an afterimage remains.. just for a moment.” Katy worries that the mustangs are “No better than ghosts. Hardly there at all...”*

In her journal, Katy uses this poetic and striking way to describe how wild horses have been pushed to the brink of extinction. Rather than being seen as “America’s Wild Horse” or for the value that they have held in assisting humans to survive in the west, they are viewed as untamed and dangerous, carriers of disease, and hated because they ruin cropland.

Because *Flicka* is a mustang in the movie, we learn a bit of the peril faced by these wild horses; how they are caught and used for rodeos, and feared by humans.

* Excerpted from *Flicka*, Yellow Draft, 04-04-05, Michael Blake et. al., Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

MODULE 3 The Fact and Fiction of *Flicka*

Activity 3: What Happened to the Mustangs of the Western Plains?



Just What Has Happened to the Mustangs of the Western Plains?

The following news story was written by an Associated Press reporter, David Foster.

HEARING SPIRITS

Long before the black clouds blow down from the Rockies, the horses know a storm is near. A stallion shakes his mane and kneads a hoof into the grass, then breaks into a gallop. Mares and foals join in, and soon a dozen mustangs streak across the prairie, legs blurring beneath them.

These are the original pride of the Western plains, Spanish mustangs, direct descendants of the Indian Ponies that once ran rings around the U.S. cavalry. Yet, these hardy steeds are a rare sight today. As the West was won, the mustangs lost. Like the Indians who rode them, they were slaughtered in wars and neglected in peace; their range fenced off; their bloodlines diluted.

Now, however, Spanish mustangs have returned to Indian country, brought home to the Blackfoot Indian Reservation by a father, his daughter, and their friend. They wanted to resurrect a bit of history. Little did they realize what it would resurrect in them.

Every year, two million tourists drive through Browning (Montana) on their way to Glacier National Park. Most never even stop for gas. To an outsider, Browning can seem depressing and dangerous, a sullen reservation town encrusted with poverty. There is little work and a lot of booze. Trailer homes and junked cars rust along the dusty streets.

But there is another Browning, a hidden place that whispers with the spirits of a prouder past.

Darrel Norman hears the spirits. Born here 54 years ago, he left at age 12 when his father found work in Seattle. For decades he was teased by memories—the smell of sage in a summer rain, the wrinkled elders telling stories. In 1991, he sold his Seattle house and built a new one on a hill two miles west of Browning.

Tina Norman hears the spirits. Age 30, she was born and raised in Seattle, but never felt at ease there. It was so crowded, so polluted, so tense. In 1994, she visited her dad in Browning, planning to stay two weeks and she hasn't left yet. Bob Blackbull hears the spirits. Forty-five years old and the only Indian on the reservation with a Rhode Island accent, he arrived by bus in 1971, seeking his place in a confusing world. When he saw the mountains, rising white from the plains, he told himself, "This is it. You're home."

They are artists, Darrell and Tina and Bob. They live in Darrell's house, which doubles as the Lodge Pole Gallery and is crammed with Indian arts and crafts. They make paintings, sculptures, beadwork, headdresses and spears. They try to wring from the past what is useful and beautiful for today.

MODULE 3 The Fact and Fiction of *Flicka*

Activity 3: What Happened to the Mustangs of the Western Plains?



It was art, naturally, that led them to the mustangs. Mr. Blackbull heard about them from an artist friend keen on historic authenticity. Old paintings showed 19th-century Plains Indians on horses that were smaller and leaner than the big, muscled saddle horses popular today. Where did they come from? The answer, it turned out, was Spain.

Though North America is where horses first evolved, they vanished from this continent 10,000 years ago and did not return until 1519, when Hernando Cortez landed in Mexico with ten stallions, five mares and a foal. More Spaniards followed with more Spanish horses, fabled in Europe for their endurance. By 1600, Spanish settlers had introduced horses to Indians in what now is New Mexico, and the horses gradually spread northward, some by escaping and forming wild herds, others through the trading and raiding of Indians.

By this time the horses were uniquely American—smart, sinewy and adapted to a hard life on the desert and plains. The Mexicans called them mestengos, or strays; in English, they were known as mustangs.

The Blackfoot were among the last to get horses, around 1750, but they soon became expert riders, using horses to hunt bison with greater success than they'd ever had afoot. Horses and the new buffalo-robe trade transformed their subsistence culture into an affluent one, with showy clothing and elaborate rituals. A man with many horses was wealthy and often brave to boot, since a common way of acquiring horses was to raid another band's herd. But the days of glory were numbered for both the Indians and their horses.

During the Indian wars of the late 1800s, thousands of Indian ponies were slaughtered. As Indians moved onto reservations, they abandoned their mustangs for bigger horses suited to the plodding work of farm life. The wild herds met varied fates. Ranchers might shoot a band's stallion and replace it with a domestic horse, just to see what foals would come of it. Over time, considered undesirable, thousands of mustangs were killed for pet food.

Since 1971, the West's 40,000 or so remaining wild mustangs have been protected by the federal government, which captures some each year for adoption to limit the herds. Most of those animals, however, bear scant resemblance to the Spanish mustangs that roamed the West 100 years ago.

Fortunately, the mustang's decline was noticed early on by a Wyoming horse-packer named Robert Brislawn. Starting in 1916, he traded with the Indians for their best mustangs. His son, Emmett, continued the work by seeking out isolated wild herds, and today Mr. Brislawn is a big name in the small world of Spanish Mustang breeding. Fewer than 2,000 registered Spanish Mustangs exist today.

MODULE 3 The Fact and Fiction of *Flicka*

Activity 3: What Happened to the Mustangs of the Western Plains?



When Bob Blackbull learned all this, he saw symbolic potential in the idea of Indians raising the mustangs, an enterprise that had become a white man's hobby. He also saw dollar signs. Not only could mustangs draw attention to the art gallery, Mr. Blackbull enthused, they could create a new economic base for the entire reservation. Tribal members, land rich but cash-poor, could be shown how to raise mustangs. A renewed horse trade could finance an equestrian center and an Indian arts institute. Troubled Blackfoot youth could get involved.

His dreams proved contagious with Darrell and Tina Norman, and soon it was decided—they would start their own herd of Spanish mustangs.

One problem: They barely knew the first thing about horses. Descended from battle-hardened horsemen, these children of the plains were decidedly soft around the middle. Mr. Norman, son of a shoe salesman, had peddled antiques and insurance before becoming an artist. Ms. Norman's training was in cosmetology, and Mr. Blackbull was not mechanically minded unless it involved leather or beads. He once fixed a broken windshield wiper with two rawhide thongs, threading them through the windows and pulling right, left, right, left as the car streaked through the rain. But they were Blackfoot, weren't they? With confidence buoyed by ignorance, they leapt into horse breeding. The mustangs were graceful and spirited, their coloring and character as varied as the prairie flowers at their feet. All were instant celebrities.

“After the horses returned, Mr. Blackbull says, it just seems that everything started happening.”

School children came by the busload and many parents followed. The Lodge Pole Gallery became a cultural center of sorts. Artists, dancers and other friends would invite themselves to dinner, sending Darrell Norman scurrying to market for more “tribe size” packages of hamburger. Strangers started showing up and so the artists became innkeepers, Blackfoot style, renting out mattress space in a circle of tepees set up in the field.

The mustangs, meanwhile, were multiplying. Spanish Mustang fanciers are glad to see the horses reunited with the Blackfoot. “They're the first Indians we know of who are trying to re-create a piece of their culture by going back to the horses their ancestors rode,” says Carol Peters, an Indianapolis horse-breeder active in the Spanish Mustang Registry. “I don't know how much of their culture they can get back, but any effort is great.”

The venture also pleases Blackfoot tribal chairman and Chief, Earl Old Person. “There was a time when kids of the Blackfoot Nation always learned how to ride horses,” he says.

MODULE 3 The Fact and Fiction of *Flicka*

Activity 3: What Happened to the Mustangs of the Western Plains?



Group Discussion

~ KEY QUESTIONS ~

- 1) Do you think it's a good idea for the Blackfoot Nation to breed and train mustangs again? Why or why not?
- 2) Why do you think the mustangs have been called mestengoes or strays?
- 3) Like deer, coyotes, raccoons, wolves and other animals that live near human communities and disrupt them somewhat by eating plants and crops, or scaring people (though rarely attacking them), some people see wild horses as a problem—and that they should be rounded up and killed. What do you think?
- 4) Have you ever seen a horse in the wild? Have you ever seen a horse that is trained or domesticated? What are the differences you notice? (Or, imagine that you would notice?)

MODULE 4

Protecting Animals and the Environment



Notes for the Facilitator

This module allows youth to explore actions they can take as individuals and in groups to protect their natural environment and its biodiversity, to reduce human disruption of animal habitat, and to become positive stewards of the environment. The activities are designed to heighten youth awareness of how they can have immediate as well as lasting positive impact on making their surroundings more ecologically sound and environmentally healthy.

As young people develop throughout the preteen and teen years of ages 9-14, they benefit greatly from experiencing their own personal power, capabilities and talents. Parents, educators, youth leaders and child development specialists know that the best way for youth to learn responsibility is to take on responsibility. This process is captured beautifully in both the book, *My Friend Flicka*, and the movie, *Flicka*, in the characters of Ken and Katy. The following activities will encourage youth to act on their beliefs and to communicate effectively with adults, as active protectors of animals and animal habitats.

≈ OBJECTIVES ≈

Youth identify actions they can take to have immediate positive impact on the environment.

Youth will be able to develop and implement service projects to provide protection to vulnerable animals.

Youth will learn ways to effectively partner with adults.

MODULE 4 Protecting Animals and the Environment

Activity 1: Species Preservation



ACTIVITY TYPE: SMALL GROUP OR LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY

Link to the Story

Note: This may be read aloud by a group member/the facilitator for all to hear, or it may be individual reading before the activity.

In the movie, *Flicka*, the lead character, 16-year-old Katy, has a deeply emotional connection with the plight of the western mustangs. They are wild horses that are unwanted, thought to be a nuisance to humans, and sold into rodeos or worse. Through her dedicated effort to tame a mustang (Flicka), Katy demonstrates the value of such horses and convinces her father to establish a mustang rescue on their ranch. In this way, the McLaughlins are involved in the preservation of a species of horses that might otherwise become endangered or extinct.

There are many examples today of the ways in which it has become difficult for some animals to live harmoniously with humans due to habitat destruction, over-hunting, pollution, or people's fear that may ultimately lead to the killing off of certain types of animals.

There are now more than 40 endangered species in the United States alone and many more around the globe. While you may not be able to establish an animal rescue as the McLaughlins did, there are important actions youth can take to help to preserve North American species that are endangered or at risk of becoming endangered.



MODULE 4 Protecting Animals and the Environment

Activity 1: Species Preservation



How You Can Help to Preserve Endangered Species of Animals and Birds

You are needed. The Earth itself, and many species of animals and birds that are endangered, need the help of dedicated, caring people like you. You can be a champion for species preservation by becoming aware of environmental problems and possible solutions and sharing what you know with others. Here are a couple of ideas for you and your friends:

RAISE AWARENESS!

Fact Sheets on endangered species may be found at:

- ➔ Defenders of Wildlife: www.kidsplanet.org
- ➔ The National Zoo: <http://nationalzoo.si.edu?Audiences/kids>
- ➔ In addition, your local library will have many books about endangered species of animals and birds. For instance, here are some of the many titles about the American Bison—which once shared its Great Plains habitat with the western mustangs.

McClung, R. *Shag: Last of the Plains Buffalo* (The Animal Life Cycles Series). Linnet Books: 1991.

Potts, S. *The American Bison* (Wildlife of North America). Capstone Press: 1997.

Taylor, J. David, Taylor, D., and Taylor, D. *The Bison and the Great Plains* (Animals and their Ecosystems Series). Crabtree Publishing: 1992.

Wilkinson, T. *Bison for Kids*. Northword Press: 1994.

Consider these questions regarding endangered species:

- ➔ Which species have habitats near you?
- ➔ Why are these species endangered?
- ➔ What steps can humans take to ensure that endangered species are protected from harm and continue to thrive in future generations?

MODULE 4 Protecting Animals and the Environment

Activity 1: Species Preservation



The following is a list of some of the animals and birds that are considered to be endangered in North America. Find out more about one or more of them.

- American Bison
- American Crocodile
- Bats
- Beluga Whale
- Black Footed Ferret
- Black Bear
- Blue Whale
- Bobcat
- Bottlenose Dolphin
- Burrowing Owl
- Butterflies
- Cactus Ferruginous Pygmy
- Owl
- Cerulean Warbler
- Eastern Timber Wolf
- Fisher
- Florida Black Bear
- Gray Whale
- Gray Wolf
- Grizzly Bear
- Hawaiian Monk Seal
- Hummingbird
- Lynx
- Killer Whale
- Manatee
- Mexican Spotted Owl
- Mexican Wolf
- Monk Seal
- Northern Spotted Owl
- Ocelot
- Panther
- Peregrine Falcon
- Puma
- Prairie Dog
- Red Wolf
- Sea Otter
- Sea Turtle
- Snakes
- Snowy Owl
- Sperm Whale
- Spinner Dolphin
- Spotted Dolphin
- Swift Fox
- Western Spanish Mustang
- Woodpecker

“ADOPT” AN ENDANGERED ANIMAL!

Several wildlife preservation organizations and zoos across the country encourage people to consider giving a holiday or birthday gift that will support the life of an endangered animal.

Perhaps your youth group can raise funds. Or, perhaps you will ask to adopt an animal on your holiday or birthday wish list. For \$25—or by finding 25 people who are willing to contribute \$1.00 each—you can “adopt” an animal. Your contribution will support work being done by educational and advocacy organizations involved in animal protection and species preservation.

Organizations involved in these efforts include zoos all across the United States, as well as Defenders of Wildlife (www.kidsplanet.org) and World Wildlife Fund (www.worldwildlife.org).

MODULE 4 Protecting Animals and the Environment

Activity 2: Become an Environmental Steward



ACTIVITY TYPE: SMALL GROUP OR LARGE GROUP

One of the ways in which Planet Earth supports many forms of life is through biodiversity. This is the idea that the Earth supports a wide variety of plants, animals, and other forms of life.

In fact, the healthy future of the Earth depends on healthy and safe land, air and water because these are the environments on which all life—human and animal—depend.

“They say the American West was a Paradise and it was our Destiny to claim it. I say...call some place Paradise, kiss it good-bye,”* writes Katy McLaughlin, expressing her concern about the ways in which humans create environmental destruction. What does she mean?

Excerpted from *Flicka*, Yellow Draft, 04-04-05, Michael Blake et. al., Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corp.

Today, an estimated 40% of the Earth is tied up in activities that support humans and our livestock and crops. As a result, there has been a dramatic loss of biodiversity in the past 100 years due to overpopulation, deforestation, pollution (air, water and soil contamination) and global warming or climate change, driven by human activity.

Everyone can support biodiversity by reducing the negative impact caused by trash, waste and pollution, and by providing habitats for wild animals and birds. Consider ways that you can become a guardian or steward of the natural environment. There is much to learn. Begin to become an environmental steward by honestly evaluating your own level of impact on biodiversity.

MODULE 4 Protecting Animals and the Environment

Activity 2: Become an Environmental Steward



Take an Environmental Stewardship Quiz (or give it to someone you care about)

Check off the boxes for those items that you do now to help to protect a diverse habitat for other species:

- I do not litter or throw trash on the ground or into lakes and streams
- I recycle paper products, as well as bottles and cans whenever I can
- I often use mugs and plates rather than paper or plastic cups and plates
- I will use the stairs rather than an elevator when feasible
- I turn off lights and other electrical outlets when they're not needed
- I wash (or my parent/guardian washes) my clothes in cold water
- I have put up birdhouses and bird baths
- I grow native plants that provides food and shelter for birds, squirrels, and rabbits
- When I'm on a hike, I do not pick wildflowers or protected plants
- I do not disturb bird nests when I see them in trees and on ledges

HOW DID YOU SCORE?!

- 1-3 Well, you have a start, but a long way to go to become a true steward of the environment. Focus on changes that you can make starting today!
- 4-7 You are doing good things to protect the natural environment. Keep going! What more could you do in your day-to-day life?
- 8-10 Congratulations! You are an excellent environmental steward. Yet, you may wish to learn more by going to the 4-H Council's Web site and looking up "environmental stewardship" at <http://fourhcouncil.edu/EnvironmentalProgram.aspx> or looking into more ways to support biodiversity at <http://investigate.conservation.org>

MODULE 4 Protecting Animals and the Environment

Activity 3: Design a project to express care and concern for animals and birds

ACTIVITY TYPE: SMALL GROUP OR LARGE GROUP ACTIVITY

Dear Young People

Think about something that your group would like to do to raise awareness about the environmental issues of concern in your community or in the United States today. Think about ways that you can work to improve appreciation for the environment, to enhance the environment, and reduce pollution. How can your group help to protect and preserve a wide and colorful variety of plants, animals and birds?

LOOK FOR WAYS TO WORK IN COOPERATION WITH ADULTS.

- Plan and conduct your project with the guidance and support of an adult partner.
- Read some of the tips for working well with adults below.
- Have your adult partner(s) read the tips for adults.
- Brainstorm your project ideas and plan the steps to carry it out. Use the F.I.L.M. service-learning supplement as a helpful, free resource -<http://www.youthfilmproject.org/film/documents/ServiceLearningSupplement.pdf>
- Then, get to work!!

Here are a few ideas from other youth groups—but, it is very important for you to organize your own ways to take the lead!

- If you feel that areas of your community are in need of a clean-up, conduct a service project to clean up a stream bed, lake shore, vacant lot or any other place where animals might wish to live.
- Conduct a mentoring program with younger student to teach them about endangered and protected species of animals and why our individual actions make a difference in protecting animals and the environment.
- Increase the amount of recycling that is done in your home, school, youth center, and community. Launch a campaign to encourage recycling with flyers; find out how to get more recycling containers and a recycling pick up.

3 TIPS FOR KIDS WORKING WITH ADULTS:

- 1) Most adults have good intentions. Remember, they are simply not used to working in partnership with young people.
- 2) When adults criticize you, it doesn't necessarily mean they are putting you down or don't value your contribution; it may mean the adult is treating you the same way he/she would another adult.
- 3) Adults may not be aware of the capabilities of young people. Show them what you know.

MODULE 4 Protecting Animals and the Environment

Activity 3: Design a project to express care and concern for animals and birds

MAKE AND DISTRIBUTE HUMMINGBIRD FEEDERS! HERE'S HOW...

Did you know that Hummingbirds, which are native to all parts of the United States, are endangered? Hummingbirds are the smallest of all birds – just about 3 1/2 inches long. They can fly up to 50 miles per hour. They can fly backwards or just hover in mid-air. Their wings beat so quickly it is hard to see them move. Hummingbirds hover rather than land when they feed, so their feeders are unlike other bird feeders.

Help the “hummers” by making and distributing feeders. Because of habitat destruction, Hummingbirds now may have trouble finding places to hover and feed.

Just a few materials are needed: a recycled plastic tub-shaped container, sugar, water, beet juice or red food color, string.

1. Start with a plastic container or tub. Look for one that is wide rather than tall.
2. Make the tub a bit fancier and easier for the hummingbirds to use by cutting three even scallops in the top edge of the tub. This allows the hummingbirds to hover and get closer to the food.
3. Cut your string into three even pieces. Punch holes in the center of the top part of the scallops and put one end of the string into the hole and tie a knot to secure it. Do this with all three pieces of string into each of the three holes.
4. Gather the other ends of all of the strings and tie them together into a knot.
5. Dissolve one part sugar to three parts hot water. Add some beet juice or red food color because hummingbirds are attracted to the red coloring.
6. Fill the container half full with the mixture.
7. Using the string, hang the feeder from a tree branch. This will help to keep ants from getting into the food.
8. Create these feeders and hang them as many places as possible.
9. Consider ways to plant tall red and purple flowers nearby to attract hummingbirds and give them natural sugar from flower nectar as well.

3 TIPS FOR ADULTS WORKING WITH KIDS:

- 1) Share the responsibility of leadership. Provide guidance, but avoid total control. Be sure to share decision-making.
- 2) Listen carefully to youth and try to understand their perspectives, without interrupting or reinterpreting.
- 3) Share all work activities, even the tedious ones.

MODULE 4 Protecting Animals and the Environment

Activity 4: Speak Out for Threatened Species



ACTIVITY TYPE: INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

Dear Young People:

In addition to service projects (see Module Four, Activity 3 and the Service-Learning Supplement) – you can also be a powerful champion for change.

The Youth Policy Action Center at www.youthpolicyactioncenter.org or 1-866-MOBILIZE, provides lots of tips and information for youth who have seen something in their community or heard something on the news that they wish to change.

The Center gives young people the same “tools” used by professional lobbyists to work to change laws and other way that elected officials respond to young people’s concerns about issues of importance.

In *Flicka*, Katy saves a wild mustang and encourages her family to establish a wild horse rescue. Maybe there is a way you, too, want to raise your voice and help protect a threatened species or make improvements in the way certain animals are treated. For example, you may want to speak up for populations of animals that are not always treated humanely. Some of these animals include:

- greyhound racing dogs
- seals in Canada
- circus animals
- farm animals
- horses
- animals trapped for fur

Visit the American Humane Association’s “Take Action” page at www.americanhumane.org to find federal and state alerts regarding the well-being of animals. You can also visit the Humane Society of the United States website at www.hsus.org. The Humane Society has a special “Take Action” page, from which you can urge senators to end the killing of America’s horses for human consumption in other countries. Visit https://community.hsus.org/campaign/FED_2006_horses_senate.

MODULE 4 Protecting Animals and the Environment

Activity 4: Speak Out for Threatened Species



Please also visit the “Take Action” web page of F.I.L.M. at www.youthfilmproject.org/film/action.htm to find advocacy resources. You can make the government listen and make positive changes! It sounds complicated – but here are a few pointers to make your voice heard:

~ FIVE KEY STEPS FOR BEING A CHAMPION FOR CHANGE ~

(adapted from the Youth Policy Action Center)

www.youthpolicyactioncenter.org or 1-866-MOBILIZE

1) PICK AN ISSUE

Maybe like the McLaughlin family in *Flicka*, you will realize that if you don't take a stand, no one will. Be sure you are clear on **WHAT** you want to change.

2) STUDY UP

Even though studying is not everyone's idea of fun time, putting in a little time to really understand an issue and **WHY** it matters, is important. You want to be able to convince your friends, adults and elected officials that what you say matters.

3) FIND ALLIES

You don't have to run a campaign by yourself. Changes are there are others who are interested in the same issue – and want to help. Find them.

4) DEVELOP A STRATEGY

While most of us experience the world broadly (we like or don't like our school, we do or don't feel safe in our neighborhoods), simply saying we want to improve the schools or our neighborhoods is not enough to get an elected official to do what we want. **FOCUS** on what specifically you would like elected officials to do. And, **FOCUS** on the right officials for your cause.

5) LAUNCH A CAMPAIGN

Send messages. Public officials keep track of how many messages they receive on specific topics. **WRITE**, **CALL** and **USE THE MEDIA**.

