



## The BIG Lesson®

Annie's BIG Nature Lesson  
BIG Zoo Lesson  
BIG History Lesson  
BIG Science Lesson



The BIG Lesson was initiated in 1999 by Margaret Holtschlag, Michigan Teacher of the Year 2000 as (1) a professional development model for immersion learning; (2) a study trip for students, parents, and teachers; and (3) a partnership between community resources and Mid-Michigan schools. The BIG Lesson programs include:

- Annie's BIG Nature Lesson at Woldumar, Fenner, Harris, Bengel, Lincoln Brick Nature Centers (Lansing); Kalamazoo Nature Center (Kalamazoo); Leslie Science and Nature Center (Ann Arbor); Wilder Creek, (Marshall), Dahlem Conservancy (Jackson), and Seven Ponds Nature Center (Dryden)
- BIG Zoo Lesson at Potter Park Zoo (Lansing), Binder Park Zoo (Battle Creek), John Ball Zoo, Grand Rapids
- BIG History Lesson at Michigan Historical Museum (Lansing), Meridian Historical Village (Okemos), and Lakeshore Museum (Muskegon)
- BIG Science Lesson at Impression Five Museum (Lansing)
- Annie's BIG Nature Lesson at Dahlem Conservancy (Jackson)

In the BIG Lesson model, teachers and students use the community resources as their classroom for a week. Changing the concept of the traditional field trip to an all-day, all-week interdisciplinary study trip, this experience includes investigations, behind-the-scenes tours, and presentations by community experts, and groups of students working cooperatively on research. Parents are actively involved in both the learning activities as well as the student service projects. Culmination of the week are service learning projects, research projects, and community action plans.

Teachers receive extensive training in The BIG Lesson model to learn about integrated curriculum, lesson design, cooperative research, scientific inquiry and content, visual note-taking, thematic instruction, and identification of community resources. Teachers continue this professional development throughout the school year with online discussions and workshops to learn about environmental topics and to share resources and lesson plans.

For more information about The BIG Lesson®, please contact Margaret Holtschlag at 517-230-8268, or by email: [biglesson@gmail.com](mailto:biglesson@gmail.com).