

"Critters Close-Up"

Fontenelle Nature Association

Suggested Grade Level(s): Pre-K – 1st

Program Objectives:

1. Participants will meet and learn about at least 3-4 captive animals.
2. Students will be given the opportunity to touch these animals.

Pre- and Post-Trip Activity Suggestions

Activity: Animal Picture Search

Suggested Timing: Pre-Trip

Time: 30 minutes

Location: Indoors and/or Outdoors

Materials: pictures of animals cut out from magazines or clip-art, tape

Procedure: Place pictures of animals around the classroom or schoolyard and let students see how many they can find. The pictures can be collected when found or left up for other class members to find. This is great practice for using observation skills in the forest!

Activity: Schoolyard Animal Map

Materials: large piece of paper (poster size), markers or crayons

Suggested Timing: Pre-Trip or Post-Trip, on-going

Time: Initially 30 minutes, then on-going

Location: Indoors

Materials: Large piece of paper, crayons/markers, magazine pictures of animals
(*optional*)

Procedure: As a class, make a generalized map of the schoolyard or outdoor play area. Put the map on a wall close to a window. Record animal sightings within this area by drawing the animals, or using magazine pictures of the animals, on the corresponding map location. Try to notice if there is any difference in what animals are seen in different months (you can make a new map for each season) or if certain types of animals are seen more often in certain parts of the yard.

Activity: Toilet Paper Roll Binoculars

Suggested Timing: Pre-Trip or Post-Trip

Time: 30 minutes

Location: Indoors

Materials: two empty toilet paper rolls per student, tape or stapler, string, hole punch and crayons

Procedure: Tape two rolls together into binocular shape. Rolls can be colored or decorated before being taped together. (Optional: punch holes in outside edges of binocular and run string through so that binoculars can be worn around neck.) This is great for practicing observational skills and focusing on small areas.

Activity: Hole Hunt

Suggested Timing: Post-Trip

Time: 30 minutes

Location: Outdoors

Materials: paper, hole punch

Procedure: Discuss what kinds of animals live in holes and then go outside for a hole hunt. Give each child a scrap of paper and have them go find holes. Once they have found one they return to you and you make a hole in their paper with a hole puncher. Only one hole at a time!

Activity: Who Am I?

Suggested Timing: Post-Trip

Time: 30 minutes

Location: Indoors

Materials: pictures of various animals, tape

Procedure: Divide students into groups and have them sit in circles. Have them tape a picture of an animal (can be an animal they have seen) onto each other's backs. One at a time, have students stand in the center of their groups. The other students give hints about the animal and the center child tries to guess what it is. Once the animal has been identified another child takes a turn. You may need to focus the hints (size, color, coat, way of moving, etc.)

Selected Resources

Acorn Naturalists: Resources for the Trail and Classroom. To order this educational resource catalogue for environmental and science education call 1-800-422-8886. To look at these resources on-line go to <http://www.acornnaturalists.com>.

Alden, Peter. Peterson First Guide to Mammals. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998.

Conant, Roger, Robert C. Stebbins, and Joseph T. Collins. Peterson First Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians. Ed. Roger Tory. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999.

Lingelback, Jenepher, ed. Hands-On Nature Activities. Woodstock, Vermont: Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 1986.

Sheehan, Kathryn, and Mary Waidner. Earth Child: Games, Stories, Activities, Experiments and Ideas About Living Lightly on Planet Earth. 1991. Tulsa: Council Oak Books, 1994.

Selected Stories

Barrett, Judi. Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing. New York: Atheneum, 1970.

Cannon, Janell. Stellaluna. San Diego: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1993.

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Mazer, Anne. The Salamander Room. New York: Knopf, 1991.

Williams, Margery. The Velveteen Rabbit. New York: Knopf, 1985.

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