

Create-A-Critter



Jumbled Jungle

Art

First, get enough sheets of plain paper—8-1/2 by 11 inches—to supply your whole class. Fold each paper in thirds, as you would fold it to insert it into a legal-size envelope. Then divide the class into groups of three, giving each child a folded piece of paper and crayons or colored pencils. Each child should draw the top of an animal on the top third of their piece of paper. Then they all pass their papers to the right, and everyone draws the middle of the animal on the middle of the paper. (You might ring a bell when it is time for everyone to trade papers.) For the final turn, pass the papers to the right again and everyone draws the bottom of the animal on the bottom third of the paper. No fair peeking until the whole thing is done! When everyone finally unfolds their papers, they will see funny animals. Give each animal a name and show it to everyone in the class.

Fur, Feathers, or Scale

Math

Make enough copies of the worksheet on page 82 for your entire class. Review with your class the fact that all animals are covered with fur, feathers, scales, or smooth skin. Give some examples in your discussion, and talk about why animals need different types of covering. Then pass out the worksheet and explain that there is one animal in each row that has a different covering than the others in the group. Students should find and circle the different animal.

As a follow-up, go over the worksheet with the students, having them name the animals and their skin coverings. Create a graph on the chalkboard, whiteboard, or large chart paper. Name the graph "Skin Coverings." Label the y-axis (vertical line) "number." Along the x-axis (horizontal line) list the four different skin coverings. Have students come up and add animals to the graph in the proper places. Think of adding some animals that are not on the worksheet, but that fit the categories.

What Animal Am I?

Creative Dramatics

Divide the class into two teams to plan animal charades. Each team decides on an animal that they want to portray. They come up with several clues about the animal, such as where it lives, what sound it makes, what its body covering is, how it moves, etc. (You may need to assist teams in writing down their suggested clues.) Then each team tries to guess the other team's animal. Students take turns giving clues, including showing how the animal moves and how it sounds. If you want to keep score, time the game. The team that gets the correct answer first wins! After one round, have each team choose a new animal and begin again.

Pet Parade

Language Arts

Have a day when students can bring in a magazine picture of a pet. This could be similar to a pet that the child has or would like to have. Let each child tell a little about their “picture pet,” what its name is, and how he or she would play with it. Tell how the pet moves, how it sounds, and what its body covering is. Talk about the responsibility that we have to care for our animals, and have children tell how they help with that responsibility at home. How are tame pets different from animals in the wild? Why are some animals not suitable as pets?

You may wish to mount the pictures on recycled cardboard or art paper. The students can write the name of the animal with the picture. On the back, students who are more comfortable with writing can add short descriptions of some characteristics of the animal: where it lives, what it eats, how it acts.

You can stress verbal communication and written word-spoken word connections with a small soft ball. Start the activity by tossing the ball to a student. The student reads the name of his or her animal and tells something about it. When finished, he or she tosses the ball to another student. The activity continues until all students have had a least one turn. (Be sure that the ball is extremely soft and the students have seen the proper way to toss it.)

Critter Masks

Art

In this activity, students will create paper plate critter masks for an animal play. Provide three work stations so students can make their choice of animals.

Station 1: Fur—provide felt, yarn, or faux fur.

Station 2: Feathers—provide feathers of different colors and sizes.

Station 3: Scales—provide sequined trim, individual sequins, or textured fabrics.

Each station should provide paper plates, yarn, colored markers, glue sticks, etc. The first step is to cut eye holes in the paper plates. Students then decorate the plates to create their fantastic animal masks. When they are finished, they can glue long sticks (like popsicle sticks) to the masks so they can hold them up in front of their faces. Divide students into groups of three or four and have them do a short skit for their classmates featuring their fantastic critters. Be sure to show how the animals move and sound!

Fur, Feathers, Scales, or Skin?



Use with "Fur, Feathers, or Scale" (page 80).