WETLANDS



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Social and Emotional

Animal Charades

EZ.019.LA.1014

Activity Type:
Large Group and Small Group

Objective:
Students will explore animal behaviors and use their bodies to describe these actions and responses.

Using animal charade cards that offer specific directions, students will actively engage in recreating animal behaviors and movements through imaginative play. Students mimic actions such as flying, crawling, or hunting to bring animals to life in the classroom. The observing students analyze the movements and make predictions about the animal's identity. This activity not only encourages creativity and physical engagement but also develops critical thinking, observational skills, and an understanding of animal behavior in a fun and interactive way.

WHAT TO DO

1. Review animal behaviors using the charade cards. Decide how you will determine whose turn it is to perform a charade. One suggestion is to write students' names on craft sticks and pick from a container.
2. Draw a name and ask the student to choose a card without showing their peers. The student demonstrates the behavior while others guess the animal's identity. Offer suggestions to the demonstrator, if needed, until the animal's identity is guessed correctly. Repeat until all students have had a turn.

PLAY TIPS

- Incorporate animal sounds in adaptations of charades.
- Incorporate animal movements into routines and transitions. For example, have students hop like frogs to a learning center or fly like herons to the lunch table.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED



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Mathematics

Perfect Prints

EZ.019.LA.1016

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will compare the lengths of prints using standard and non-standard measurement tools, as well as terms like 'longer' and 'smaller.'

Animal footprints reveal a lot of information about the animal that made them, providing details about their physical properties (size, weight, speed) and behaviors (species and movement patterns). In wetland areas, these prints left in soil or sand can tell a story about the animal's activities and journey. By measuring these footprints with both standard and non-standard tools, students can engage in hands-on learning, uncovering details about the animal's behavior. Additionally, they can compare the footprints to their own measurements using terms such as 'more,' 'less,' 'longer,' and 'shorter.' This activity not only fosters curiosity and observation skills but also enhances students' understanding of measurement concepts and their connection to the natural world.

WHAT TO DO

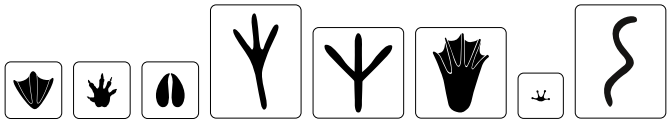
1. Display the wetland animal footprints to the students. Prompt discussion by asking, "What do you notice about the footprints?," "Can you guess which animal might have made them?," and "Do you think these footprints are the same length, shorter, or longer than your own footprint?"
2. Encourage students to measure the footprints using different tools such as math links, Unifix Cubes, or measuring tape. Encourage them to record their measurements or use number flashcards to track their results. Then, have the students measure their own footprints and record those measurements as well. Ask them to compare the wetland animal footprint measurements with their own. What similarities or differences do they observe?

PLAY TIP

Non-standard measurements can be incorporated into everyday activities. Children might use various non-standard tools for estimating and comparing measurements, like hands and fingers for length, blocks or squares for area, and sand or water for capacity.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

more más	less menos	longer más extenso	shorter más corto	taller más alto
heavier más pesado	lighter más ligero	bigger más grande	smaller mas pequeña	









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Fine Arts

Animal Puppet Habitats

EZ.019.LA.1018

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will interact with peers to promote creative expression and language development.

Puppets help students express themselves using their imagination and creativity. Students use animal puppets to act out real-life scenarios with peers in the habitats spread throughout the classroom. Through puppet play, students develop their speaking skills by enhancing classroom communication.

WHAT TO DO

1. Take the students on a gallery walk through the classroom, discussing the embedded habitats on the murals. Ask students the following questions: “What habitats do you see and how can you tell?” and “What animals live in this habitat?”
2. Set the puppet theater in a mural habitat and encourage students to create their own scenarios or participate in educator-led activities.

PLAY TIPS

- During morning meeting, use a puppet or several puppets to welcome children, lead a morning song, or discuss the events for the day. These simple modeled interactions help children initiate positive conversations.
- Puppets can help make home-school connections. Children can take a puppet home along with a class journal to write or draw about their adventures with the puppet.
- Create story stones. Draw or paint pictures of characters (puppets), settings, and items on a collection of stones for students to use as prompts in puppet storytelling.

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Science

Life Cycle Observations

EZ.019.LA.1019

Activity Type:
Small Group and Free Choice

Objectives:
Students will use science tools to make observations.
Students will make connections between life cycles and the concept that all living things grow and change.

Understanding and observing life cycles helps young children make connections to the notion of change and provides background knowledge about how living things grow, develop, and reproduce. Introducing life cycles at an early, foundational age paves a pathway for success in science exploration and critical thinking. Teaching life cycle principles can instill an appreciation for the balance and interdependence of living organisms within ecosystems and promote empathy and respect for all living things.

WHAT TO DO

Place the magnifiers and life cycle manipulatives in the Observation Station for free exploration. Encourage students to make observations about each stage of the life cycle, noting details and arranging the stages in order from start to finish. As students are manipulating the pieces, introduce new vocabulary words by identifying the stages and asking questions like, “What do you notice?,” “How is each stage the same and different?,” and “Why do you think the change at each stage is so important?” Ask the students to compare their observations using various types and magnifications of magnifiers.

PLAY TIPS

- Place the specimen sets on a light table, allowing students to observe the features illuminated by the light from different angles. Encourage them to examine the specimens from all sides of the acrylic for a more detailed perspective.
- Have students arrange the manipulatives in a circular pattern to illustrate and reinforce their understanding of cycles and processes, emphasizing the concept that these cycles are continuous.

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Science

Our Feathered Friends

EZ.019.LA.1020

Activity Type:
Free Choice and Small Group

Objective:
Students will identify and explain the key characteristics of birds.

Birds are found in all settings and communities, making them easily accessible and interesting to young students. Observing birds provides children with an entry point into the world of nature and science. Through these observations, students learn key concepts such as bird identification, behavior, habitats, and conservation. Hands-on exploration deepens this learning experience. For instance, students can investigate bird characteristics, such as the structure and function of feathers, beaks, and talons, using simulations at the sensory table. Interactive activities spark curiosity and foster an appreciation for biodiversity while supporting critical thinking and scientific inquiry skills.

WHAT TO DO

1. Read developmentally appropriate books about birds, such as *Birds* by Kevin Henkes and *A Nest Full of Eggs* by Priscilla Jenkins, discussing the features and characteristics that birds have in common. Discuss feathers as the defining characteristic of birds.
2. Provide students with feathers to examine in the sensory table. Students can blow on the feathers, squirt water on the feathers, and comb the feathers using their finger or pencil. Ask students to describe what they see.
3. Provide students with tools that simulate a bird picking up items with its beak, such as tweezers, tongs, straws, and toothpicks. Provide various types of "food" in the sensory table, such as beans, rice, and paper. Ask students to describe how it feels to pick up the items. Then ask, "How do you think a bird might feel doing this?'

PLAY TIPS

- Paint with feathers. Allow students to manipulate the feathers, asking them to make different- sized paint strokes and discuss their observations.
- Make birdseed collages. Copy large silhouettes of birds onto cardstock and allow children to fill in the silhouette with glue and seed.
- Take a bird walk. Look for birds and signs of their presence, such as feathers, seeds or droppings. Display a bar graph near a classroom window featuring native birds. Children can tally which birds are observed over time and make comparisons.

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Play-Based Learning Materials

Fine Arts:



Fine and Gross Motor:



Puzzles:



Games:



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