



EXPLORING **Wild Animals**



TEACHER TOOLKIT



Exploring Wild Animals

TEACHER TOOLKIT

Susan B. Neuman, Ed.D.

Designed by Lillie Bukzin, M.A.

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Getting the Most out of the WILD ANIMALS Teacher Toolkit

Welcome to the World of Words! The WILD ANIMALS Teacher Toolkit was developed to facilitate children's natural instincts to learn about the world around them while building vocabulary and developing language, comprehension, and self-learning skills.

The Teacher Toolkit contains engaging lessons and activities that easily integrate into your classroom day.

How do the lessons work?

Each lesson is divided into a three-part conversation between you and your class. The Teacher Toolkit provides conversation prompts for you to follow through each section of the lesson.



PART 1: Talk Together

Talk Together:

The conversations during this time are designed to introduce and review concepts and vocabulary, pique children's interest in learning new information, and introduce the shared book.



PART 2: Read Together

Read Together:

The conversations during this time are focused around the shared reading book.



PART 3: Reflect Together

Reflect Together:

The conversations during this time are designed to reflect on what was read, develop background knowledge, and build understanding of the Big Ideas.

Getting the Most out of the WILD ANIMALS Teacher Toolkit

Where can I find the Big Ideas, Learning Outcomes, and Vocabulary Words?

The At a Glance section is the foundation for the lessons in the unit. It starts by identifying the BIG IDEAS of science that children will be developing an understanding of during the unit. These cross-cutting themes of science focus on learning about life science, biology, physical science, and earth science. This learning builds the background knowledge and foundation for children's future learning.

Following the BIG IDEAS are the LEARNING OUTCOMES for the unit. These are specific concepts related to the topic that children will learn during the unit. The LEARNING OUTCOMES come from the BIG IDEAS.

The last part of the At a Glance section is the VOCABULARY section. The vocabulary words include words that are specific to the LEARNING OUTCOMES, as well as words that develop children's understanding of the BIG IDEAS. The vocabulary words have picture cards are featured with cameras.

What is the Curriculum Notes section on each lesson for?

The Curriculum Notes section holds additional information to guide and enrich lessons. These sections highlight the relevant book and picture cards for each lesson. There are also teaching strategies and tips included to further support implementation.

Exploring WILD ANIMALS Teacher Toolkit

- Teacher Guide with lessons, hands-on activities, and family engagement activities
- A set of Picture Cards with definitions and teacher talk prompts on the back
- A learning poster featuring the Learning Outcomes for the unit
- 5 Books about WILD ANIMALS

What books come with the WILD ANIMALS Teacher Toolkit?

A title list of the five books that come in the Teacher Toolkit is provided with the materials. The list identifies the type of text structure for each book as predictable (PB), narrative informational (NB), or informational (IB). Each lesson also has extension activities that teachers can incorporate throughout the unit and information and activities that can be sent to families.



Predictable

A predictable book repeats words, phrases, rhymes, or patterns that help children guess what will happen or be said next in the story.



Narrative Informational

A narrative informational book teaches real facts and information while also telling a story.



Informational

An informational book teaches children real facts and information about a topic.

Getting the Most out of the WILD ANIMALS Teacher Toolkit

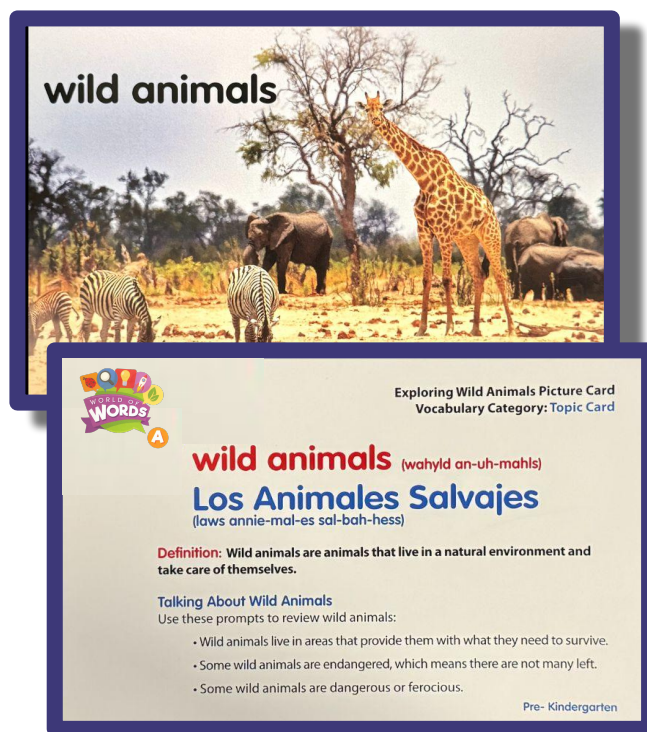
How do I use the Picture Cards?

Picture cards are used during every lesson. They are used to teach new information, as discussion prompts, and for activities. Using picture cards is an excellent Dual Language Learner strategy that builds the connections between verbal and visual skills.

The picture card words are selected from the vocabulary words for the unit. To identify which vocabulary words have picture cards, look for the camera icon beside the word.

The following information is given on the back of each picture card:

- The word and pronunciation guide in English and Spanish (Spanish words are in red)
- A child-friendly definition
- *Talking About* discussion prompts



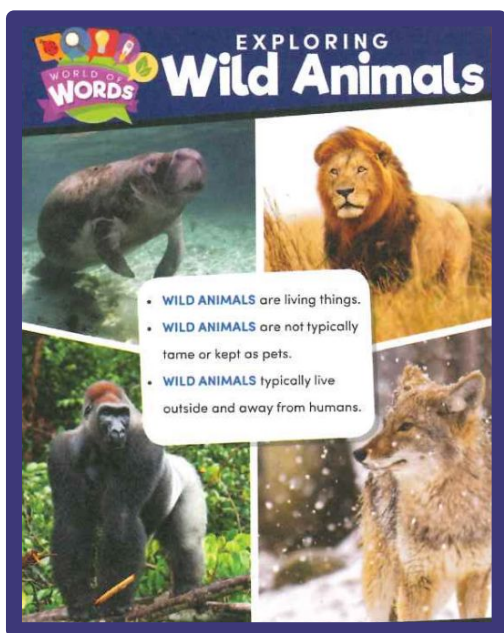
How do I use the Learning Outcomes Poster?

The Learning Outcomes Poster should be displayed in the area where the children gather for lessons. During the unit, the poster is used for different lessons. The poster serves as an important visual cue for children to remember the science concepts that they are learning.

How long does it take to complete all of the lessons in the Teacher Toolkit?

The lessons in the unit are designed to be completed over a 2-3 week period. During this time, the children are engaged in whole group lessons led by the teacher. These lessons build background knowledge and vocabulary while teaching the unit's Learning Outcomes and Big Ideas.

During the unit and in the weeks following, we encourage teachers to engage children in the suggested independent and small group Discover More! Extension Activities. These activities promote children's development of self-learning skills as they apply and extend what they learned during the lessons.



Getting the Most out of the WILD ANIMALS Teacher Toolkit

How much time do I need to schedule for a lesson?

Each lesson takes about 12-15 minutes.

Are there take-home activities?

The Teacher Toolkit has two Family Engagement components. There is a Family WOW Refrigerator Note that tells families what topic their child will be reading about, provides the learning outcomes for the unit, and gives suggestions for ways they can support their child's learning.

There is also a family extension activity sheet that should be sent home at the end of the unit. These activities are for families to do together as a learning extension. During the activities, your children will share and celebrate what they have learned about the topic with their families. The refrigerator note and family extension activities are available in English and Spanish.

Wild Animals Family Engagement Activities

Try these activities at home in the next few weeks to deepen your child's learning about WILD ANIMALS:

- Build an animal habitat:** Depending on the weather, you can do this inside with blankets and pillows or blocks or outside with branches, grass, and leaves.
- Cut out and play this animal game with your family:**

WILD ANIMALS CHARADES

LION Roar like a lion!	ELEPHANT Stomp like an elephant!	MONKEY Swing like a monkey!	GIRAFFE Stretch tall like a giraffe!	ZEBRA Gallop like a zebra!
TIGER Prowl like a tiger!	BEAR Waddle like a bear!	CHEETAH Run fast like a cheetah!	RHINO Charge like a rhino!	HIPPOPOTAMUS Open wide like a hippo!
KANGAROO Jump like a kangaroo!	PANDA Sit like a panda!	SNAKE Slither like a snake!	CROCODILE Snap like a crocodile!	OSTRICH Stand like an ostrich!

WOW Refrigerator Note

WOW! We are reading and learning about wild animals right now. During the next few weeks, you can help your child by asking them about wild animals and helping them discover new things about wild animals. Talking about wild animals will reinforce what your child is learning in the classroom.

- Talk about some wild animals that you see each day.
- Go to the park or a backyard with your child, look around and see what types of wild animals are living there. Talk about what type of animal it is (bird, reptile, insect, amphibian, fish, mammal, etc.) and how it survives in the habitat. Remind your child to never touch a wild animal.
- Go to the library and check out a book about wild animals. Read the book with your child and stop to talk more about the pictures.
- Try the activities on the next page.

Post this note on your refrigerator to remind you to talk about wild animals with your child.

Thanks!

What other resources do I need?

Your Teacher Toolkit includes all of the essential instructional tools for successful lessons. Some additional resources that can enhance instruction include:

- **Books:** Make a resource library of books about WILD ANIMALS by gathering any books that you have in your classroom library and/or checking out additional books from the library. Put the books in your Book Nook or use for read alouds.
- **Videos:** Find websites about WILD ANIMALS to share with children. National Geographic for kids has lots of great facts and interactive material: <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com>.
- **Music:** Put together a collection of songs and poems about WILD ANIMALS. "Walking in the Jungle" from Super Simple Songs is always a favorite!
- **Art:** Print out pictures from the internet or from old magazines relating to WILD ANIMALS. Have these pictures available for children to use during discovery activities.

Exploring WILD ANIMALS Teacher Toolkit

AT A GLANCE



BIG IDEAS

The overarching science concepts children will learn:

- WILD ANIMALS have life cycles
- WILD ANIMALS have ways of protecting themselves.
- WILD ANIMALS get their food, water, and shelter from their habitats.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

In these lessons, children will learn that:

- Some WILD ANIMALS are ferocious or dangerous
- WILD ANIMALS usually live outside and away from people.
- WILD ANIMALS take care of themselves.
- Lions, giraffes, and tigers are types of WILD ANIMALS.

ABC

In the lessons, children will build vocabulary for:

(Vocabulary words with a camera icon have a picture card)

Words that relate to WILD ANIMALS:

lion 
bear 
elephant 
rhino 
hippo 
giraffe 
tigress 
zebra 
ape 
chimpanzee 

Words that help us talk about WILD ANIMALS:

den
ferocious
jungle
plain (savanna)

Challenge Words:

chicken 
pig 
puppy 
snake 



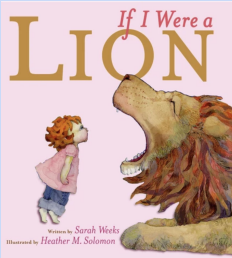
Getting the Most out of the WILD ANIMALS Teacher Toolkit

LESSON PLANNER

Lesson 1

Week 1

Predictable



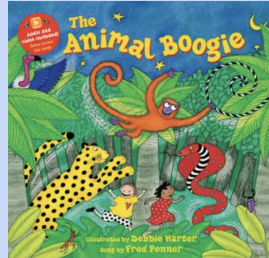
If I Were a Lion
by Sarah Weeks

Key Vocabulary:
bear

Lesson 2

Week 1

Predictable



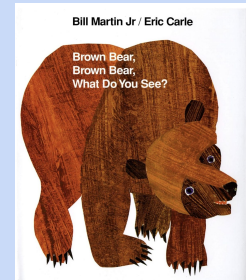
The Animal Boogie
by Debbie Harter

Key Vocabulary:
lion, bear, elephant, rhino

Lesson 3

Week 2

Predictable



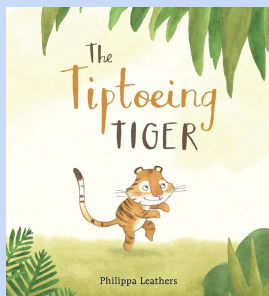
Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?
by Bill Martin Jr. & Eric Carle

Key Vocabulary:
lion, bear, elephant, rhino, hippo, giraffe

Lesson 4

Week 2

Narrative Informational



Tiptoeing Tiger
by Philippa Leathers

Key Vocabulary:
tigress, zebra, challenge cards

Lesson 5

Week 2/3

Informational



Baby Chimpanzees
by Meg Greve

Key Vocabulary:
chimpanzee, ape, challenge cards, all WILD ANIMALS vocabulary

Lesson 6

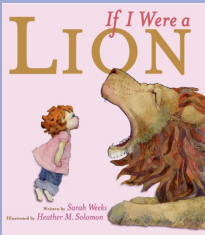
Week 3



Select three favorite WILD ANIMALS books to reread this week with the children.

Revisit all WILD ANIMALS vocabulary as you relate vocabulary to Big Ideas.

SHARED READING:



PICTURE CARDS:

- bear, lion

CURRICULUM NOTES

Reflect together

Why do it this way? Research indicates that attaching actions to words helps children, especially DLLs, to remember the words and their meanings. During the lesson, have children walk on all fours like a lion. Additionally, have children make animal sounds throughout the unit.

DID YOU KNOW?

Wild Animals in Urban Settings

Urban settings are home to many wild animals such as owls, squirrels, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, and cougars. Talk about why these animals should not be pets or approached when they are seen.

Talk Together

Start today's lesson by saying: *Today we'll begin learning about **WILD ANIMALS**. **WILD ANIMALS** are animals that live outside and away from people.*

Show the picture cards of the **LION** and the **BEAR**. Point to the picture cards and say: ***This is a lion and a bear. Lions and bears are WILD ANIMALS. WILD ANIMALS, like lions and bears, can be dangerous. Some are ferocious, which means they're fierce and frightening. Would you have a ferocious animal like a lion as a pet that lives in your home?*** [No!]

Introduce today's book by saying: ***Our book today has pictures of different WILD ANIMALS. Let's look at the lion. The lion is a WILD ANIMAL that cannot live with people.***

Read Together

Read together the predictable book: ***If I Were a Lion***. Try not to stop too often, since the book has a cadence that will help the children learn the words.

Reflect Together

Show the pictures cards for the **LION** and the **BEAR**. Point to the picture cards and say: ***Lions and bears are both WILD ANIMALS. Let's say their names together.***

Some WILD ANIMALS are ferocious. How do we describe some WILD ANIMALS?

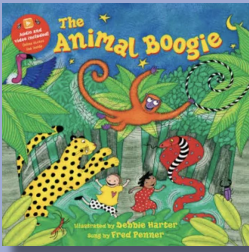
[Have the children say the word "ferocious" together as a group.]

Yes, WILD ANIMALS can be ferocious and dangerous.

Re-read ***If I Were a Lion***. Discuss why a lion and a bear are WILD ANIMALS.



SHARED READING:



PICTURE CARDS:

- bear, lion, elephant, rhino

CURRICULUM NOTES

Talk Together

This part of the lesson provides children with a focus on the category.

- Choral responses ensure that all children participate in an activity (expressive language).
- Yes/no and one-word answers let you know right away whether children understand the information you have taught them.
- For this reason, only present the information you want the children to recall.

DID YOU KNOW?

Elephants

Elephants are the largest land animals in the world. Elephants live in Africa and Asia. You might see them at the zoo, but the zoo is not their natural habitat. Elephants can swim and like to eat leaves, twigs, and roots. Elephants use their trunks to get water. However, an elephant's trunk is not like a straw; they must suck up the water through their trunks, then spray it into their mouths to drink.

Talk Together

Start today's lesson by saying: *Today, we're going to learn more about WILD ANIMALS. Let's see what you remember from what we've explored so far. What are animals that live outside and away from people? [WILD ANIMALS.] Can WILD ANIMALS find their own food? [Yes.]*

Show the picture of the **LION** and the **BEAR**. Point to the picture cards and say: *Which of these WILD ANIMALS has sharp claws and is considered dangerous and ferocious. [The lion and the bear.]*

Show the picture card of the **ELEPHANT**. Point to the picture card and say: *Here is an elephant. An elephant is another type of WILD ANIMAL. This WILD ANIMAL lives in a large flat, grassy place called a plain or savanna.*

Show the picture card of the **RHINO**. Point to the picture card and say: *Here is another WILD ANIMAL. It is a rhinoceros. You can call it a rhino, but its long name is rhinoceros. It often lives in the plains, as well.*

Introduce today's book by saying: *WILD ANIMALS can live in places all over the world such as jungles, deserts, oceans, forests, and grassy plains/savannas. In this book, let's explore the lives of WILD ANIMALS in the jungle.*

Read Together

Read the predictable book *The Animal Boogie* straight through without disrupting the flow of the story. Have the children look for the different WILD ANIMALS and where they live.

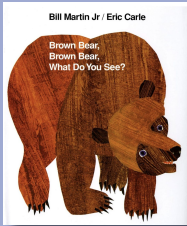
Reflect Together

Use the same picture cards. Ask the children: *Which of our WILD ANIMALS live in the grassy African savanna? [The rhino and elephant.] WILD ANIMALS live where they can find their own food; they usually live away from humans and take care of themselves.*

Reread *The Animal Boogie*. Have the children talk about some of the things they've learned about WILD ANIMALS. Review picture cards as time allows.



SHARED READING:



PICTURE CARDS:

- lion, bear, elephant, rhino, hippo, giraffe

CURRICULUM NOTES

Reflect together

Why do it this way? Comparing and contrasting provides children with opportunities to discuss features of the WILD ANIMALS they are learning about. Encourage children to make direct comparisons by discussing specific features of both tame and WILD ANIMALS.

DID YOU KNOW?

Giraffes

Giraffes are the tallest land animals in the world. Baby giraffes are around 6 ft. tall, taller than most people! Their height and long necks help them get food. Giraffes eat leaves from trees.

Talk Together

Start today's lesson by saying: *We're learning all about WILD ANIMALS.*

Show the picture card of the **HIPPO**. Point to the picture cards and say: *This is a hippopotamus, or hippo, which is another WILD ANIMAL. Hippos live outside and away from people. Hippos live in water and mud to keep cool.*

Show the picture card of the **GIRAFFE**. Point to the picture cards and say: *This is another WILD ANIMAL, a giraffe. It has a long, long neck. It often lives near hippos.*

Introduce today's book by saying: *Today's book is about more WILD ANIMALS. Look for the WILD ANIMALS that we have already talked about.*

Read Together

Read the predictable book: **Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?** As you read, point to the pictures and stop and ask the questions: *Where do bears live?* [forests] *Which of these animals live in the water?* [Frog, goldfish] *What are some things you would find where bears live?* ? [A few trees, a lot of grass, elephants, zebras.]

Reflect Together

Make comparisons and contrasts. Show the picture cards and ask:

How are a giraffe and an elephant alike?

[They are both WILD ANIMALS that live on the African savanna.]

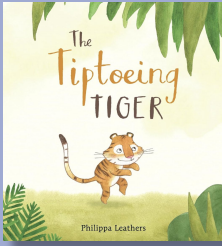
How are an elephant and a hippo different?

[An elephant has a long trunk and a hippo doesn't.]

Continue to compare and contrast other WILD ANIMALS as time allows.



SHARED READING:



PICTURE CARDS:

- tigress, zebra, all picture cards used in prior lessons, and challenge cards

CURRICULUM NOTES

Reflect together

Why do it this way? The purpose of this activity is to encourage children to participate in discussion and work on categorization. The important part is not that the child correctly notes if it does or does not belong in the category but how the child explains why it does or does not belong. Support children in sharing their rationale or justification for their response.

DID YOU KNOW?

Lions & Tigers

Lions and tigers both belong to the cat family. While lions are taller, tigers are longer. Tigers have black stripes and lions do not. Lions live in a group called a pride, while tigers like to be alone. Female lions do all of the hunting for the pride, while a tigress takes care of her cubs on her own.

Talk Together

Show the picture cards from prior lessons and say: *We've been learning about different WILD ANIMALS. Tell me what you remember about WILD ANIMALS.*

Make sure all the key concepts listed on pg. 7 are covered.

Show the picture cards of the **TIGRESS**. Point to the picture card and say: *This WILD ANIMAL is a tigress, which is a female tiger. Tigers often live in jungles, which are places where there are thick tangles of trees, bushes, and vines. A tigress hides her cubs in a den, which is a cave or hollow, to keep them safe.*

Show the picture cards of the **ZEBRA**. Point to the picture card and say: *This is a zebra. It looks like a horse, but it has stripes like a tigress.*

Introduce today's book by saying: *In today's book, we are going to meet a tiptoeing tiger. Let's read to find out who the tiger meets along his way.*

Read Together

Read the narrative informational book: **The Tiptoeing Tiger**. Throughout the reading, stop and ask the children questions about the text: *Where does the tiger live? Do you think he is ferocious? Do you think he will be ferocious when he is an adult tiger?*

Reflect Together

Time for a challenge: Mix and display all the picture cards (including the challenge cards) and say: *Let's play a game. I'm going to hold up a picture, and you will need to tell me whether it's a WILD ANIMAL or not. You'll have to think hard about what you've learned about WILD ANIMALS. Ready? Let's go.*

Hold up the picture card of the **SNAKE**. Point to the picture card and say: *Is a snake a WILD ANIMAL?*

Elicit responses and encourage children to give you a rationale using the key concepts listed earlier.

Continue using the challenge cards - **CHICKEN, PIG, PUPPY** - as well as picture cards from past lessons.



SHARED READING:



PICTURE CARDS:

- chimpanzee, ape, all picture cards used in prior lessons, and challenge cards

CURRICULUM NOTES

Reflect together

Keep the activity moving to support children's engagement. However, if you notice that some children are not catching on to different science concepts or vocabulary, interact separately with them during center times using key vocabulary. Or reread one of the books with them and have a discussion about the science concepts.

Why do it this way? In this part of the lesson, you are asking open-ended questions. These questions extend learning and provide opportunities for children to use vocabulary. Nonetheless, the discussions are very much guided because the responses are anchored in the book and text set concepts.

Talk Together

Start today's lesson by displaying the picture cards from prior lessons and saying: *We've been learning about different WILD ANIMALS. All of these WILD ANIMALS spend their entire lives in outside habitats away from people. WILD ANIMALS are not tame and can be dangerous. WILD ANIMALS also find their own food. Tell me what else you remember about WILD ANIMALS.*

Show the picture card of the **CHIMPANZEE** and **APE**. Point to the picture cards and say: *These are WILD ANIMALS. The chimpanzee and the ape, are some of the strongest and smartest. Of the WILD ANIMALS we have seen, which ones do you think are the smartest?*

Introduce today's book by saying: *Today's book is about chimpanzees. As we read, think about why they are called WILD ANIMALS.*

Read Together

Read the informational book: **Baby Chimpanzees**. Have the children share what they already know about WILD ANIMALS; use the information in the text as a springboard to additional information the children might want to contribute. As you read together, show the children each page, and use the pictures to help them review the names, habitats, and diets of the various WILD ANIMALS.

Reflect Together

Say: *Let's talk about what we have learned about WILD ANIMALS; Why are some WILD ANIMALS so ferocious? How do they take care of their young? Is it similar or different than other animals, such as pets? Can you describe your favorite WILD ANIMAL? Is it similar or different than other animals, such as pets. Can you describe your favorite WILD ANIMAL? What might you want to learn more about?*

Say: *On your paper, draw a picture that shows something you have learned about WILD ANIMALS.*

Encourage children to summarize what they know by drawing a picture or writing ('driting') about their favorite WILD ANIMALS. Allow the children to share their drawings with others and talk about what they have learned.

Have all the books from this unit available for the children to view independently if they desire.

Review all of the WILD ANIMALS picture cards as time allows.



SHARED READING:



CURRICULUM NOTES

Reflect together

Turn-and-Talk: A great strategy to get more children's voices involved in the lesson is to ask a question, provide think time, and then have children discuss their opinions in pairs. This provides all children with an opportunity to use the vocabulary and the teacher with the opportunity to move around and check for understanding.

Consider showing the children in your class one of SciShow's videos: *Into the Forest with Jane Goodall* which is available on Youtube. Providing children with diverse ways of interacting with content allows them more opportunities to internalize the material. You may incorporate this into the lesson or use the video as an extension activity.



Talk Together

Keep the books, the picture cards, and the students' writings/drawings about WILD ANIMALS on display in the classroom.

Say: ***Let's revisit what we've learned about WILD ANIMALS.***

What can you tell me about WILD ANIMALS?

[Encourage the children to revisit the vocabulary and key concepts, relating them to the Big Ideas.]

Revisit the books by saying: ***Let's select three of our favorite WILD ANIMALS books to reread this week. Which book would you like us to read today? What do you recall about WILD ANIMALS from this book?***

[Allow the children to select the daily books to reflect, recall, and reread].

Read Together

Read the selected book(s). Discuss the books together as you use the text to make connections to the Big Ideas listed on pg. 7.

Reflect Together

Ask the following questions to deepen children's understanding of WILD ANIMALS:

Life Cycles: ***What different life cycles of WILD ANIMALS were discussed in our books?***

[Encourage the children to draw pictures of the life cycles of different kinds of WILD ANIMALS from the text.]

Basic Needs/Habitats: ***How are the basic needs of WILD ANIMALS similar to or different than our basic needs? How does the specific habitat of a WILD ANIMAL help meet its needs?***

[Animal habitats allow for activities such as feeding (grazing plains for zebras), shelter from the elements or or sleeping (den for lions), or hiding from predators (tall trees for chimpanzees).]

Protection: ***What are some ways that WILD ANIMALS protect themselves?***

[Camouflage, running fast, growling/biting, spraying a strong smell, etc.]

Discuss how some WILD ANIMALS are endangered and need to be protected by humans.

Continue investigating WILD ANIMALS. Ask: ***Why aren't WILD ANIMALS typically kept as pets?*** Encourage further independent exploration of WILD ANIMALS with home/school connections.

Resources

Fun Facts About Wild Animals

Discover More! Extension Activities

- Circle Time
- Dramatic Play
- Writing and Art Center
- Book Nook
- Science and Discovery Center
- Ask-An-Expert

Home Connection

- WOW! Refrigerator Note
- Home Extension Activity



Fun Facts About Wild Animals

There are many types of wild animals and each has its own characteristics and behaviors. Living in all parts of the world, these animals include lions, bears, giraffes, elephants, hippos, tigers, rhinos, zebras, apes, chimpanzees, and many more. These animals can be ferocious and dangerous, and they tend to stay away from people. Each of these wild animals has a life cycle (just like every other living thing), ways to protect itself, ways to get food and water, and ways to get shelter from their habitats to help them take care of themselves.

Unique Facts About Wild Animals:

- Adult elephants, rhinos, hippos, and sloths cannot jump.
- A rhino's horn is made up of hair.
- A sloth takes two weeks to digest its food.
- Giraffes have no vocal boxes.
- An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain. They can also run faster than a horse, and males can roar like lions.
- Gorillas can catch human colds and other illnesses.
- A lion in the wild usually makes no more than 20 kills per year.
- A female lion does 90% of the hunting.



How do wild animals protect themselves?

Animals have different physical characteristics that protect them from their enemies. These include hard shells, thick skin, hard scales, horns, sharp claws, or body shapes or colors that match their surroundings, which is also known as camouflage.

Why do living things need each other?

Producers are living things that make their own food, such as plants.

Consumers are living things that eat plants and animals, such as wild animals. Consumers are divided into three different groups depending on what they eat: herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores.

Carnivores are animals that are meat eaters and predators, such as lions, bears, and tigers. They hunt and eat other animals to survive.

Herbivores are animals that only eat plants, such as deer, giraffes, zebras, elephants, hippos, pandas, rhinos, and apes.

Omnivores: are animals, such as chimpanzees, that eat both plants and other animals.

Food Chain:

Together, producers and consumers make up a food chain, which shows how plants and animals rely on each other for food.

Discover More!

Exploring Wild Animals Extension Activities

The WOW vocabulary lessons introduce children to new concepts and build vocabulary and background knowledge. Throughout the unit, use these activities with children in small groups during center times to further engage with the topic and synthesize their learning. The open-ended activities provided in this section encourage children to personalize their learning and make it their own.

Circle Time



Circle Time Activities

Here are some activities that can be done during whole class meetings to connect to wild animals to further immerse children in their learning:

Wild Animal Guessing Game: Give clues (“ex: I have stripes and roar”) and have children guess the animal. Use vocabulary from the cards to help children connect to their learning.

Movement Imitation and Songs: For movement breaks, have children stomp like elephants, slither like snakes, swing like monkeys, etc. to encourage learning through play, which is so essential for preschoolers. To further this learning, add songs and rhymes like “We’re going on a Bear Hunt” or “Animal Freeze Dance” by the Kiboomers to encourage whole body learning.

Discover More!

Exploring Wild Animals Extension Activities

Dramatic Play

Dramatic Play

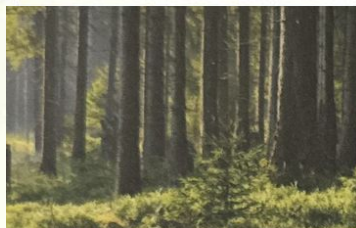
Dramatic play is one of the most powerful learning tools for preschoolers, as it allows children to explore real-world roles and situations in a safe, imaginative way, building language, social skills, and creative thinking all at once. When children pretend, they practice cooperation, problem-solving, and empathy — skills that form the foundation for success both in school and in life. Here are some dramatic play activities for this unit:

Popsicle Stick Puppets: Create Popsicle stick puppets (like the ones below) or have children create the puppets (using index cards, popsicle sticks, and glue) to provide an opportunity for children to use them for pretend play and strengthen their vocabulary about wild animals.

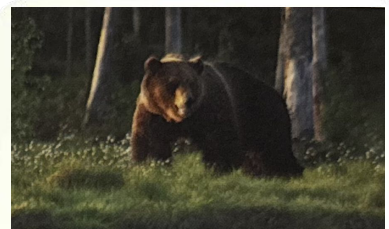
Pretend Zoo: Turn the dramatic play area into a zoo. Have animal puppets or stuffed animals for the children to create the scene. Children can create zoo habitats with blocks. Help children think of what each animal would need in their zoo habitat to live like they do in the wild. Children will love being zoo keepers and caring for the different animals.



Owl



Forest



Bear

Discover More! Wild Animals Extension Activities

Writing and Art Center

Art helps preschoolers learn by engaging their hands and minds at the same time. Perhaps most importantly, art gives young children a powerful way to express their feelings and tell their stories, supporting both emotional development and early literacy. Teachers can record children's words about their art so even the youngest children can write stories.



Writing and Art Center Activities

Paper Plate Animals: Use paper plates to create animal faces. Children can paint the plate orange and glue on black stripes for a tiger or paint yellow and use cut yellow paper for a lion's mane. Large wiggly eyes and some nose cut outs make these faces come to life for children. Children can talk about what they like about the animal they chose to create.

Safari Collage: Use brown/green paper, leaves, and animal cutouts to create safari collages. Let children share their collage, naming some of the cut-out animals with the larger group. Talking about their favorite wild animals further reinforces their vocabulary and oral language.

Cutting Strips: For fine motor development, have children cut black zebra stripes or green grass from the savanna. Teachers can use the strips as part of a bulletin board.

Discover More!

Exploring Wild Animals Extension Activities

Book Nook

Books are essential for preschoolers because they build vocabulary, spark imagination, and lay the foundation for reading success while creating meaningful moments of connection between children and the caring adults who read with them. Make a special book basket filled with books about the unit's topic to keep in your book nook that children can look at throughout the unit.



Book Nook Activities

Story Theater: As a teacher reads one of the wild animals books, have children act out the motions and have a story theater. Teachers can also have children that want to volunteer take turns acting out each page while the rest of group acts as the audience.

Book Charades: Let children take turns pretending to be different wild animals from the book and the rest of the group can be the guessers.

Retelling with Animals: Teachers can use puppets or stuffed animals while reading a book to add another dimension to the stories for children.

Discover More!

Exploring Wild Animals Extension Activities

Science and Discovery Center

Science is important for preschoolers because it nurtures their natural curiosity about the world, teaching them to observe, question, and explore in ways that build critical thinking skills they will use throughout their lives. Putting activities and materials in your Science and Discovery Center that relate to the unit gives children the chance to work independently and discover more about what they have been reading about.



Science and Discovery Activities

African Savannah Sensory Box: Gather supplies including a clear *plastic tub*, *light yellow crinkle-cut paper* to represent the grasslands, a few *sprigs of dry and scraggly grass* to represent sparse vegetation, *rough and smooth stones*, *plastic safari animals* (including rhinos, giraffes, lions), and plastic fine-motor tools like *mini-rakes*. Students experience the savanna through tactile exploration while discussing how that habitat is different from our own and how wild animals are different from tame pets.

Discovery Walk: Take a walk around the school yard or to a local park to help children understand the concept that while most wild animals live away from humans, there are some that live by humans. Look for animals such as insects, birds, squirrels, frogs, turtles, raccoons, rabbits, or opossums. Talk about why they are wild animals and not pets.

Camouflage Activity: Gather small animal figures. Hide some animals in place that match their color and some in places that contrast their color. Talk about the importance of camouflage for animals in the wild.

Discover More!

Exploring Wild Animals Extension Activities

Ask-An-Expert

Giving children first-hand experiences with what they are learning helps children build understanding and make connections to the world around them. Hearing from someone who is an expert in the field allows children to ask more specific questions and also learn interesting facts from another reliable source.



Ask-an-Expert

There are many different ways to give children the opportunity to Ask-an-Expert. You can invite people into your classroom from school or from the community. Before the expert comes to visit, it is important to have a class meeting to prepare a list of questions the children would like to ask. Some examples of exercise experts are:

Here are some ideas of wild animal experts:

- **Zookeeper:** Invite a zookeeper to visit the classroom to talk about how zoo habitats are made to mimic animals' lives in the wild.
- **Veterinarian:** Ask a veterinarian to explore how wild animals can be cared for if you notice they need help in the wild.
- **Ranger:** Talk with a ranger at a park or preserve to learn about the wild animals living there.



WOW Refrigerator Note

WOW! We are reading and learning about wild animals right now. During the next few weeks, you can help your child by asking them about wild animals and helping them discover new things about wild animals. Talking about wild animals will reinforce what your child is learning in the classroom.

- Talk about some wild animals that you see each day.
- Go to the park or a backyard with your child, look around and see what types of wild animals are living there. Talk about what type of animal it is (bird, reptile, insect, amphibian, fish, mammal, etc.) and how it survives in the habitat. Remind your child to never touch a wild animal.
- Go to the library and check out a book about wild animals. Read the book with your child and stop to talk more about the pictures
- Try the activities on the next page.

Post this note on your refrigerator to remind you to talk about wild animals with your child.

Thanks!



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WOW Notas para el Refrigerador

WOW! En este momento, estamos leyendo y aprendiendo sobre los animales salvajes. Durante las próximas semanas, usted puede ayudar a su hijo preguntándole sobre los animales salvajes y ayudándole a descubrir cosas nuevas acerca de ellos. Conversar sobre los animales salvajes reforzará lo que su hijo está aprendiendo en el aula.

- Habla sobre algunos animales salvajes que ves cada día.
- Ve al parque o sal al patio trasero con tu hijo, observa a tu alrededor y fíjate qué tipos de animales silvestres habitan allí. Hablen sobre qué tipo de animal es (ave, reptil, insecto, anfibio, pez, mamífero, etc.) y cómo sobrevive en ese hábitat. Recuérdale a tu hijo que nunca debe tocar a un animal silvestre.
- Ve a la biblioteca y saca un libro sobre animales salvajes. Lee el libro con tu hijo y detente para hablar más sobre las ilustraciones.
- Prueba las actividades de la página siguiente.

Pega esta nota en tu refrigerador para recordarte hablar sobre los animales salvajes con tu hijo.

¡Gracias!



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¡Gracias!



Wild Animals

Family Engagement Activities

Try these activities at home in the next few weeks to deepen your child's learning about WILD ANIMALS:

 **Build an animal habitat:** Depending on the weather, you can do this inside with blankets and pillows or blocks or outside with branches, grass, and leaves.

 **Cut out and play this animal game with your family:**



WILD ANIMALS CHARADES

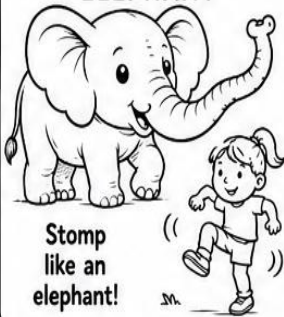


LION



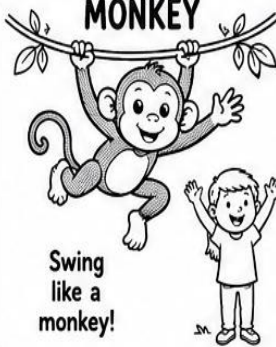
Roar like a lion!

ELEPHANT



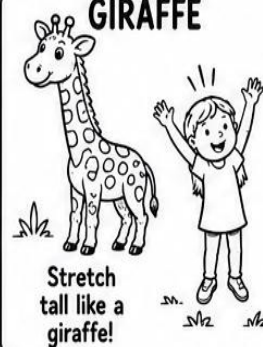
Stomp like an elephant!

MONKEY



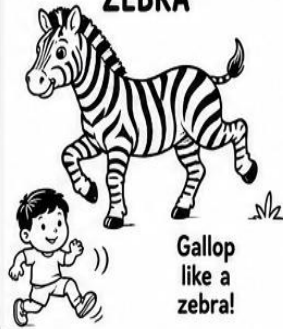
Swing like a monkey!

GIRAFFE



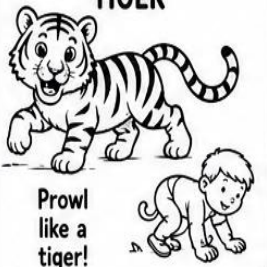
Stretch tall like a giraffe!

ZEBRA



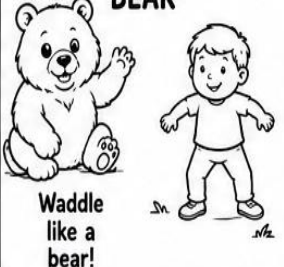
Gallop like a zebra!

TIGER



Prowl like a tiger!

BEAR



Waddle like a bear!

CHEETAH



Run fast like a cheetah!

RHINO



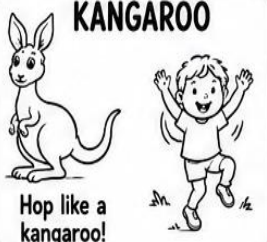
Charge like a rhino!

HIPPOPOTAMUS



Open wide like a hippo!

KANGAROO



Hop like a kangaroo!

PANDA



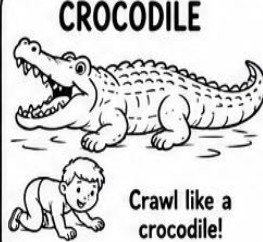
Munch like a panda!

SNAKE



Slither like a snake!

CROCODILE



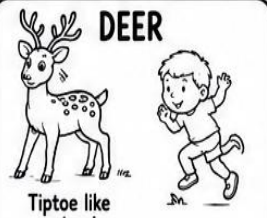
Crawl like a crocodile!

OSTRICH



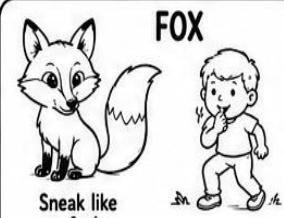
Run like an ostrich!

DEER



Tiptoe like a deer!

FOX



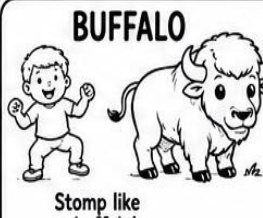
Sneak like a fox!

OWL



Flap like an owl!

BUFFALO



Stomp like a buffalo!

WOLF



Howl like a wolf!

Animales salvajes

Actividades de participación familiar

Prueben estas actividades en casa durante las próximas semanas para profundizar el aprendizaje de su hijo sobre los ANIMALES SALVAJES:

 **Construyan un hábitat para animales:** Dependiendo del clima, pueden hacerlo en el interior con mantas, almohadas o bloques; o al aire libre con ramas, hierba y hojas.

 **Recorten y jueguen en familia a este juego de animales:**





WoW Topics

Pre-Kindergarten

Wild Animals

Marine Animals

Seasons

Pets

Healthy Foods

Exercise

Susan B. Neuman is a Professor of Teaching and Learning at New York University, specializing in teacher education and early literacy development. Previously, she was a Professor at the University of Michigan and has served as the U.S. Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education.



In her role as Assistant Secretary, she established the Early Reading First Program and the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program, and she was responsible for all activities in Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Act. She has served on the IRA Board of Directors (2001 - 2003) and numerous boards of nonprofit organizations. She is past Editor of Reading Research Quarterly, the most prestigious journal in reading research. Her research and teaching interests include early childhood policy, curriculum, and early reading instruction, Pre-K - Grade 3 for children who live in poverty. Neuman has received two lifetime achievement awards for research in literacy development and is a Fellow of the American Educational Research Association. She has written over 100 articles and authored and edited 11 books.