

Animal Classification

Summary

This is a great lab to do before you attend a zoo field trip. Students sort pictures or small plastic animals into groups. Students classify animals as to where they live; whether they have scales, feathers, or hair; and whether they have hands, wings, flippers, or fins.

Time Frame

1 class periods of 30 minutes each

Group Size

Small Groups

Materials

This lab can be completed as stations in which one set of each supply is needed or you can make multiple sets of all three activities.

Animal sorting pages

For activity 1: If you have a supply of small plastic animals they can be used here. If not, you can find pictures. Find at least 5 animals for each environment.

For activity 2: Pictures work best because the students can observe the animal's outer covering more easily. Find at least 5 pictures for each outer covering. A great source of pictures is old copies of Ranger Rick, Backyard Barn, or National Geographic.

For activity 3: Pictures again work best. Find at least 4 pictures for each type of appendage.

Background for Teachers

Classification is an important science skill. In kindergarten, students will begin to learn to classify animals by sorting them into groups. As students sort, they observe similarities and differences in a variety of animals.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Framing questions. Designing investigations. Conducting investigations. Drawing conclusions. Developing social interaction skills with peers. Sharing ideas with peers. Connecting ideas with reasons.

Ideas are supported by reasons. Communication of ideas in science is important for helping to check the reasons for ideas.

Instructional Procedures

Pre-activity discussion:

Show students the sorting pages. Have students give examples of animals with hair/fur, scales, and feathers. Discuss different types of animal appendages and ask for examples of animals with hands, fins, flippers, and wings. Finally, show students the three environments and ask for animals that would live in each of them.

Instructional procedure:

Animals that live on land, in the water, or both. Students will use an assortment of small plastic animals and place them on their proper environment page. Have students take turns and decide where they think the animal lives; then, as a group, decide if the animal was placed appropriately.

Animals that have scales, feathers or hair/fur. Students will use an assortment of pictures of

animals and place them on either a scale, feather, or fur page. Have students take turns and decide what type of covering they think the animal pictured has; then, as a group, decide if the picture was placed appropriately.

Animals that have hands, wings, flippers, or fins. Students will use an assortment of pictures of animals and place them on either a hand, wing, flipper, or fin page. Have students take turns and decide what type of appendage they think the animal pictured has; then, as a group, decide if the picture was placed appropriately.

Bibliography

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