

Connected Experience: Mystery Mammals

GRADE LEVELS	2 nd -8 th ; California Content Standards for 3 rd , 6 th , and 7 th
SUBJECTS	Life Sciences, Visual and Performing Arts
DURATION	Pre-Visit: 20 minutes At the Academy: 20 minutes
SETTING	Classroom; African Hall at the California Academy of Sciences

Objectives

Students will:

1. become motivated to learn about African mammals.
2. discover connections between animals and their habitats.
3. practice observation skills and detailed writing.

Materials

mystery mammal cards
scissors
in-class worksheet (1 per student)
museum worksheet (1 per student)
colored pencils (or other drawing implements)
mystery mammal answer key

Vocabulary

- ❖ mammal: any of various warm-blooded vertebrate animals of the class Mammalia, including humans, characterized by a covering of hair on the skin and, in the female, milk-producing mammary glands for nourishing the young
- ❖ predator: an organism that lives by preying on other organisms
- ❖ prey: an animal hunted or caught for food
- ❖ habitat: the area or environment where an organism or ecological community normally lives or occurs

Before the Visit

Preparation

1. Print and cut out enough mystery mammal cards so that each student can have one.

Procedure

1. Pass out animal cards. Some students may get the same animal.
2. Tell students to read their cards.
3. Pass out the in-class worksheet (1 per student).
4. Have students spend 10-15 minutes sketching what they think their mammal in its habitat would look like based on the information on their card.
5. Have students write three questions they have about their mammal.

Wrap-Up

Tell students that when they go to the California Academy of Sciences, they will be able to find their mystery mammals in the African Hall dioramas and they will learn what the mammals really look like, where they live, what they eat and what eats them!

At the Academy

Procedure

1. Have students find their mystery mammal in African Hall.
2. Instruct students to spend 10-15 minutes sketching their animal.
3. Have students answer the questions on the worksheet by gathering information from the signage and from the dioramas.
4. Lastly, tell students to write a new description of their mystery mammal, a detailed description that would help the next scientist better visualize the animal's appearance.

Extensions

Place your students' drawings in a central location and discuss the diversity of mammals.

If you cannot visit the California Academy of Sciences or if your students still have unanswered questions after their visit, they can do their own research to find the answers. The resources listed below may help students in their research pursuits. The mystery mammal answer key will provide you with basic information about each mammal to help your students.

Resources

African Wildlife Foundation. *Wildlife Gallery*. Retrieved December 27, 2007 from <http://www.awf.org/section/wildlife/otherspecies>

University of Michigan Museum of Zoology. *Animal Diversity Web*. Retrieved November 30, 2007 from <http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/site/index.html>.

Huffman, B. *Ungulates of the World*. (2007). Retrieved December 10, 2007, from <http://www.ultimateungulate.com/>

Correlated California Content Standards

Grade Three

Life Sciences

3b. Students know examples of diverse life forms in different environments, such as oceans, deserts, tundra, forests, grasslands, and wetlands.

Grade Six

Life Sciences

5b. Students know matter is transferred over time from one organism to others in the food web and between organisms and the physical environment.

5c. Students know populations of organisms can be characterized by the functions they serve in an ecosystem.

Visual and Performing Arts: Visual Arts

2.1 Use various observational drawing skills to depict a variety of subject matter.

Grade Seven

Life Sciences

3a. Students know both genetic variation and environmental factors are causes of evolution and diversity of organisms.

Visual and Performing Arts: Visual Arts

1.1 Describe the environment and selected works of art, using the elements of art and the principles of design.