



Theme: Animals (Grades 3-5)

Pre-Visit Activity #2 Animal Poetry

Overview:

Students will use imagery to develop animal poetry.

Objectives:

- Students will explore the desert animals found at the Springs Preserve.
- Students will create poetry about the animal they have chosen.
- Students will present their animal to the class.

Activity:

1. Have students choose an animal from the list below. You may want to have pictures displayed.

Some animals that are found at the Springs Preserve:

Gila Monster

Lizard

Gray Fox

Bobcat

Sidewinder Snake

Pallid Bats

Mallard Duck

Desert Tortoise

Big Horn Sheep

Kangaroo Rat

Cottontail Rabbit

Pocket Mouse

Antelope Ground Squirrel

Red Tailed Hawk

2. Ask students to close their eyes for a few minutes and imagine that they are the animal living in its natural environment.
3. Guide them by asking questions: Imagine how big your animal is. Where is it living? What does it eat? Is it nocturnal? How does it travel? Is it kind? Is it aggressive?
4. Once you have given the students time to imagine that they are the animal, have them open their eyes.
5. Have them write a poem about their animal. They may choose to do Haiku, Cinquain, Diamante, or free write.
6. You may choose to have students illustrate their poems.
7. Have the students present their writing to the class.
8. Completed poems can be displayed with images of the animals.

Conclusion:

1. Ask the students why they chose their animal.
2. Have them describe their animal, including what they liked and did not like.
3. Inform them that they will get the opportunity to see some of these animals at the Springs Preserve.

Suggested Reading:

1. ***Alejandro's Gift*** by Richard E. Albert. A lonely man living in the desert builds an oasis to attract the desert animals around him. Inspires children's appreciation for the desert's beauty.
2. ***Desert Voices*** by Byrd Baylor, Peter Parnall. Readers are given messages about the beautiful desert and its animals through text and illustrations.
3. ***Draw Desert Animals*** by Doug DuBosque. Inspires creative kids to draw animals like the ones they see in Desert Discovery.
4. ***How Jackrabbit Got His Very Long Ears*** by Heather Irbinskas. Jackrabbit learns about the traits of many different animals in the desert and how they use them
5. ***Keepers of the Animals: Native American Stories and Wildlife Activities for Children*** by Joseph Bruchac, Michael J. Caduto. A rich collection of uplifting Native American stories and creative nature activities.
6. ***Listen to the Desert/Oye al Desierto*** by Pat Mora. A very simple text, with each line repeated twice in English plus twice in Spanish, becomes a rhythmic, lyrical bilingual chant suggesting the onomatopoeic powers of both tongues.
7. ***The Desert Is Theirs*** by Byrd Baylor. This beautifully illustrated 1976 Caldecott Honor Book depicts animal life and adaptations in the desert.
8. ***Voices from the Wild*** by David Bouchard. This winner of a 1997 Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award features poems about how animals use their senses.