

Let's Get Squirrely

With Art & Writing!

Choose a prompt from the box on the right.
Write a rough draft. Edit. Write a final draft.
Follow directions below to create a handprint squirrel.
Add to your final draft.

Squirrel Writing Prompts:

- Write a story or poem from the squirrel's point of view.
- Write a Haiku for a squirrel's habitat.
- Tell a story about an encounter between a grizzly bear and a red squirrel.
- Write 10 facts about Idaho red squirrels.
- Tell how a squirrel benefits the environment.

Make a Handprint Animal Art Squirrel

1. To form the head, paint a leaf shape on your palm with reddish brown paint and print close to the top of your paper.
2. To print the squirrel's body, paint your hand reddish brown, leaving the thumb clean. Overlap the head a little. Add a small amount of white paint to your index finger for a white belly.
3. Print a branch beneath the squirrel, using the length of your pointer finger painted brown.
4. Give the squirrel a nose and ear and print the base of an acorn, using a dark brown fingertip print.
5. Fingerprint an eye and an acorn top using light brown paint.
6. Print the squirrel's foot reddish brown using your pointer fingertip. To print an arm holding the acorn, use your whole pointer finger.
7. To form the tail, use reddish-brown paint on your pointer finger and print several times in a row. Repeat with a lighter color.
8. Outline when dry. Add the details to the tail, whiskers, claws and eyes.



Winter Survival

Subject: Science

Objective: Students will be able to give four examples of behaviors animals use for winter survival.

Materials:

- 12" X 18" construction paper
- markers or colored pencils



Procedure:

1. Discuss with students the behaviors they take on when winter arrives. How do they handle the cold weather? In what activities do they participate? Does their behavior change from summer to winter? Share the poem, "Coping with Cold," (following page) with your students.
2. Discuss with the class the wildlife they see in the winter. Are there fewer animals to see? Does animal behavior change in any way? Why does the behavior change? How do winter animals "make a living?"
3. Introduce or review the different behavior strategies animals use in the winter.
 - A. **Migrate:** Animals travel to another area where weather is warmer and food is more accessible.
 - B. **Adapt:** These animals make changes to behavior or to their bodies. For example, they may grow newer, thicker fur in the fall or change the coloring of their coats to blend in with their environment. Some animals gather food when it is available and store it for later. Other animals change their diet for the different seasons.
 - C. **Hibernate:** True hibernators are animals that go into a special deep sleep. Their body temperature drops, heartbeat and breathing slow down. They eat extra food in the fall and store it as body fat.
 - D. **Dormancy:** Cold-blooded animals like fishes, frogs, snakes and turtles have no way to keep warm in the winter. This inactive period, or dormancy, is similar to hibernation.
4. Ask students to research more thoroughly winter survival techniques for different animals. Give each student a 12" X 18" piece of construction paper. Instruct them to fold the paper into fourths. They should then draw lines on the folds and label each box. Use the following labels: Migration, Hibernation/Dormancy, Adaptations and My Preference. For the Migration, Hibernation/Dormancy, and Adaptations boxes, students should give an explanation of the technique and list three animals that use the technique. They should then illustrate one of the animals demonstrating that behavior.
5. For the fourth box, My Preference, students should tell which technique they would prefer if they were an animal surviving the winter.

Coping with Cold

By Shelley Cooke

When winter approaches and cold weather draws near
what happens to the animals this time of year?

Can they put on a jacket to keep themselves warm,
or stay snuggled in bed during a harsh winter storm?

Perhaps take a trip to the place of their choice,
to a beach in the tropics to relax and rejoice?

If people can do it, can animals too?
Let's take a quick look and see if they do.

Early in the fall as the days start getting short,
I hear quacking and honking, creating a ruckus of sorts.

I look to the sky, for what could it be?
A flock of geese flying south in the shape of a V.

I see a squirrel in the treetop, some nuts in his cheeks,
to store for the winter in the upcoming weeks.

He'll take them and hide them in some secret space,
and when he gets hungry, he'll search for that place.

The animals of the mountains, like the wolf, elk and goat,
all grow extra fur for a thick winter's coat.

Then, in the springtime, they'll shed that thick pelt,
about the same time the snow starts to melt.

I believe there is a rabbit who is known as a hare
that during the winter changes the color he wears.

Most of the year, he is dark, head to toe
but turns white during the winter, to blend in with the snow.

The frogs and the turtles that live in the lakes,
sleep buried in mud until spring, when they wake.

They breathe through their skin, which keeps them alive.
When the water warms up, they begin to revive.

I've heard that the bear will retreat to a den,
to sleep all winter through, no matter how long it's been.

He prepares in the fall by eating more than his share,
then emerges in springtime, looking no worse for wear.

Moles and chipmunks, and some kinds of mice,
will stay inside when it's cold and roam around when it's nice.

They will huddle together in a tight little ball,
and hide in the homes they built in the fall.

People and animals are alike in some ways.
We all have a plan to survive cold winter days.

Some sleep, some snuggle, some fly south on their wings,
but all that really matters is we survive until spring!

It's your Niche

Subject: Science

Objective: Students will be able to define habitat and niche and create business cards for particular animals.

Materials:

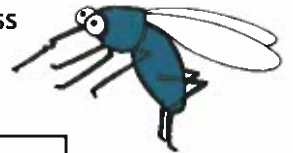
- 3" X 5" blank index cards or pieces of construction paper cut business card size
- writing and coloring materials
- animal books / internet access for researching

Procedure:

1. Review habitat with students (food, water, shelter, and space in a suitable arrangement). Tell students that habitat can be considered an animal's address. Explain to students that in this activity they will not only be looking at animals' addresses, but also animals' jobs.
2. Talk about the neighborhood the students live call home. Everyone has an address and most people have jobs. The job might be a role that person plays in the community. Animals have roles in the ecosystem, or community, where they live. This role is called the animal's ecological niche. It includes such things as where and how the animal gathers its food; its role in the food chain; what it gives and does for the community; its habits; periods of activity, etc. It can also be described as what an animal does for a living.
3. Allow students time to choose and research a certain Idaho animal to find out its niche and choose one thing this animal does well.
4. Their assignment will be to create a business card for that animal advertising its job in the community. To help them, you may want to bring in a few "real" business cards.
5. Here are a few samples of animal business cards:

Rick Raven
Environmental Cleanup
Unlicensed, Unbonded, Uninsured
Your trash is our treasure
Call 1-800-Wise-guy

Buzz Mosquito
Plasma collector/blood sucker
123 Stick-it-to-you Lane
Everywhere, Idaho
We'll suck you drier than a vampire
Call 1-800-drink-blud



6. Business cards should include the following: name of animal, job title, company name, address, phone number, slogan and an illustration or symbol for the business (optional).