

# Zoo Enclosure

**Subjects:** Science and Environmental Science

**Objectives:** Student will work in teams to solve problems. Students will be able to identify problems for animals that have been moved from natural habitats to enclosures. Students will be able to use their knowledge to design a suitable habitat for a wolverine.

**Materials:**

- Butcher paper
- Markers, crayons or colored pencils

**Procedure:**

1. Discuss zoos and the need to design enclosures/habitats in which animals can survive.
2. Discuss habitat needs of a wolverine.
3. Tell students they will have the opportunity to design their own zoo enclosure for a wolverine that has been moved from its natural habitat of a mountain forest to a zoo in Boise, Idaho. Students should create a zoo environment that replicates, as much as possible, the characteristics of the wolverine's habitat.
4. Divide students into groups of two to three. Have students list some major features the enclosure should include. Give each group of students a large piece of butcher paper.
5. Instruct students to design and draw their wolverine enclosure on the paper.
6. Have groups share their work.
7. Discuss some of the problems encountered when designing animal enclosures and the possible solutions to those problems.



# My Oh, My, Mustelid

**Subject:** Science

**Objective:** Students will be able to use a variety of sources to research a mustelid and create a mustelid wheel demonstrating knowledge.

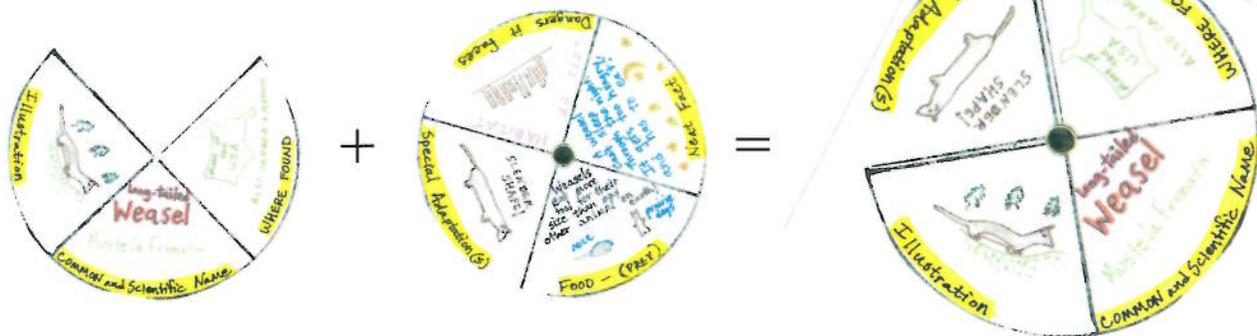
**Materials:**

- construction paper (2 pieces/student)
- scissors
- research materials
- coloring tools
- brad for each student



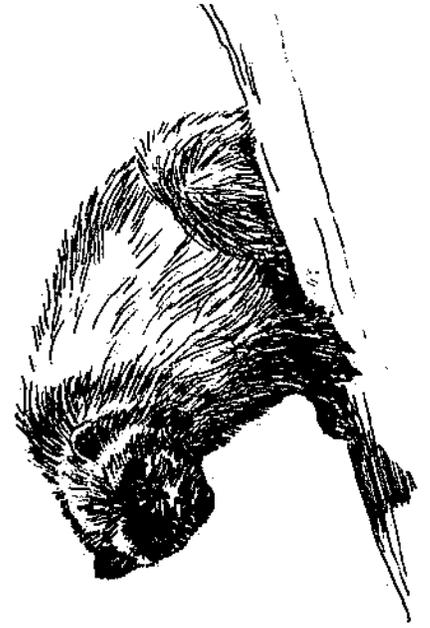
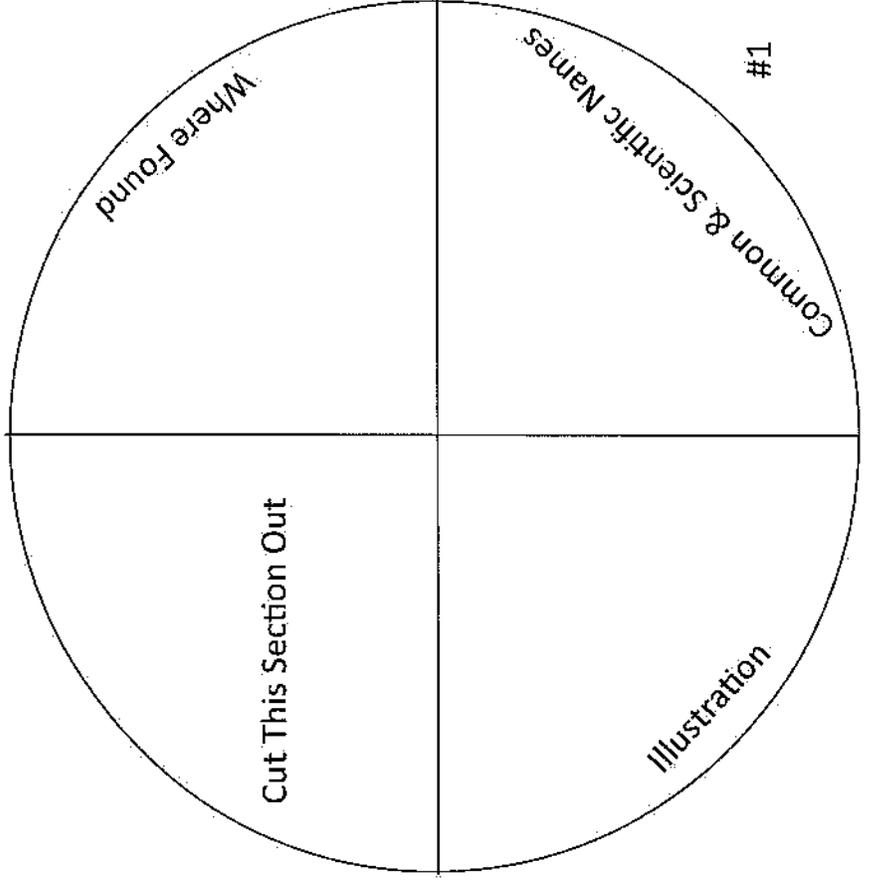
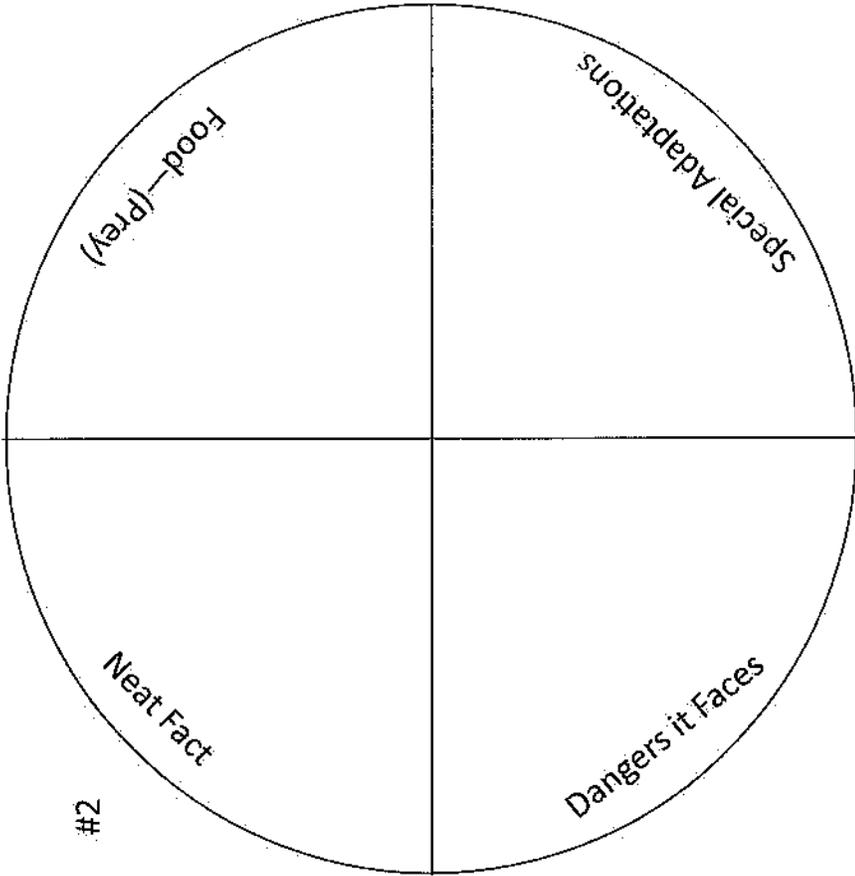
**Procedure:**

1. Review with students the animal kingdom. The wolverine is in a family called mustelids. Mustelids come in many sizes, but most have short legs, short round ears and thick fur. Mustelids also have scent glands that are used for different purposes. Remind students that scientists are continually monitoring animal classification. The skunk, for instance, used to be classified as a mustelid, but it no longer is in that group. Scientists have found that it actually belongs to a family called Mephitidae.
2. Discuss other mustelids found in the United States (fishers, weasels, badgers, sea otters, river otters, ferrets, minks, and martens). Talk about how mustelids are different from each other. Review animal adaptations. Remind students that all of the varied sizes, shapes, diets and hunting methods help the animals to survive in the environment in which they live.
3. Assign each student (or pair of students) a mustelid to research. Students should gather information and with it create a mustelid wheel. Hand out the following page. Have students complete the wheel. The circles can be glued to construction paper and then cut out to make the wheel stronger.
4. After students share their wheels with one another, display wheels for others to learn about mustelids!



# My Oh, My, Mustelid

Directions: Complete circles with words and illustrations.  
Color. Cut out and glue circles to construction paper. Cut out circles again and place circle # 1 on top of circle #2. Place a brad in the middle to hold wheel together.



# It's Your Niche

**Subject:** Science

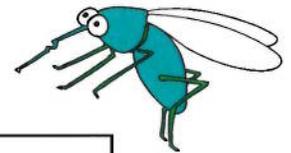
**Objective:** Students will be able to define habitat and niche and create business cards for particular animals.

**Materials:**

- 3" X 5" blank index cards or pieces of construction paper cut business card size
- writing and coloring materials
- animal books 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 be not only be looking at animals' addresses, but animals' jobs, as well.
2. Talk about the student's neighborhood. 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, that they live in. This role is called the animal's ecological niche. It includes such things as where and how the animal gathers its food; the animal's role in the food chain; what the animal gives and does for the community; the animal's 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 to look at.
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 illustration or symbol for business (optional).
7. Hang business cards on your bulletin board and call it "Whose Niche?"