



“Predator & Prey”
Pre- or Post-Visit Activity
Grades: 1-6

Materials: large area, stop watch, whistle, measuring tool (rope, ruler, yard stick)

Vocabulary:

- Predator: an animal that exists by hunting other animals
- Prey: an animal that is hunted and seized for food
- Ambush: attack suddenly and unexpectedly from a concealed position

Background:

Tigers are magnificent predators, whose strength and power allow them to hunt and kill animals much larger than themselves. But being a predator isn't easy; in fact, it's a tough, tenuous existence. Once a tiger locates prey, it must use any available tools and skills to catch the prey using an ambush technique.

Objectives:

- Use math to calculate what kind of tigers your students would make
- Gain a greater appreciation for the challenges that tigers face in the wild

Activity:

1. Have students find a partner. One will be the predator (tiger) the other will be a favorite prey (wild boar, deer...etc.)
2. Line partners up with the prey in front of the predator.
3. Tigers chase prey at top speed for only a short distance, so use a stop watch and allow each “tiger” only 10 seconds to catch the “prey.”
4. Prey students should start running first and should be allowed a 2 second head start.
5. Signal the “tiger” and start the stopwatch to begin the chase and try to “catch” the “prey” student by tagging him or her on the shoulder.
6. After 10 seconds, blow a whistle to indicate the end of the “tiger’s” dash for prey.
7. Have students switch roles and repeat activity.

Summary:

What was the success rate for the class as a whole? A tiger's success rate is 30%. If you continued to try over and over again would the rate increase or decrease? A tiger will not make more than 1 or 2 attempts in a day. To expend any more energy than this would be doing more harm than good, and it would be better to wait for another day to eat.

Extension:

In another activity, see who is “top tiger” among the students by measuring and recording their leaps. A tiger can leap nearly 30 feet. Have students calculate how many of their leaps would be needed to make up a tiger's leap.