



**Zoofari  
Kindergarten  
Teacher Packet**

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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

During the Zoofari class, children will experience for themselves the rich and exciting diversity of life all over the world. We will take an imaginary journey around the world without ever having to leave the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium. The term habitat is introduced as we discuss animals from four distinct regions: tropical rainforests, oceans, savanna and temperate forests.

### **NORTHERN TEMPERATE FORESTS**

Pennsylvania forests are considered northern temperate forests. Characterized by oaks, maples, beeches, birches, and conifers, northern temperate forests experience a short (around four months) growing season. Animals living in temperate forests must be able to adapt to extreme changes in weather. For example, squirrels begin storing nuts in the autumn, preparing for a cold season. Songbirds fly south as the cool weather arrives in order to insure food and water sources. Black bears go into a state of torpor, or long periods of sleep, during deep cold spells.

### **AFRICAN SAVANNA**

The African savanna is the grassland that stretches between the desert and rainforest areas of Africa. There are only two seasons: the rainy season and the dry season. Some of the largest animals walking our planet, such as elephants and giraffes, call this habitat home.

### **OCEANS**

From the tropical coral reefs to the poles, oceans provide a seemingly infinite diversity of habitat for the world's aquatic plants and animals. Around 70% of the planet's surface area is covered by oceans.

### **TROPICAL RAINFORESTS**

A tropical rainforest is an area of heavy rainfall, high humidity, and thick vegetation. Tropical rainforests can be found along the earth's equator. Rainforests occur in South America, Africa, Asia, and Australia. Some rainforest areas can receive up to 400 inches of rain a year. Average daily temperatures range between 75 - 85F. Tropical trees help to maintain worldwide oxygen levels, absorb carbon dioxide and assist in cooling the Earth. These are areas of astounding biodiversity, home to about half of the world's known plant and animal species.



### ***Suggested Reading***

Big Al by Andrew Clements (Scholastic, 1988).  
A House for Hermit Crab by Eric Carle (Scholastic, 1987).  
How Giraffe Got Such a Long Neck by Michael Rosen (Dial, 1993).  
Little Gray One by Jan Wahl (Tambourine, 1993).  
Little Gorilla by Ruth Bornstein (Clarion Books, 1976).  
Owl Babies by Martin Waddell (Candlewick Press, 1992).  
Play With Me by Marie Hall Ets (Puffin Books, 1955).  
Sam Who Never Forgets by Eve Rice (Mulberry Books, 1977).  
Tenrec's Twigs by Bert Kitchen (Philomel Books, 1989).  
Who's Who at the Zoo by Ellen Weiss (Western Publishing Co., Inc., 1987).

### ***Teacher Resources***

Ranger Rick's Nature Scope: Amazing Mammals-Parts I&II ed. by Judy Braus (National Wildlife Federation, 1992).  
Ranger Rick's Nature Scope: Diving into Oceans ed. by Judy Braus (National Wildlife Federation, 1989).  
Ranger Rick's Nature Scope: Endangered Species ed. by Judy Braus (National Wildlife Federation, 1989).  
Ranger Rick's Nature Scope: Trees are Terrific ed. by Judy Braus (National Wildlife Federation, 1992).  
Zoo Animals by Sandy Cortright (Barrons, 1990).

### ***Internet Resources***

[www.africam.co.za/](http://www.africam.co.za/)  
[www.coral.org](http://www.coral.org)  
[www.gn.apc.org](http://www.gn.apc.org)  
[www.nwf.org](http://www.nwf.org)  
[www.naturalia.org/zoo/indexing.html](http://www.naturalia.org/zoo/indexing.html)  
[www.yahooligans.com/Science and Nature/Living Things/Animals/](http://www.yahooligans.com/Science_and_Nature/Living_Things/Animals/)  
[www.nps.gov/yell/kidstuff/alphabet](http://www.nps.gov/yell/kidstuff/alphabet)  
[www.kidnet.com/AOL/KidsOnly/aolindex.pl](http://www.kidnet.com/AOL/KidsOnly/aolindex.pl)  
[www.pbs.org/kratts/index.shtml](http://www.pbs.org/kratts/index.shtml)  
[www.zoobooks.com/](http://www.zoobooks.com/)



## **Nature Notes**

### Pre-Visit Activity

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- TSW utilize their senses to learn more about their environment.
- TSW will observe and identify common objects found on a nature walk.

#### **MATERIALS:**

- Paper (may be in leaf shape)
- Crayons
- Small natural objects (leaf, acorn, soil, rock, etc.)
- Paper bag.

#### **PROCEDURES:**

##### **Anticipatory Set:**

Place natural objects in a paper bag. Ask the students to use their sense of touch to figure out what is in the bag. Describe what it feels like.

##### **Development of Lesson:**

1. Enjoy the outdoors by taking a nature walk. Choose a quiet location close to the school where the students will not be interrupted. Encourage the students to use all of their senses. With your eyes closed, what do you hear? What do you smell? Open your eyes, what do you see? What colors do you see? Do you taste anything in the air? What can you feel?
2. Remind the children it is important to leave nature the way that you found it. Using crayons and paper, have each child can make a nature rubbing of a leaf or tree bark.
3. Take notes of the children's observations. Take at least one quote from each student.
4. Copy your notes onto each child's nature rubbings.

##### **SUMMARY:**

Read each of the children's quotes to the class. Make a keepsake book with the children's quotes, or display them on a bulletin board.

##### **EXTENSIONS:**

- Plant a tree at your school.
- Make bird feeders to hang around your school or for your students' homes.
- Make trail-mix for an outdoor picnic with cereal, raisins, chocolate chips, and dried fruit.



## **Animal Alphabet** Post-Visit Activity

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- TSW recall the animals that they observed while visiting the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium.
- TSW write the name of the pictured animals.
- TSW will draw animals that they observed at the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium
- TSW practice letter recognition while creating books.

### **MATERIALS:**

- Crayons
- Scissors
- Animal Alphabet Sheets (see attached)
- Stapler

### **PROCEDURES:**

#### **Anticipatory set:**

Ask the students to help you brainstorm a list of animals that they saw during their visit to the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium. Write these animals on the chalkboard. Ask them to identify the first letter of each animal.

#### **Development of Lesson:**

1. Distribute a blank Animal Alphabet Sheet to each child. Explain that they will be helping to make an animal alphabet book (or bulletin board) that contains our class' favorite Zoo animals.
2. Ask the student to pick their favorite Zoo animal and draw it on the top of the Animal Alphabet Sheet.
3. Have the student write the name of their favorite Zoo animal on the bottom of the Animal Alphabet Sheet

### **SUMMARY:**

Read aloud the Animal Alphabet Sheets.



## Animal Alphabet Sheet

**THIS IS A DRAWING OF MY ANIMAL...**

**MY ANIMAL BEGINS  
WITH THE LETTER...**

**THIS IS HOW YOU SPELL MY ANIMAL...**

**THIS IS HOW YOU SPELL MY NAME**

