

Amazing REPTILES

Suggested Classroom Activities

Created and compiled by
Iowa Public Television

Amazing Reptiles

Suggested Classroom Activities

Language Arts

1. Ask each student to choose a favorite reptile. The students will write about a typical twenty-four hour period in the life of their chosen animals. The profile may be written from the narrator's point of view or from the point of view of the reptile.
2. Create a shape poem about your reptile. For example, if the student chooses a snake, the words of the poem should curve to form a snake.
3. Use descriptive words to write a description of your chosen reptile. Do not mention the name of the reptile in your description. Work with a partner to try to guess the reptile being described.
4. Chart the pros and cons of the reptile's characteristics. For example, a snake has no legs (con), but it has a venomous bite (pro). From the chart, write a "good news, bad news" report. The good news is that a snake has a venomous bite that it uses to protect itself, the bad news is a snake can't run away from danger, because it has no legs.

Science

1. To demonstrate the interdependency of living things, the students will simulate nature's food web.
 - Explain that living things depend on one another in order to survive. Ask students to think about a natural setting where plants and animals live together such as a pond.
 - Brainstorm plants and animals that would be found in this environment. Record responses on the chalkboard. Add other environmental elements such as air, sun and water, which are vital to the plants and animals.
 - One student will write SUN on a sheet of paper. He/she will stand at the front of the room holding the sign. Other students will write and represent other environmental elements.
Elements may include air, water, plants, soil, plant-eaters, meat-eaters, etc.
 - The teacher will introduce an environmental problem such as air pollution, water pollution, drought, insecticide use, animal disease, etc.
 - Students who are representing the environmental elements sit down as they become affected by the problem (e.g. the water becomes polluted, so the student representing water sits down, it also affects the plants, so those students sit down, the fish and other plant-eaters have no food, so those students sit down, the meat-eaters are without food now, so they sit down, etc.)

- Continue the activity to illustrate the interdependency of the living things in the food web.
 - Discuss other potential environmental problems and their affect on the food web.
 - Discuss steps we can take to prevent these environmental problems.
2. Create a Venn diagram. Inside the left circle list characteristics of reptiles (e.g. cold-blooded, have backbones, etc.) Inside the right circle list characteristics of mammals (e.g. warm-blooded, gives live birth, etc.). Where the two circles overlap list the characteristics shared by both reptiles and mammals (e.g. they have eyes, they need clean air, etc.) You can then repeat the activity using another animal group such as amphibians.

Math

1. Ask students to create reptile-related math story problems. Work with a partner to solve.
2. Work as a class to create a bar graph illustrating your favorite reptiles. Compare and discuss the results.
3. Use a ruler or yardstick to demonstrate and compare the different body measurements of these common rattlesnakes: Mottled Rock Rattlesnake 24", Prairie Rattlesnake 60", Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake 84", Mojave Rattlesnake 36". The students can convert the inches to feet or metric measurements. They can conduct research to find the lengths of different breeds as well. The students can compare the lengths of the snakes to their own heights.