



Lesson + Activity: Habitats & Hibernation



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Grade Level(s)	Timeframe
Pre-K, K-2	15 - 90 min

ABSTRACT

Where do all of the animals go in the winter? How do they stay warm? This activity pairs nicely with the stories that are read to JK-SK students as they head into winter. The EIR will introduce key phrases to students - hibernation, migration, and adaptation. Students will learn about what certain species do in the winter, draw/design a habitat, and have a chance to build their design - inside, or out in the snow!

Presentation can be done virtually by EIR. The only in-person part of the lesson involves the building of habitats, which can be led by the classroom teacher if EIR cannot be present.

Alternate search terms; habitat; winter; hibernation; design; build; ecosystem

30 minutes for the presentation (introduction of terms, guessing game)

30 minutes for the design of habitats (students can draw their designs and share it with their “engineer” for approval!)

1 hour for the building of designs (can happen inside or outside!)

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Tables with paper and writing / drawing materials should be set up in advance.

1 building kit per student should be prepared in advance of the building session.

Projector for presenting photos of animals during Guessing Game

Paper & writing utensils for drawing/designing habitats

Building kit (1 per student). This can include:

- > cardboard
- > popsicle sticks
- > straws
- > cotton balls
- > newspaper

GETTING READY

This sessions can be broken up into several parts:

1. Reading Session (15 mins - 1 hour, depending on the book)

This was done by the teacher, several weeks in advance of the EIR visit. The teacher read a story about animals in the winter, and told the students that they would have a special visitor in class to learn more...

Book recommendations for stories that focus on winter / hibernation include: The Mitten, Over and Under the Snow

2. Introduction & Guessing Game (30-45 minutes)

This can be done virtually, or in person. The EIR introduced the class to 3 words: hibernation, migration, and adaptation. The EIR then showed photos of a number of species (bear, goose, dog, etc.). This part can be exciting for the students to do a count down before you show the next picture, and ask them to say the name of the animal as soon as they see it on the next slide! Then you can ask the students to guess - does this animal hibernate, migrate, or adapt?

3. Draw/Design of Habitat (30 minutes)

This can be done virtually, or in person. This was introduced to students to highlight the importance of having a plan before you build something, and getting approval before you move forward! Students went to their assigned tables and each student drew a picture of the habitat that they planned to build in order to keep their animal warm in the winter! As students completed their drawing, they brought it to the engineer to explain their design and get the engineer's "stamp" of approval to proceed with building!

4. Building in the Snow! (1 hour)

This session was done by the teacher in person, as guests were not allowed to be on school property due to COVID restrictions. Each student was given a kit of materials to build a habitat outside in the snow!

Slideshow:

Depends which animals you would like to discuss! Good ones to talk about would be: bear, goose, and dog (students were very excited to see a dog on Zoom, and it is easy to relate since some of them had pets too!). Best to make a slideshow or PDF and project on screen, so that everyone can see.