

Animal Olympics

Subject: Science, Physical Education

Duration: 45 minutes

Location: Outdoors / Gymnasium

Key Vocabulary: Biological diversity, adaptation, variation

Related Activities: All activities in the wildlife section

Florida Sunshine State Standards: SC.4.L.17, SC.5.L.17



Objectives: The students will be able to: a) compare and contrast differences between animals and themselves, b) define the concepts of variation and biological diversity, and c) develop a classification system to group the animals in this activity; i.e. runners, swimmers, fliers, two-legged or four-legged.

Method: Students will attempt to mimic unique characteristics of various species.

Background: Animals have certain characteristics which make them unique. By comparing ourselves to other species, we see how truly remarkable those species are. Even individuals within the same species have different physical abilities. For example, one frog may be able to jump higher than another one. These differences within a species are referred to as variation.

Materials

- Three measuring tapes
- Several stop watches or watches with seconds hand
- One copy for each student of “Animal Olympics”
- Pencils
- Blindfold
- Long pole or piece of wood that students can walk on.
- Student aides, chaperons, or other teachers

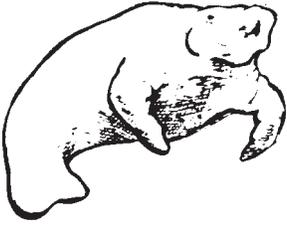
Suggested Procedure

1. Find a large open area outdoors. Set up stations for the eight competitions. Have a student aid, teacher, or chaperon lead the competition and take measurements at each station.
2. Inform students that they will be competing in an “Animal Olympics” and distribute one sheet to each student. Place them in groups of five and have them rotate through the stations.
3. Instruct students to record their individual results from each of the stations on their sheet.
4. When everyone has gone to each station, make a chart with the results of all the groups to compare. Have the students make a graph of the results and find averages for each category.

Evaluation

Following the Olympics, reassemble as a group and discuss various differences between humans and animals, and among animals of the same species. Given two of the animals on the list, have the students describe one similarity and one difference between the two animals. Similarities and differences should be based on food gathering, movement, birth of young, camouflage coloration, or bright colors. Discuss how each of these adaptations might help the animal to survive.

ANIMAL OLYMPICS

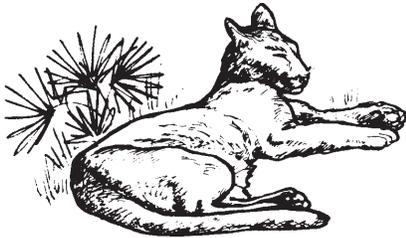
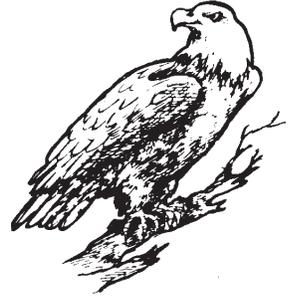


1. A **Manatee** can hold its breath under water for up to 25 minutes.

I can hold my breath for _____ seconds.

2. A **Bald Eagle** may have a wingspan of 7 to 8 feet.

I have a wingspan of _____ feet _____ inches.

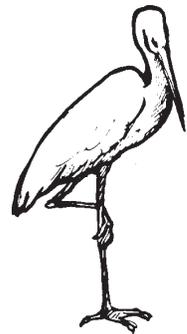


3. A **Panther** can jump 20 feet in one leap.

I can jump _____ feet in one leap.

4. A sleeping **Heron** can stand on one leg for over an hour.

Blindfolded, I can stand on one leg _____ seconds.

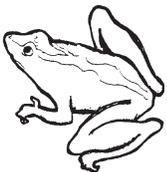
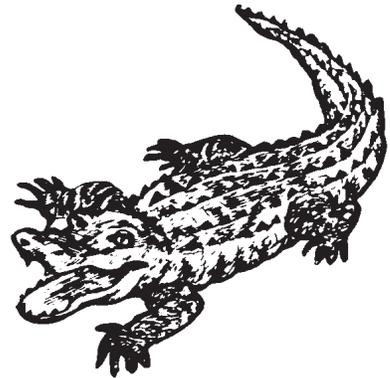


5. A **Snake** can crawl along a branch without falling off.

I can walk along a branch _____ feet.

6. An **Alligator** can run at a speed of 30 miles per hour (about 40 feet in two seconds).

I can run 40 feet in _____ seconds.



7. **Frogs** can leap 120 times consecutively without stopping.

I can leap _____ times without stopping.

8. **Owls** have the ability to stare for hours.

I can stare down my partner without blinking for _____ seconds.

