



Howard County
RECREATION & PARKS

Robinson Nature Center
6692 Cedar Lane, Columbia, MD 21044
www.howardcountymd.gov/RobinsonNatureCenter.htm
410-313-0400



Lil' Nature Adventure: First Impressions (Ages 2-4 yrs) – Teacher Pre-visit Activity

Concepts

Animals are fascinating to preschoolers. But, people respond differently to certain animals based on personality, life experiences and culture. This program introduces participants to local animals, and explores the feelings they have about these animals. By providing accurate information about animals and pleasant experiences with them, we promote positive feelings and an understanding that all animals play an important role in nature.

Program Activities

This field trip begins using movement and games to explore student reactions to different animals. We continue with an exciting puppet show about Tabitha Turtle. Tabitha is new to the forest and begins looking for friends. While making her way through the forest, she encounters animals of which she is afraid. Once she gets to know these animals, she is no longer afraid. At the end of the puppet show, participants get a first hand look at a live animal that sometimes gives the wrong first impression. Then, out on the trail, we spend time learning about different animals and pretending to be them. We end our program with the message that, even though some animals might not leave the best first impression, all animals play an important role in nature.

Vocabulary

First Impression: first thought or feeling

Feeling: a sentiment, attitude or opinion

Undecided: not having one's mind firmly made up

Reaction: action in response to some influence or event

Pre-visit Suggestions

Read a story or two from the following list:

I Love Animals: Wild, Scary, Cute or Cuddly, We Love Them All!, by Roger Priddy

The Feelings Book, by Todd Parr

Today I Feel Silly and other Moods that Make My Day, by Jamie Lee Curtis

The Icky Bug Alphabet Book, by Jerry Pallotta

Have students bring in a picture of their favorite kind of animal and share during circle time.

Go on a Nature Hunt looking for animals around the schoolyard.

Using play dough, pasta or other materials, build happy, sad, mad, excited faces and discuss.



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Dear Teacher,

We hope you enjoyed your recent field trip to the Robinson Nature Center. To help with follow-up in the classroom, we have developed the following post-visit materials:

- 1) Follow-up discussion
- 2) Follow-up activities

Follow-up Discussion

- 1) Review the animals that we learned about at Robinson. Have you seen these animals around your community? Do you feel different about any of the animals now?

Follow-up Activity

Animal Sorting Center – provide an activity station where students can sort various plastic animals (or animal pictures) into different baskets. One basket contains a happy face, one an undecided face and one a sad face. Did any of their first impressions change after coming on the field trip?

Revisit some of the animals that we talked about during our field trip (snake, spider, bat, bee etc.). Brainstorm some of the important roles they play in nature.

Examples as follows:

Snakes – eat mice (and other rodents) and insects

Spiders – eat insects – including pests like stink bugs etc.

Bats – eat insects - up to 1,000 mosquitoes in a single hour