



WHO EATS WHAT?

An activity about animal diets in the zoo



GRADE 4

MATERIALS

- clipboards

KEY WORDS

- predator
- prey
- herbivore
- omnivore
- carnivore

STANDARDS

- SCI.4.3.2
- SCI.4.3.3
- SCI.4.3.4

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn that animals of different species interact with each other in several ways, one of which is to eat or be eaten by another animal.
- Students will learn that while hunting animals (predators) have efficient methods to capture prey, the hunted animals (prey) have equally effective strategies to avoid capture.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Sharp claws, powerful beaks, deadly stingers, slashing teeth--all are weapons used by various predators, animals that hunt other animals for food. Besides these well-known physical characteristics, predators also rely on their speed, stealth, and sometimes elaborate disguises to aid in their search for food.
- Prey animals have developed equally numerous ways to avoid capture. Each prey species must have some defensive strategy against would-be predators or be wiped out completely. This, of course, would lead to a decrease in (and eventual elimination of) the predator species, as hunters would compete for fewer numbers of prey animals.
- Predators that eat only meat are called carnivores. Meat is an excellent source of protein and carnivorous animals generally do not need to eat as much as non-carnivores to obtain an equal amount of protein.
- Herbivores, or plant-eaters, must spend large portions of their waking hours browsing on bushes and trees, eating fruits or seeds, or grazing on grass.
- Some predators eat both meat and plants, and are termed omnivores.

PROCEDURE

- This activity must be completed at the zoo. Have students observe different animals and put those animals into categories as carnivores, omnivores, or herbivores. Next to the animal's name, have the students write whether it is a predator or prey animal.

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT

- Have the class discuss their observations with their neighbors. What did they find interesting? Were there any animals which they were unable to classify?





WHO EATS WHAT?

Continued



EXTENSIONS

- Have each student choose a zoo animal and observe it for 5-10 minutes. Have them draw its picture and describe its behavior (feeding, sleeping, fighting, grooming, etc.). Is this animal a predator or a prey animal? What does this animal eat?

TEACHER HINTS

- When planning a field trip to the zoo, download the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo's School Programs Guide which includes a coupon for a free teacher planning day. Make sure all chaperones are educated on all rules and procedures.





WHO EATS WHAT?



Name _____

Fill in the chart with the names of animals you see at the zoo. Next to the animal's name, write whether it is a predator or a prey animal. One answer has been filled in for you. What do you notice about your chart when it is complete?

	HERBIVORE (plant-eater)	CARNIVORE (meat-eater)	OMNIVORE (eats meat and plants)
MAMMAL			
BIRD		Owl - predator	
REPTILE			
AMPHIBIAN			
FISH			

