

Tips for Using The Learning Page Zoo Animals Lesson Plans

The study of zoo animals is a fascinating and amazing topic for young children. The world of zoo animals is a mysterious and wonderful microcosm of new concepts to be taught, and big ideas to be presented. The **Learning Page** provides you with Lesson Plans, Fact Files, Fun Sheets, Cutouts, and Murals to make teaching a Zoo Animals Unit productive and fun for the whole class!

Be prepared with a good background of animals both wild and captive, including some fascinating facts to stimulate students' imaginations as you introduce lessons.

Info about Zoo Animals

A zoo is a place where live animals are kept for us to enjoy and learn about, and for conservation. Many zoos create surroundings that look like the native habitats of the animals that live there. Zoos also provide veterinarians to take care of health problems, and special places for endangered species to mate and have babies in captivity.

Modern zoos are increasingly replacing barred cages with large, natural areas surrounded by ditches so wide and deep that animals can't escape.

Zookeepers are specially trained in many aspects of animal care. Meeting their physical needs, such as food, shelter, and health care, is only one aspect of this job. Animals must trust their caregivers, and zookeepers will often stimulate the animals by teaching them to look for food as if in the wild, playing with the baby animals, and keeping the animals active.

The Reading Recommendations on the **Learning Page** offer starting points for studying various aspects of zoo animals. Use picture books generously, as being read to is always a favorite for younger children; the strong visuals can stimulate students' imaginations

and prepare them for learning new things. Use books to initiate art projects, creative writing, journaling, book arts, math, and science activities. There is at least one book cited for each Lesson Plan to assist you in engaging the students' interests at the beginning of the Lesson. Books are often innovative originators of lessons as there is often a strong subtext under the surface theme.

Book Making and Journal Writing

Handmade children's books are an ideal way to incorporate language arts into every area of the curriculum. Making and writing books capitalize on the rich language opportunities of each of the Learning Page Units. Children easily formulate ideas and are eager to record and share with others the wonderful things they are learning; they also will be able to read the books they write. By making their own books, from designing the cover and pages, to writing down their thoughts, ideas, poems, and responses, children will value both their craftsmanship and their work.

Along with daily reading, have a time set aside for daily journal writing. As a conclusion to each Lesson Plan that follows, give the students the topic and a little stimulation: how does it feel to be that monkey we saw this morning, swinging from tree to tree? You have five minutes, starting right now. Write!

Common Themes

You will notice many common, interdisciplinary themes appearing throughout the Learning Page Lesson Plans. These can be used and adapted in many teaching situations. Use them freely to help students make connections between something they are studying now and something they studied in the past. Reminding them how they already know this, or did this, generalizes and reinforces their learning.

