



THE
CHILDREN'S MUSEUM
AT LA HABRA

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Notice and Wonder

Overview

How can you turn a snail, worm, or roly-poly into an object of inquiry for a young learner? With this activity, you can help guide students in making observations of a living thing and asking relevant questions about its characteristics or behavior.

Processes/Skills

- Observing
- Comparing
- Recording
- Sharing
- Asking questions

Recommended For: Preschool-1st Grade

Time Required: 30 minutes prep and 30 minutes for the activity

Materials Required:

- A live animal to observe! Use a classroom pet or try collecting snails, worms, roly-poly bugs, or other invertebrates from your school grounds
- magnifying glasses
- drawing materials

Connecting to the Standards

- Language Arts
 - S.L. 1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *grade 1 topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
 - S.L. 3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.
 - SL.1.4. Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
 - SL.1.5. Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
- Science
 - LS1.A. Structure and Function : All organisms have external parts. Different animals use their body parts in different ways to see, hear, grasp objects, protect themselves, move from place to place, and seek, find, and take in food, water and air.

Activity Objectives

In this activity, students will:

1. practice observation as they examine a live animal.
2. demonstrate curiosity by asking questions about the animal.
3. share and record their observations and questions.

Preparation

1. Obtain the animal, and spend a little time observing the animal yourself. What are some things that you, as an adult, notice and wonder about it?
2. Notice whether the animal seems to be more active at certain times of day or under certain circumstances (such as just after being fed). If so, you may want to plan to do this activity during one of these more active times.
3. Place the animal(s) in a container that makes it easy to see.

Activity Part 1: Observe

1. Have students spend time looking at the animal. Ask them “What do you notice? What do you wonder?”
2. If it seems practical (depending on the size of the animal and how much it moves around), give each student a magnifying glass and show them how to use it to look closely at the animal.
3. Encourage students to remain focused on the animal for a period of time. The longer they watch, the more questions tend to come up.
4. Let students generate their own observations as much as possible. You can also prompt them to look closer with questions like:
 - What do you see?
 - Is it all one color? Or are different parts different colors? What colors do you see?
 - How many legs does it have? How many eyes does it have? (Or any other body part.)
 - Does it have any markings on it? What shapes or patterns do you see on it?
5. As students generate questions about the animal, try to keep yourself from answering right away. The natural impulse for adults is to respond immediately with an answer to every question. However, leaving the questions open for a while keeps the “wondering” process going for students, and will lead to more observations, more questions, and deeper thinking.
6. Be sure to share some of your own questions with your students. Students easily pick up on their teacher’s attitudes. Hearing you “wonder” about the animal will encourage their own curiosity.

Activity Part 2: Record

1. After students have spent some time looking, noticing, and wondering, provide drawing materials and ask students to draw the animal in their journals. Encourage them to include the

things they have noticed in their drawings to the best of their ability. For example, if they noticed the animal had six legs, they should show six legs in the drawing.

2. With an adult's help, have the students record at least one "I notice" statement and one "I wonder" statement in their journals.

Source:

California Academy of Sciences. <https://www.calacademy.org/educators/lesson-plans/notice-and-wonder>