



The Confederated Tribes
of Grand Ronde

ANIMALS

Early Childhood Education
Tribal Curriculum



Introduction

In this unit, students will explore the rich and diverse relationships between indigenous peoples and the natural world. From the significance of certain animals in traditional stories and ceremonies, to the ways in which Native Americans have lived in balance with local ecosystems for generations, children will gain a deeper understanding of the sacred connections between humans, animals, and the environment. Through hands-on activities, storytelling, and exploration of local wildlife, students will develop a respect for the natural world and an appreciation for the wisdom and traditions of Native American cultures.



Book: Sharing Our World: Animals of the Native Northwest Coast

Read Aloud: <https://youtu.be/nCmwW4Lc7Gs>

Literacy: Big Bear Circle

Skill: Letter Recognition & Visual Memory

Place a bin with a black bear face on top, filled with "Sharing Our World" Letter Cards. Students pass a stuffed bear around the circle singing "Big bear, big bear down by lake; I'm going to reach right in and see what letter you ate." The student holding the bear then pulls a letter and calls it out. After identifying the letter, students flip the card over and name the animal on the back.

Math: Counting Critters

Skill: Counting

Start the activity by showing the pictures of animals found in the Pacific Northwest. Ask the children to name the animals and make the corresponding animal sounds. Introduce the flashcards with numbers 1-10. Explain to the children that they will be practicing counting the animals they see. Hand out construction paper and markers or crayons. Ask the children to draw the animals they saw in the pictures. After they have finished drawing, instruct them to count how many animals they have drawn and write the number on their paper.

Science: Habitat

Read "Sharing Our World". Pause after each page to ask children if they can identify the animals on the page. Elicit responses from children and ask them to describe the animals' features, such as color, size, and shape. Introduce flashcards with the names of some animals found in the Pacific Northwest. Use the flashcards to describe the animals' habitat and what they eat. For example, the salmon live in the Pacific Ocean and migrate to rivers to lay eggs, while bears feed on salmon during the spawning season.

Make animal craft: provide children with a piece of construction paper, scissors, and glue. Ask children to choose an animal from the Pacific Northwest and draw it on the paper. Once it is drawn, children can cut it out and use their creativity to decorate it with the provided materials.

Book Suggestions: Who Am I? (t'alapas) by Cheyanne Heidt

[Access Link](#)

Literacy: Illustration Matching

Skill: Visual Literacy & Focus on Detail

Print images and text from "Who Am I? (t'alapas)" on separate sheets of paper. Students will match the text with the illustrations they go with.

Math: How Many Animals?

Skill: Number Recognition

Gather Pacific Northwest animal pictures/figurines and number labels. Place a sheet of paper or whiteboard in a visible area of the room. Show the children each animal and ask them to identify the animal. Talk about each animal's characteristics and behaviors. Next, ask the children to find the animal's corresponding number label and attach it to the animal. Once all animals have been labeled with their corresponding number, ask the children to place the animal figurines/pictures in front of the number on the paper/whiteboard. Begin the counting activity by pointing to the number 1 and asking the children which animal is labeled with number 1. Continue this process until each animal has been counted.

Art: Habitat

Discuss with the students the different elements of a coyote's habitat, such as trees, rocks, and grass. Encourage them to think about what it would be like to be a coyote living in the Pacific Northwest. Ask students to create a background for their artwork using various collage materials. They can use construction paper to create a mountain range, feathers to represent grass, and leaves to create trees. Using gray, black, and white paint, students can paint their coyote onto the background they have created. Encourage them to think about the coyote's unique characteristics, such as its pointed ears and bushy tail. Once the paint has dried, students can cut out their coyote and glue it onto the background.

Book: Who Is Hiding in the Woods?

[Purchase Link](#)

There are lots of creatures in the woods. Where are they hiding and what are they doing? In this innovative lift-the-flap book, little ones can pore over the beautiful collaged pages and explore under rocks and logs to learn lots of interesting facts about the forest. This is a perfect introduction to the outdoors.

Literacy: What's Next?

Skill: Predicting Sequence

Begin by reading the book "Who Is Hiding in the Woods?" to the children. Encourage them to participate by asking questions about the different animals they see and making predictions about what will happen next in the story. After reading the book, show the children pictures of the animals featured in the story. Ask them to help you put the animals in the correct order of appearance. Write the names of the animals on the whiteboard or chalkboard, in the same order they appear in the story. Divide the children into groups and give each group a set of animal pictures. Ask them to predict the order in which the animals will appear in the story. After each group has made their predictions, reread the book and see how close their predictions were.

Math: Where Do I Belong?

Skill: Sorting

Set up a sorting tray or container with the labels for each animal. Show the child pictures or figurines of the animals and name them. Ask the child to sort the animals into their correct categories based on where they can be found in the Pacific Northwest. Encourage the child to explain their reasoning for each animal's placement. Review with the child the animals and their appropriate categories once they have finished sorting.

Example Labels:

- Forest Animals
- Mountain Animals
- River Animals
- Coastal Animals

Sensory Bin: Animal Habitats

Forest Animals

- *Fill a plastic bin with dried leaves, twigs, and small logs*
- *Add plastic or stuffed animals such as black bears, raccoons, deer, and foxes*
- *Include a small cardboard box or paper tube for kids to use as a den for the animals*
- *Have magnifying glasses for kids to explore the forest floor and find hidden treasures*

Mountain Animals

- *Fill a bin with rocks of various sizes, pine cones, and dried moss*
- *Add plastic or stuffed animals such as mountain goats, elk, bighorn sheep, and wolves*
- *Include a small foam mountain for kids to climb and explore*
- *Have small plastic cups or jars for kids to collect rocks and moss to create their own mountain habitats*

River Animals

- *Fill a bin with blue dyed water or blue glass beads to represent a river*
- *Add plastic or stuffed animals such as salmon, otters, beavers, and eagles*
- *Include small rocks, pebbles, and sand to represent the riverbed*
- *Have nets or spoons for kids to "catch" pretend fish or river creatures*

Coastal Animals

- *Fill a bin with sand and shells to represent the beach*
 - *Add plastic or stuffed animals such as sea otters, seals, whales, and seagulls*
 - *Include small pebbles and driftwood for kids to create rocky areas on the beach*
 - *Have small buckets and shovels for kids to build sandcastles and explore the beach environment*
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Book: Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest

[Purchase Link](#)

Literacy: Picture Walk

Skill: Picturing Reading

Show students the illustrations from "Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest" by Gerald McDermott. As you flip through the pages, ask students questions about the pictures and what they see. Ask students to describe Raven and what he looks like. Point out key elements of the Pacific Northwest region such as the totem poles, cedar trees, and mountains. Ask students what they think Raven is doing in each picture and why.

Math: Finding Shapes

Skill: Shapes

Read aloud the book "Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest" by Gerald McDermott. As you go through the book, pause at various illustrations and ask the students if they notice any shapes in the design. Hold up the cut-out shapes one at a time and ask them to identify the shape in the illustration that matches. Encourage them to name the shape as well. After reading the book, give each student a piece of paper and ask them to draw a picture of Raven and the shapes they noticed in the book. Encourage them to be creative and use different colors for each shape.

Art

Read "Raven: A Trickster Tale from the Pacific Northwest" by Gerald McDermott aloud to the class, pointing out the different illustrations of Raven throughout the book. After reading the story, have the students create their own Raven-inspired artwork. Pass out the construction paper and encourage the students to use blue and white paper to create a background representing the sky and clouds. Then, cut out black paper shapes to make the outline of Raven's body. Next, have the students use orange paper to create Raven's beak and feet, as well as any other details they want to add, such as feathers or talons. If desired, students can also use googly eyes to give their Raven some personality.

Book Suggestion: Three Bears of the Pacific Northwest

[Purchase Link](#)

Literacy: Phonics Baskets

Skill: Skill: Visual Discrimination (b, d, or p?)

Find small toys, items, and pictures that begin with the letter on each of the baskets, and have your students sort the items into each basket.

Math: What's the Same? What's Different?

Skill: Comparing

Show the students pictures of different animals that can be found in the Pacific Northwest. You can print out pictures or use the animals in

"Three Bears of the Pacific Northwest". Ask the students to identify each animal and name some things they know about them. Choose two animals that are different from each other, such as a eagle and whale. Draw a large Venn diagram on the paper or the whiteboard, and write the names of the animals at the top of each circle. Ask the students to think about what is the same and what is different about the two animals. You can give them some prompts, such as:

- What kind of food do they eat?
- Where do they live?
- What color are they?
- How big are they?
- Are they dangerous to humans?

Ask the children to identify the things that are the same about the two animals, and write them in the middle of the Venn diagram where the circles overlap. Then, ask them to identify the things that are different about the two animals, and write them outside the circles. Repeat the activity with different pairs of animals, encouraging the children to think about what makes each animal unique.

Sensory Bin: Habitats (continued)

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Additional Resources

Inquiry-Based Activities

Animal Hunt

Take the children on an animal hunt around the classroom or playground. Hide pictures or stuffed animals of animals found in the Pacific Northwest and have the children find them. Once they find one, encourage them to bring it back to a central location and talk about what they found. Ask questions such as, "What animal is this?" "Where do you think it lives?" "What does it eat?" "What does it sound like?"

Animal Tracks

Provide the children with animal tracks and magnifying glasses or binoculars. Ask them to study the tracks and figure out what animal left them. Talk about what clues they used to solve the mystery. Ask questions such as, "What do you notice about the size of these tracks?" "Are there any claw marks in the tracks or just paw prints?" "Where do you think this animal was going?"

Map Exploration

Show the children a map of the Pacific Northwest and help them locate where they are. Point out areas where different types of animals live. Discuss how animals adapt to their environment and how some animals migrate. Encourage the children to use their imagination and pretend to be an animal exploring its habitat.

Animal Art

Provide the children with paper and crayons or markers. Ask them to draw a picture of their favorite animal they learned about today. As they draw, ask them to share what they know about the animal. Ask questions such as, "What color is your animal?" "What does it like to eat?" "What sound does it make?"

Materials and Links

["Sharing Our World" Letter Cards](#)

[Animal Tracks Cards](#)

Drawing Paper

Paint

["Who Am I? \(t'alapas\)" Pages](#)

Small toys/items that start with (b) (d)(p)

Crayons/Pencils

Magnifying Glass

["Who is Hiding in the Woods?" Animal Cards](#)

Stuffed Animals/Figurines

Scissors

Map of the Pacific Northwest

[Animals of the PNW Photo Cards](#)

Shape Cut-Outs

Construction Paper

Suggested Additional Materials

[Sounds of The Pacific Northwest: A Children's Book Celebrating the Animals of the PNW \(Anna Hill\)](#)



Learn Chinuk Wawa Video "chxi-tənəs-wawa: Animals"



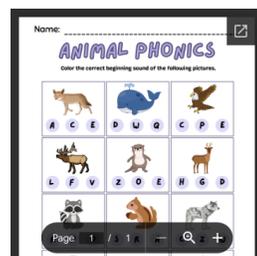
Culture as Health - May 29th Elk Kids Culture Circle



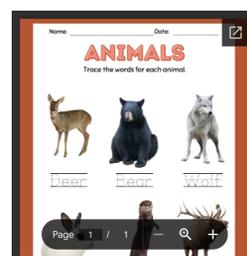
Culture as Health - May 19th Salmon Kids Culture Circle



Animal Tracks with the Kimsey's!



PNW Animal Names Phonics Worksheet for Preschool



PNW Animals Tracing Worksheet for Preschool

Sharing Our World Letters:

(T) Thunderbird/Turtle

(W) Wolf/Whale

(S) Salmon

(F) Frog

(B) Beaver/Butterfly

(O) Owls/Otters/Octopus

(R) Raven

(E) Eagle

(H) Hummingbird

Teacher Preparation Suggestions

- Shape Cut-Outs
- Print/Cut Animal Tracks Cards (for each student/small groups)
- Print/Cut Animals of the PNW Cards (for each student/small groups)
- Print "Who Am I? (t'alapas)" Pages
- Print/Cut "Sharing Our World" Letter Cards
- Print/Cut "Who is Hiding in the Woods?" Animal Cards