

Animal Time!

Age Group: Daisys

You can choose to do all or just one or two of the animal-related activities listed here. Take the liberty to adjust any activities to suit the attitude and level of your girls.

Activity 1: Animal Cookies (for animals only!)

Materials: All ingredients listed below for dough, cookie cutters (preferably animal shaped but not required)

Each girl will get to use animal cookie cutters to make cool and interesting shapes out of the dog biscuit dough. Please contact your local animal shelter to ensure that they can use these treats. If they cannot, substitute Sugar Cookie dough and the girls can enjoy the treats.



Basic Yeast Dog Treats

This very basic dog treat contains whole grain and all-purpose flour as well as cornmeal. The flavoring comes from chicken or beef broth so the better the quality the better the flavor. Because we use yeast we get a nice, tall puffy treat.



INGREDIENTS

3 1/2 cup all-purpose (or unbleached) flour
2 cup whole wheat flour
1 cup cornmeal
1/2 cup skim milk powder
1 tablespoon (or 1 package) dry yeast
3 1/2 cups lukewarm chicken or meat broth (about 2- 15oz cans)
1 egg beaten with about 2 tablespoons water (for egg wash)

INSTRUCTIONS Preheat your oven to 350 degrees. Grease cookie sheets.

Mix together all dry ingredients.

Dissolve the yeast in the lukewarm chicken or meat broth. Let yeast broth mixture set 10 min. Then stir in flour mixture until a soft dough is formed. If the dough is too sticky you can add more flour.

Roll resulting dough out 1/4" thick. Cut dog biscuit shapes from dough. Put scraps back in bowl and re-roll out until all dough is used.

Brush biscuits with egg wash. Bake on greased cookie sheets at 300* for 45 min. Then turn off oven and leave in overnight to finish hardening.

Makes 60 medium-sized biscuits*

*Recipe Note

We used 3" medium dog-bone cookie cutters as well as a few 3" dog paws and fire hydrants. We made about 4 dozen treats. Additionally, we did not use the egg wash in the batch we photographed.

Storing Dog Treats

In general you should store dog treats the same way you would homemade people cookies. That being said, there are two main variables that determine storage time - the amount and type of fat in the recipe and your local weather conditions. If your recipe uses fats such as butter, or meat bits or juices then it will be more prone to rancidity than a recipe that uses some vegetable oil or shortening. Your treats may mold or spoil much faster in humid or very hot climates.

Refrigeration and Freezing - Refrigeration will prolong the life of more fragile dog treats. Make sure to store in a tightly sealed container or zip lock bag. You can also freeze most treats in zip lock freezer bags. Allow to thaw completely before use.

Activity II: Fashion a Fish (15 minutes)

Materials: paper, marker/crayons

In this activity girls are a marine biologist who has discovered a new species of fish. This fish lives in a unique environment that has never been seen before. The girls get to design their own fish to live in this new cool place! Their fish must be able to find food and live happily.

Encourage the girls to name their fish, and give two reasons as to why it is unique. Have each girl share her fish and say how they believe it could survive in its environment.

Background information for leaders: Aquatic animals are the product of countless adaptations over long periods of time. These adaptations, for the most part, are features that increase the animals' likelihood of surviving in their habitat. When a habitat changes, either slowly or catastrophically, the species of animals with adaptations that allow them many options are the ones most likely to survive. Some species have adapted to such a narrow range of habitat conditions that they are extremely vulnerable to change. They are over-specialized and are usually more susceptible than other animals to death or extinction.

As these adaptations become part of the fish's design, the fish becomes better suited to the habitat in which it lives. Because of the variety of conditions within each habitat, many different fish can live together and flourish.

Activity III Sea Star Awards (25 minutes)

Materials: cardboard, pencil, paper fasteners, yellow paint, paintbrush, white glue, sand, scissors, a small bowl and spoon to mix in, newspaper to work in

Each girl will get to make their own Sea Star, witness how Sea Stars can lose and re-grow an arm, and award a girl with a positive value.

1. Using a marker, draw the shape of a sea star on cardboard. Cut the shape out. Shape and Numbers/Counting: Have the children count out loud with you the number of arms on the starfish. Point to the fact that it is called a starfish or sea star because it is shaped like a star. Cut one arm off of the sea star.
2. Using a paper fastener, re-attach the arm you just removed. The arm should be able to swing behind the sea star so that it cannot be seen, then swing back out to allow the sea star to "grow" a new arm.
3. Mix a small amount of white glue with some yellow paint. Paint the sea star and immediately sprinkle it with the sand to give it a rough texture. Let the paint dry completely and then have the girls feel and describe the sea star (this is what one actually feels like!)

4. Once dry, have each girl write one positive quality on their star (can be on the back or front). Have each girl award their star to another girl who they feel exhibits that quality. Each girl should have one sea star at the end of the activity.

Background information for volunteers: The sea star is also called a starfish and is a sea animal with a flat body and five or more arms. Sea stars live in shallow parts of the ocean. They are carnivores that eat clams and other mollusks.

The starfish is shaped like a star. A star shape is a design with five or more points that emerge from a center.

Activity IV: Acting Like Animals (25 minutes)

Materials: animals cards, whiteboard/flipchart, index cards

1. Shows the girls several photos of different kinds of animals. Ask them which animals are insects? Reptiles? How can they tell them apart (fins, gills, webbed feet, etc)
2. On a board/flipchart, write the word "animal" at the top and ask the girls to create a list of animals they know.
3. Tell the group they are playing animal charades, using the animals they just listed. Have the girls write one animal they mentioned on one side of an index card, on the other have them draw a picture of the animal or list characteristics of the animals (eats acorns, makes loud noises, has brown fur, etc). Shuffle the cards, and have each girl take a card and act out her animal in front of the group. The actor can either act out the name of the animal or how it acts. If the group has a hard time guessing, allow the actor to make noise and/or give the group four options (one of which is the correct answer) from which to choose.
4. After an animal is guessed, ask the group what else they know about the animal. If there are characteristics on the index card have the actor share those with the group.

Background information for volunteers: In "Acting Like Animals" girls will learn and attempt to act out various characteristics of different animals. It is not necessary for them to understand the entire classification system, but it can be helpful to know the difference between animals groups, as follows:

Insects: adults have three pairs of legs, bodies segmented into three parts (head, thorax, and abdomen) and they usually have two pairs of wings.

Spiders: have a body divided into two parts, eight legs, two fangs, and two feelers

Reptiles: do not produce their own body heat so are cold-blooded, have a backbone, and usually lay eggs, are covered by scales or horny plates, and use lungs to breathe.

Amphibians: are cold-blooded with smooth skin, generally hatch from an egg, have gills when young but eventually develop air-breathing lungs

Birds: produce their own body heat, lay eggs, covered with feathers and forelimbs that serve as wings

Mammals: warm-blooded vertebrates (have a back bone), females produce milk, have hair, and give birth to live young (except for the platypus).

Activity V: Local Wildlife (15 minutes)

Materials: pictures of animals that can be found in local ecosystems (variety of mammals, herbivores, insects, etc.)

1. Before beginning the activity draw or paste pictures of different animals on separate pieces of construction paper. Create two or three copies of each picture, so that there are enough for girls to form groups of two or three by animal (example- if you have 15 girls, find five animals and make three copies of each animal).
2. Ask the girls what they know about local wildlife. What have they seen in their backyard? At the local park? What is wildlife and what do they eat? What eats them?
3. Hand out the pictures, asking the girls to place theirs face down so that no one else can discover the identity of their animal. Tell them to wander around the group and guess each other animals, but they can ask and answer only “yes” or “no” questions.

Samples: Do you eat plants?

Are you red?

They will soon discover that some of them have the same animal. Have them form groups according to their animal. Have each group fill out the “My Animal Is” worksheet (below).

4. Have each group present their animal and worksheet to the rest of the group.

Background information for volunteers: Each animal has a habitat in which it lives, and is part of a greater picture called an ecosystem. Each animal fits into an ecosystem in a different ways and learning about local wildlife and how they fit into the local ecosystem will the girls understand the importance of wildlife in their everyday life. It will also help them format questions about local species.

MY ANIMAL IS:

I HAVE SEEN IT:

IT EATS:

ONE COOL THING ABOUT IT IS:

IT LOOKS LIKE: