

Woodland Park Zoo
Animal Behavior Inquiry
Grades K-5



In this activity, students will work in groups or individually to answer a question using inquiry skills. They will ask their own question (using a fill in the blank method) and use observation skills to answer that question.

Materials to bring with you to the zoo: Animals Behavior Inquiry activity sheet (both sides), pencils, clipboard or stiff cardboard, something to keep time (will need seconds)

Pre-visit preparation in the classroom:

- Practice: It is a good idea to practice observation techniques and then turning those observations in to questions using the fill-in-the-blank tool. You can use other kids on the playground, something outdoors, a classroom pet, a video etc.
- Decide if you will have the students working individually or separately. Make sure each group or individual has a timing device for when they get to the zoo.

At the zoo:

- Let chaperones know that at some point they will need to stop at a particular exhibit and help their students complete the Animal Observation Inquiry activity sheet
- Not all students need to watch the same animals or ask the same questions within the group. In fact having a variety of questions means your class will collect more information which you can interpret as a group back in the classroom!

Post-visit wrap-up in the classroom:

- Have your students present their findings to the whole class.
- Discussion: What more do we know about the animals at the zoo? What more do you want to know? How could we use this model of questioning in other ways?

Animal Behavior Inquiry

Names: _____



1. Find an animal you want to learn more about. You'll need to focus on one individual animal for this study.

(For example if you want to study penguins pick a specific penguin to watch)

2. Fill in the question with what you want to learn.

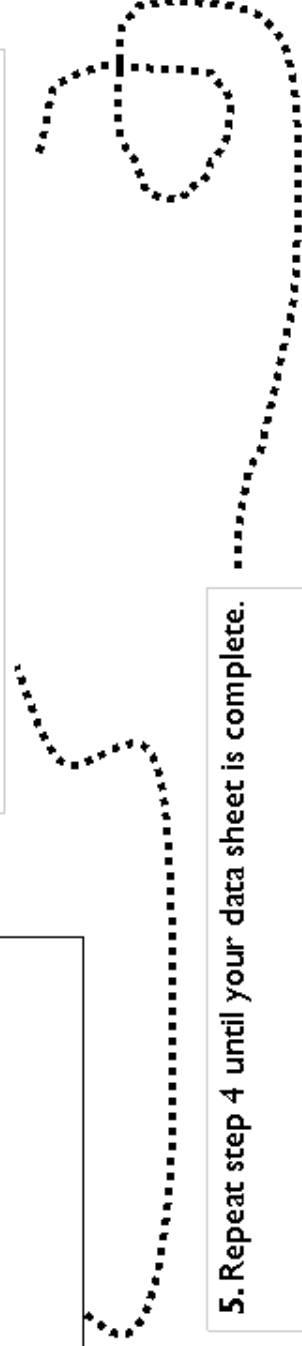
"Do _____ spend more time _____ or _____"
(Animal) (Place or Action) (Opposite place or action)



3. Make a prediction. What do you think the answer to your question will be?

I think...

4. Time to collect your data! Every 30 seconds you are going to mark what your animal is doing or where it is located. Use the back of this sheet to record your animal's location or action.



5. Repeat step 4 until your data sheet is complete.

What other things could you compare about this animal?

What other tools could help you answer your question?

Why do you think the animal was acting that way?

Do you think other similar animals would act the same way?

What do your results tell you about the animal in the wild?

If you did this again, what would you do differently?

Could things like weather or time of day affect your results? What else would?

What other questions came up?

Date: _____
Time: _____
Weather: _____

Instructions

1. Use the same place or action from the front to fill in the spaces above the data table.
2. Keep a close eye on your individual animal.
3. Every 30 seconds put a mark in the correct box.
4. After the 5 minutes total each column
5. Write out your conclusion and then try to answer the questions found around the sides of the paper.
6. If you want to do this again with another animal just use a different symbol in the box!

Place or Action Opposite
Place or Action

30 sec		
1 min		
1 min 30 sec		
2 min		
2 min 30 sec		
3 min		
3 min 30 sec		
4 min		
4 min 30 sec		
5 min		
TOTAL		

Conclusion

The _____ spent more time...
(Animal)