



FOREST ANIMALS

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Age of participants: 5-7 years old

Time required to carry out activities: 2 hours

Overall objectives:

- To build the child's awareness of nature
- To create a positive image of the natural world
- To enhance creativity and teamwork

Specific objectives:

- Teaching participants about the species characteristics of animals found in European forests
- Developing teamwork skills through cooperation and mutual encouragement.
- Building fine motor skills through art projects

Methods:

- physical activities
- artwork

Keywords:

Animals, forest, wildlife

Materials:

- music player
- books, poems, songs about the animals that appear in the tasks
- cards with animals and their tracks
- forest scenery boards for each participant
- cut-out animals from the forest animals board
- a box wrapped multiple times alternately in bags and brown/gift paper
- the box contains a selection of art supplies (paints/modeling clay/colourful pipe cleaners...)





- groats and peas mixed in a large bowl or several smaller bowls
- large tweezers - one per two participants
- a book about forest animals and their adventures

COURSE

1. INTRODUCTION (10 min)

All participants are given a forest scenery board. The facilitator asks what is missing from such a landscape. Participants arrive at the answer through trial and error, discovering that there are no animals there.

The facilitator asks what animals can be found in the forest.

Numerous answers are given; they are written down on the board with a marker. The facilitator tries to group the answers into animal kingdoms: mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, fish. The facilitator proposes to the participants to look for different animals, tries to introduce the feeling of a shared adventure and weaves the presentation of information in such a way that the children feel they are going on a forest expedition.

Participants will now take part in eight games dedicated to different animals. Any animals can be selected for this purpose. Below you will find suggested games for the following species: fox, stork, wolf, wild boar, woodpecker, roe deer, hare, owl.

Before each new task, it is worth reading a passage from a book, a poem, or playing a song about the animal – this guides participants toward the information about which animal will be discussed next.

After each task, participants are given a cut-out drawing of an animal to paste onto their board.

2. FOX (15 min)

After the participants have guessed that the task will be about the fox, the facilitator asks what characteristics the animal is associated with. Foxes are clever and fast, and they can sneak around.

Participants sit in a circle. In the first round, the facilitator is a fox looking for a burrow. They walk around the circle with the music on. When the music stops, the facilitator touches the arm of the person they are standing next to, and runs round the whole circle. The person who was touched chases the facilitator; it creates a race for the vacant seat. Whoever joins quicker sits down, whoever comes second becomes the new fox.

The game is repeated as many times as there are willing participants to play the role of the fox. When the game ends, everyone receives a picture of a fox.



3. WOLF (10 min)

After the participants have guessed that the task will be about the wolf, the facilitator asks what characteristics the animal is associated with. Wolves live in packs, they are smart hunters.

Participants are given cards with animals and their tracks; these can also be, in a simpler version, cards of animals and their homes. The task is to match the animals and their tracks. When all the tracks are correctly connected, participants receive a picture of a wolf.

4. HARE (10 min)

After the participants have guessed that the task will be about the hare, the facilitator asks what characteristics the animal is associated with. Hares are fast and skittish; they live in fields.

An obstacle course is set up in front of the participants - a slalom, balance beam run, crossing over and going under, jumping; the more interesting the obstacles and the more varied the route, the better.

Like a hare, each participant has an obstacle course to follow. The rest of the participants cheer, and when a participant reaches the end (or halfway along the route, to make it more dynamic), another participant starts the run.

5. WILD BOAR (15 min)

After the participants have guessed that the task will be about the wild boar, the facilitator asks what characteristics the animal is associated with. Wild boars are strong; they can sometimes be threatening; they like to dig in the ground.

Participants sit in a circle and start passing around the package – a box wrapped many times. With the help of a rhyme or music that can be turned off, a person is designated to remove the next layer of the wrapping; when the rhyme or music ends, the person who is holding the package removes the top layer. The game ends when the group unwraps the box.

Together, they open the box containing art materials, which they need to complete the next task.

6. DEER (25 min)

After the participants have guessed that the task will be about the deer, the facilitator asks what characteristics the animal is associated with. Deer are agile, skittish and herbivorous. Using the contents of the box that has been unpacked, participants create artwork: bouquets. These can be:

- large-format paintings
- works created with crepe paper
- works created with modeling clay
- works created with colourful pipe cleaners

and other.

The works are a memento of the activity for the children, which they can take home.





7. STORK (10 min)

After the participants have guessed that the task will be about the stork, the facilitator asks what characteristics the animal is associated with. Storks are frequent visitors to fields, often standing still on one leg, and they migrate to warm countries for the winter.

In groups of three, participants take a run to the end of the room on one leg and return, jumping on the other. Each group is cheered on by the rest of the participants. The run is repeated until all participants have had a chance to take part.

8. WOODPECKER (10 min)

After the participants have guessed that the task will be about the woodpecker, the facilitator asks what characteristics the animal is associated with. Woodpeckers are the doctors of trees; they peck at the bark to extract the pests they feed on.

Participants receive beans mixed with groats. They have a time limit (e.g. 5 minutes) to remove the beans from the groats with tweezers and transfer them to another container. There is one pair of tweezers per pair; children need to communicate and exchange the tool.

9. SUMMARY (20 min)

The facilitator encourages participants to glue the animal pictures they have been given on their forest scenery boards.

The facilitator asks everyone to sit in a circle and reads a chosen book that tells about forest animals and their adventures.