Animal Crackers

Unit Overview

by Mary Erickson, Ph.D., with Arizona artist and art teacher Jasen Evoy

This unit is a series of lesson plans designed in conjunction with the Animal Crackers exhibition at the Gallery at Tempe Center for the Arts.

Preview the Animal Crackers exhibition PowerPoint

Themes

- Theme in Life: Throughout human existence people have lived around and with animals.
- Theme in Art: Many artists have chosen animals as their subject matter.

Key Questions

Lessons approach the themes through three key questions.

and SEEK IDEAS
1. How can I get ideas for my art from the natural world?

and MAKE CHOICES
2. How are complex shapes and forms made up of smaller, simpler shapes and forms?

and SET GOALS
3. How can I transform a traditional, functional object into a lively new one? (secondary only)

Community Connections

The diversity of natural environments in the Southwest is home to a great variety of animals from mountain sheep in the high country to Gila monsters in the low desert. Coyotes, roadrunners, cactus wrens, rattlesnakes, scorpions, geckos and pronghorns not only survive but thrive in Arizona's wild places. Other animals, like horses, cows, greyhounds, cats and goldfish live here only because of their relationships with people.

Lessons

Lesson One: Animals All Around (pdf)
Lesson Two: Exploring Relationships between Animals and People at the TCA (pdf)
Lesson Three: Simply Animals: Clay (pdf) (secondary)
Alternative Lesson Three: Simply Animals: Paper (pdf) (secondary)
Four: Simple Animal Shapes (pdf) (elementary)

Resources
Preview of Animal Crackers Exhibition PowerPoint
Animals All Around PowerPoint
Exploring Relationships between Animals and People at the TCA (pdf)
Simply Animals: Clay PowerPoint (secondary)
Self Evaluation: Animal Project (pdf)
Simply Animals: Paper PowerPoint (secondary)
Simple Animal Shapes PowerPoint (elementary)
Questor Questions: Animals at Home & on the Road (pdf)

Additional Website Resource
Phoenix Zoo

Supplies
Student access to the internet and a printer or, alternatively, a collection of printed images of animals in books, magazines or Internet printouts.

SECONDARY CLAY PROJECT
Clay facilities (clay, clay tools, kiln, glazes, etc.)
Sketch paper and pencils

SECONDARY PAPER PROJECT
Undecorated paper or cardboard containers (small boxes, shopping bags, paper cups, cupcake cups, etc.)
Scissors
Transparent Tape
Sketch paper and pencils

ELEMENTARY PAPER PROJECT
Collection of printed images of animals in books, magazines, or Internet printouts
Pencils or markers
Construction Paper
Glue

MASK PROJECT OPTION
Paper masks or small paper plates with cut-out eye holes
Self-adhesive Foamie sheets or pre-cut shapes (OPTIONAL)

Credits
Animal Vessels by Jasen Evoy' advanced ceramics students at Marcos di Niza High School
Photography by Mary Erickson, Nancy Egly, Kathy David and Faith Clover

Estimated Time
Pre-visit Lesson = 20-60 minutes
TCA Visit Lesson = Field Trip
Secondary Post-visit Lesson = 500-800 minutes
Elementary Post-visit Lesson = 50-100 minutes