

Title: Guess the Mammal

Objective: Ask *yes* or *no* questions to determine an unknown mammal

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: Pictures of mammals or stuffed mammals which are hidden in a box or out of sight (only one is needed at a time)

Activity

Theme: Mammals

Topic: Inquiry

Suggested Grade Level: K-2

Indoors or Outdoors: Either

Directions:

1. Have the students sit in a circle and place a box in the middle of the circle.
2. Tell students there is a picture of a mammal (or a stuffed mammal) inside of the box. They are to see if they can guess what it is by the time each person in the circle has asked a yes or no question.
3. Have the students go around one at a time and ask their question. Answer it with a yes or no. Encourage no repeats for questions which will take careful listening.
4. If a student thinks they know the animal, they can guess—"Is it a ...?" If they are correct, have another picture that you can put in the box and let that student answer the questions posed by the other students.

Discussion Questions:

1. Knowing it was a mammal in the box, what questions do we know we didn't need to ask? *Such as does it have hair or fur? Discuss strategies for questions that promote critical thinking and narrow possibilities. (Is it smaller than a house cat? Etc.)*
2. Would it be easier to answer questions that did not have a yes or no answer? Explain.
3. What kinds of questions were the most helpful? *Such as, "can we see them outside in the winter?"*
4. Could we have put a picture of a person in the box? Explain why/why not?

Science and Engineering Practices:

1. Asking questions (science).

Crosscutting Concepts:

6. Structure and function.

Disciplinary Core Idea:

Life Sciences: LS 3: Heredity: Inheritance and variation of traits.

Background Information:

- Classifying is grouping things according to common characteristics.
- One group of vertebrate animals is called mammals.
- Mammals are animals that have hair (fur), are warm-blooded, give live birth, and produce milk for their young.
- There are about 4,000 kinds of mammals.
- A baby mammal closely resembles, but may not be identical, to its parents.

Additional Resources:

- National Geographic Kids (mammals) <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals>
- *Marvelous Mammals* (Science Vocabulary Readers) by Lydia Carlin
- *What If You Had Animal Hair?* by Sandra Markle

Correlates with:

Greeting - Where's My Baby? (p. 38)

Interdisciplinary Lesson - Draw a Mammal (p. 93)