

Title: Walk This Way

Objective: Experience walking as Minnesota mammals

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials Needed: Sixteen 6” sized ovals: 8 gray and 8 white - Walk this Way prints (found at jeffersfoundation.org)

Activity

Theme: Mammals

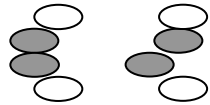
Topic: Tracks

Suggested Grade Level: 2-5

Indoors or Outdoors: Outdoors

Directions:

1. Using the background information, introduce the different walking patterns of Minnesota mammals.
2. Place ovals in the pattern of a walking pattern and have students try to walk using arms and legs as front and hind legs of a mammal. The gray ovals represent the front feet and the white ovals represent the hind feet.



Galloper Tracks



Perfect Walker Tracks



Bounder Tracks



Waddler Tracks

3. Using the background information about body characteristics ask students to make predictions about which animals “walk this way” for each of the four walking patterns.

Extension:

Go on a walk and look for tracks on your school grounds, nearby park, or neighborhood and try to identify what animals live in your community.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did it feel to move as a Galloper? Perfect Walker? Bounder? Waddler? (Promote measurable descriptive words in answers)
2. Why are there so many different ways in which mammals move?
3. What Minnesota mammals have an easier time walking in the deep snow? Explain.

Science and Engineering Practices:

1. Asking questions (Science); 4. Analyzing and interpreting data; 7. Engaging in argument from evidence.

Crosscutting Concepts:

1. Patterns; 2. Cause and effect: mechanisms and explanation; 6. Structure and Function.

Disciplinary Core Ideas:

Life Sciences: LS 1: From molecules to organisms: Structure and processes; LS 4: Biological Evolution: Unity and diversity.

Background Information:

- **Perfect Walkers** have long legs and sleek bodies. Their tracks and trails tend to be in a line. Their hind foot often lands where their front foot stepped. Perfect walkers include: deer, fox, coyotes and bobcats.
- **Waddlers** tend to have short legs and round bodies. Their feet land side by side rather than on top of each other. Waddlers include: skunk, beaver, raccoon and opossum.
- **Bounders** tend to have short legs and long, sleek bodies. Their back feet land where their front feet stepped as they are bounding. Bounders include: Weasels, mink, and river otters.
- **Gallopers** tend to have short legs, large thighs and round bodies. When they gallop their two front feet appear next to or on top of each other behind the larger hind feet. Gallopers include: rabbits, squirrels, mice and shrews.

Some hints for identifying tracks are:

- Know the habitat. Know what animals live in the place you are looking and could possibly be out leaving tracks.
- Narrow the possibilities. Look first at the type of walker. Then, based on the track size, determine what animal was present.
- Search for other signs to help identify an animal track including scat, eat marks, food cache, or territory markings.

Additional Resources:

- *Tracks in the Wild* by Betsy Bowen
- *Animal Tracks of Minnesota and Wisconsin* by Ian Sheldon and Tamara Eder

Correlates with:

Greeting - Whose Track is That? (p. 39)

Interdisciplinary Lesson - Comparing Mammal Movements (p. 87)

