

Calling All Canids! Pre Activity

Program at Nature Station: Canine Communication

Grade Level: 3rd – 6th

Program Length:

Prep time: none

Activity time: varied

Group size: Variable

Setting: Classroom

Vocabulary:

- canine: any member of the *Canidae*, or dog family, including the wolves, jackals, hyenas, coyotes, foxes and domestic dogs

Materials:

- Canine chart (attached)
- Field guides to mammals
- Other books and/or magazines on canines available in your library

Background Information:

People are often very confused when they try to distinguish among wolves, coyotes, and dogs. Wolves and coyotes are often blamed for the depredations of feral dogs that roam in packs and kill livestock. While most members of the dog family are similar in shape, there are differences in size, color, and behavior that make separating them a fairly easy task...with little patience.

Procedure:

1. Divide the class into six groups.
2. Using the chart provided assign each group a specific canine.
3. Have the students study the chart and look up information about the size, weight, shape, and appearance of their particular species.
4. Students should also look for any other information they can find about their canine.
5. They should use the information they have located to then construct a report about their canine and later present it to their class.

Extension: Make a collage or exhibit on your classroom bulletin board about the six canines. Invite other classes into your classroom to view the exhibit and have the various groups give their presentations again.

Assessment or Evaluation:

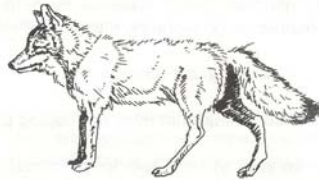
Use the canid chart to test the students about their knowledge in recognizing the different members of the dog family. You could divide the class into teams and make a game out of it.

Source:

GETTING TO KNOW THE WOLF: A Teacher's Guide to the "Wolf Pac" Materials. A School Outreach Project of the National Park Service. Written by Joseph W. Zarki. Illustrated by Ellen Meloy. 1989.



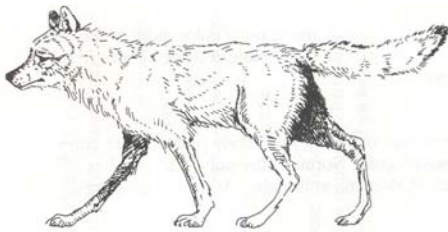
Red fox



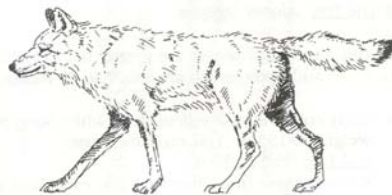
Gray fox



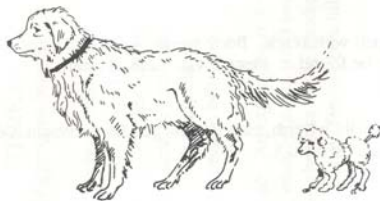
Coyote



Gray wolf



Red wolf



Dog (golden retriever, toy poodle)