

Sound Off Activity



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Time: 20 minutes

Introduction

Have students imagine that they are animals with poor vision or are active at night. What senses would you use? (*hearing, smelling*). How would you communicate? (*sound*). The ability to communicate is a very important one. Can you name some animals that communicate with sound? (*crickets chirp, frogs ribbet, whales sing, wolves howl, crows caw, etc.*). What do you think these calls communicate? Frogs and crickets call during mating; Crows call often as an alarm signal triggered by the sighting of a predator; the rattlesnakes rattle warns possible predators to stay away; a wolf's howl may communicate the location of the pack's members or that a prey has been found.

Directions

1. Explain to students that they are going to pretend to be animals that communicate by sound. They will be wearing masks so they will have to rely on their sense of hearing. Most of the participants will be — “prey” but one or two people will be — “predators”. Discuss the meaning of predator and prey.

A **Predator** is an animal that captures and eats other animals.

A **Prey** is an animal that predators eat.

2. Explain that every prey will have a secret partner, who is the same animal. The object of the game is for the prey to make their animal sound and find their partner before being caught by a predator.
3. Pass out masks. If none are available, students can use one hand to cover their eyes. Point out the boundaries of the game zone and select areas along the edge to serve as CAPTURED and SAFE areas. Go over the rules with the group:
 - a. Everyone may move freely, but no running is allowed!
 - b. No peeking!
 - c. If the predator tags you, take off your mask and move to the captured area.
 - d. Predators must be sure the prey knows that they have been tagged.
4. Prey that successfully find their secret partners should take off their masks and go to the SAFE area to watch the rest of the game.



5. Have students form a large circle and pass out animal cards with animal calls. Give one or two students a — “predator” card.
6. When everyone has their mask on, (or eyes covered) shout — “Sound Off!” to start the first game.

Play a couple rounds if time permits.

Discussion

- Was it difficult/easy to find your partner using only your hearing? Why?
- What two things does communication involve to be effective? *Giving and receiving of information.*
- What could you do to communicate more effectively? *Call less frequently, so you can hear the other person. Set a pattern of calls that could be more easily identified by the other person.*
- Was it difficult/easy for the predator to locate his prey? Why?
- What methods did the predator use to locate and catch his prey?
- What other ways do animals communicate without using sound? (*freezing, tail flash, body gesture, odor, mimicry/warning colors*)

Communication whether by sound or another method, is an important adaptation that helps animals survive. It can help them avoid being eaten by another animal, it can help them to find prey, and it can help them to reproduce by establishing territory, finding a mate, and protecting young.

