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Learn About Dogs and Other Animals!

Activity Description

Online Activity: The activities include interesting information about different breeds of dog and what people bred them to help them with, as well as interesting information about some of the animals that live in or near water. There is also a related quiz.

Further Reading: **WHO AM I?**

by

Charlotte Sebag-Montefiore

Parental involvement: This is recommended

Minimum age: 4. No maximum age.

Time: 1 hour.

Specified learning outcomes:

1. Increased knowledge of the functions that people bred dogs for including guarding, hunting, rounding up animals, pulling sledges, and calming down horses.
2. Increased knowledge of animals living in or near water including whales, lobsters, crocodiles, cormorants, flamingos, starfishes and seahorses.

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HAVE FUN AND LEARN ABOUT DOGS!

Dogs are not descended from modern wolves but they are related. You can tell a dog from a wolf by its footprints: the footprints of a wolf are in a straight line –the wolf puts its hind paws in the footprints of the front paws. However, the footprints of a dog are not in a straight line.



Humans have bred dogs to help them in all sorts of ways for thousands of years.

- Some dogs were bred to help round up sheep. Sometimes these are just called sheepdogs, but well-known breeds are Welsh corgis, German shepherds, and border collies.



- Some dogs were bred to work as guard dogs, like the Doberman pinscher, and the rottweiler. These dogs do not attack familiar people, but watch out for and guard against unwanted people or animals.



- Some dogs were bred to help as hunting dogs like retrievers, pointers, cocker spaniels and dachsunds.



- Some dogs were bred to run with their friends like huskies: they are used to pull sleds.



- Some dogs had a highly specialized function: in the past, Dalmatians worked with firemen, not only to warn people to get out of the way of horse drawn carriages, but to calm down the horses as the carriage got closer to the fire.



NOW LEARN ABOUT SOME ANIMALS LIVING IN OR AROUND THE SEA OR WATER

There are a huge range and number of animals, fish and birds living around the sea or water. I tried to choose a very few that show what a range and variety of animal life is in this category.

- Whales: all the whales are mammals. A favourite is the humpback whale. It is a great jumper, and whale watchers love watching it jump out of the water. It is a traveller, and covers about 16,000



miles a year. With a knobby head, it sprays water high in the air. Humpback whales don't attack or eat people and can mix with dolphins. Once you have heard one sing, you will never forget it!

- Crocodiles: This well-known reptile family is famous for its hunting skills and tears. People used to think that crocodiles cried when they ate their victim. In fact, they cry to lubricate their eyes, especially when they have been out of water for a long time. Known for their huge mouth, and fearsome teeth (they grow new ones if they need to), the females are loving mothers! They carry their babies, once hatched, to the water, and respond very quickly if a baby croc calls in distress. As well as being terrific swimmers, they can climb, and run at a speed of between 15-22 mph.



- Lobsters: crustaceans, lobsters come in a range of colours, and co-ordinate their 10 legs (which is quite a task). Their brain has some similarities with ours, as the same pain killers work on them and on us! Something else which may seem strange to you, is that lobsters have their teeth *in* their stomach.

Lobsters are protected by their shell, though while they are growing, as their shell does not grow, they have to shed it. Until their new shell has hardened, they are very vulnerable.



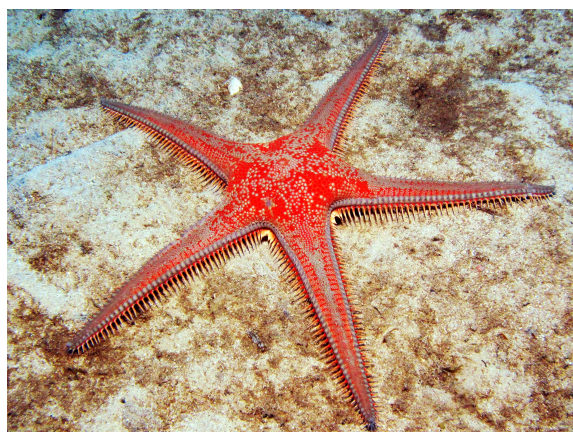
- The cormorant: this bird is one of the few birds that humans use to help them. It is so good at fishing, that in the past some fishermen got cormorants to spit out the fish they had caught into their fishing-boat! At home on the sea, or in land, they have webbed feet (4 toes), a big wing-span, and nest in colonies on cliffs.



- The sea-horse: this attractive animal lives in the sea, but is not a very good swimmer, and has to tie its tail to seaweed to prevent it being swept off by currents. They pair for life, and start each day but linking tails and twirling round. They are unusual in that the male carries the eggs in its pocket until they hatch.



- The star-fish: like some other quite different animals, such as some snakes, they are very good at dealing with injury. If one of their limbs is injured, they can grow it back. With no head and no brain, the star-fish has a nerve ring round its mouth, and from their nerves go into its arms. They can't swim, but glide along the sea bottom and can spout little jets of water to wave themselves along.



- The flamingo: Flamingos are not pink when they are born, but the food they eat, including shellfish, turns them pink. The pinker they are, the healthier and more aggressive they are (when they fight each other for food)! Flamingos are social and like to live in packs. They like warm, watery regions and shallow coasts and wetlands such as lakes, lagoons, mangrove swamps, and mudflats. They like shallow water so they can stand, and with their long neck, find the food they need under the water. Like some other birds, they can stand on one leg for long periods.



That's it. I do hope you have enjoyed this Activity. Now it's time for you try the Quiz!

Animal Quiz

(Do this after completing **LEARN ABOUT DOGS AND OTHER ANIMALS**)

Further Reading: WHO AM I?

By

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1. How can you tell a dog's footprints from the footprints of a fox or wolf?

2. Where are a lobster's teeth?

3. What dog calms down horses in a fire?



4. What male animal in the sea carries the eggs giving birth to live young?



5. What did people use cormorants for?

6. Name a dog breed used for hunting.

7. What runs faster? A crocodile or you?

8. What sea animal can grow a new limb if it needs to?

9. Why is a flamingo pink?



10. Do humpback whales stay in the same part of the sea?