

Wild Child WINTER PROGRAM

ANIMAL TRACKS

MATERIALS

- 'THE GRUFFALO'S CHILD' STORYBOOK* BY JULIA DONALDSON
- THICK WHITE PAPER
- CRAYONS
- SANDPAPER ANIMAL TRACKS**
- FOLDING TABLES
- ANIMAL TRACKING BOOKS (OPTIONAL)
- PRESERVED ANIMAL FEET (OPTIONAL)

*This book is small- so everyone can see the pictures, print out the pages of The Gruffalo's Child, one page per printer sheet. Print out the words and glue to the back of the picture so the children can see the pictures while you read the story.

**To make sandpaper animal tracks: Draw various animal tracks found in your area (we used deer, moose, snowshoe hare, turkey, coyote, fox) on sandpaper. Cut out the sandpaper tracks and glue them to cardstock.

SET UP

Take a walk around to find some animal tracks so you know what direction to guide the children
Set up folding tables on the ground or be ready to bring craft materials indoors

PROGRAM

Sing a gathering song to form a circle
Introduce instructors

Opening Circle (songs and dances)

The purpose of opening circle is to get the blood and breath moving. Feel free to substitute songs with dances or movements from your own repertoire or look up the ones we use.

-Go-around of names and everyone repeats name and claps for each syllable (optional- this can be challenging for very young kids.)

-“Good morning dear earth” with motions

-Mouse, penguin, eagle (tiny circle with one foot in centre, small circle with elbows

touching, large circle with ‘wings’ spread

-“I like to rise when the sun she rises” with dance

Jingle Bells Animal Movements

(Sing and skip in a large circle)

Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle all the way. Oh what fun it is to ride in a one-horse open sleigh - hey!

(Stop, act like you're listening, speak this part)

WAIT - Who is it that we hear?

Lumbering to their dens?

Could it be we're drawing near ?

Hush now, listen again! OH

(Speak this part. Move like a bear, lumbering bent-over or all fours walk)

Bears lumber to a fro, eating the last berries before they go off to their dens for a deep winters sleep, we won't be seeing them til the peepers peep

(Sing and skip in a large circle)

Dashing through the snow in a one-horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go, laughing all the way oh ho ho . . .
Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle all the way.

Oh what fun it is to ride in a one-horse open sleigh -
hey!

(Stop and act like you're listening, speak this part, act out
beating wings)

WAIT - Who is it that we hear?
Beating their wings so strong?
Could it be we're drawing near?
Hush now, listen long! OH . . .

(Speak this part. Act out waddling like a partridge and
then flying away.)

Mr Partridge is in the wood, for one moment here he
stood
Eating high bush cranberries but when we come near he
quickly flees

(Sing and skip in a large circle)
Dashing through the snow in a one-horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go, laughing all the way oh ho ho . . .
Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle all the way.
Oh what fun it is to ride in a one-horse open sleigh -
hey!

(Stop and act like you're listening. Speak this part.)
WAIT - Who is it that we hear?
Cantering through the snow?
Could it be we're drawing near?
Hush now, listen soon we'll know! OH . . .

(Step slow steps with high knees)
Small horses step peacefully and slow
Over hills and through valleys so upright they go
(Trot by jogging a bouncy jog)
Brown horses trot merrily in the sun and their silver
hooves hit the ground as they run
(Lope around full speed, neighing)
Black horses gallop with courage abound
and they throw back their heads as they hammer the
ground

(Sing and skip in a large circle)
Dashing through the snow in a one-horse open sleigh
O'er the fields we go, laughing all the way oh ho ho . . .
Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle all the way.
Oh what fun it is to ride in a one-horse open sleigh -
hey!

(Stop and act like you're listening. Speak this part. Hop
into a small circle or group sitting on the
ground.)

WAIT - Who is it that we hear?
Hopping quietly around the bend?
Could it be we're drawing near?
Hush now, listen friend ! OH . . .

(Finger play. Everyone is now sitting on the ground.)
Early one morning, Just as the sun did rise
(Poke up 2 fingers)
Two little bunny ears, Poked upward toward the skies.
(Push thumb between 2 fingers)
Out poked a bunny nose Sniffing here and there
(Move 'bunny' all around)
Wanting just a friend to meet And looking everywhere.
(Poke up 2 fingers on the other hand)
Out from another den Two more ears arose
(Push thumb between fingers)
And right between them Was another little nose.
('Bunnies' meet)
Nose to nose the bunnies played Wiggling their ears
(Move hand bunnies all around)
Hopping through the woods all day
Without a care or fear.

Gruffalo's Child Story

Come into a circle or group sitting down and read the story. After the story invite the children on an adventure. . . "Are you feeling brave like the gruffalo's child? Let's go find some animal tracks!"

Introduce 'Sacred/magic circle'

Explain that when someone finds a track, you can circle the track(s). This is the sacred circle! Nobody steps into or over the sacred circle, so everyone can see the tracks without them getting stepped on.

Find animal tracks

When you find some: "Ahah! Aho! Some tracks in the snow! Who do they belong to, and where do they go?"

Use the 'art of questioning' (see the Coyote's Guide to Nature Connection) to guide children through noticing details about the tracks. How many toes? Big or small animal? Where did it come from or go? The actual answer doesn't matter as much as wandering looking for tracks and then exploring details.

Move like the animals who made the tracks (hop like rabbits and squirrels, step like deer, etc.)

"What time is it Mr. Fox" (running game)

Line the kids up as if starting a race

Instructor stands 15-30' in front of them

The kids say "what time is it Mr. Fox?"

Instructor answers "It's _____ o'clock" (chose any time)

The kids take that many steps forward

The kids repeat "what time is it Mr. Fox?" And take steps forward

When the kids get close, instead of a time, the instructor answers "LUNCHTIME" and races toward the kids, tagging them.

Play as many times as desired

Animal tracks craft

This can be done indoors, especially in the middle of winter. Each child gets a piece of paper and a crayon. Place the sandpaper track under the white paper and demonstrate using the crayons to discover the hidden track underneath! Make sure to use the side of the crayons, otherwise the rubbing won't show up.

Closing Circle

Circle dance: Wishata dewyah

(Any song can be used, along with simple walking in a circle or coming in and out of the circle)