



# OPERATION OBSERVATION

## Materials:

- ☆ Nature book (see list under Activity 1).

## Rationale

Students will investigate biological diversity using observation

## Objectives

1. Students will use nature stories to practice observation skills.
2. Students will make inferences about habitats from the observations of classmates and characteristics listed by classmates.

## Activity One: *I See, I Hear, I Feel, and I Know*

**PROCEDURE NOTE:** Necessary science skills involve observation, prediction and validation to ensure accuracy, collection of data, investigation, interpretation and classification of data, formation of conclusions and communication of results.

1. Choose a nature book that offers many chances for students to observe nature and habitats through words, such as the *Owl Moon* by Jane Yolen (Scholastic); *The Story of Jumping Mouse* by John Steptoe (Mulberry Books); *Possum and the Peeper* by Anne Hunter (Houghton Mifflin); *Where Does The Day Go?* by Walter

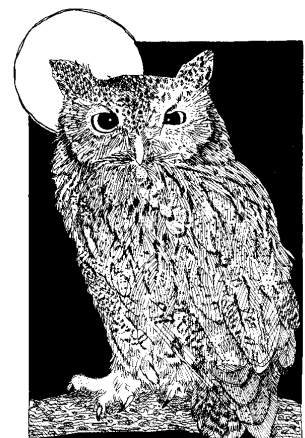
Myers (Parents Magazine Press); *Possum's Harvest Moon* by Anne Hunter (Houghton Mifflin)

2. Show students the cover of the book. Ask them to imagine what they might hear or see if they were in this book's setting (woods on a snowy night, spring day by a pond). Have them use the title and cover picture to predict what they think the book is about. Have students try to think of everything they know about the book's subject (owls, opossums, etc.).
3. As you read the book to the students, create a list of all the things they notice in the story and the pictures. You may wish to read the book twice, once to let the students enjoy the story and language and then again to note observations. Answer these questions:
  - Who were the characters in the story?
  - What did the characters in the story see and hear?
  - How did they act in order to find out things? Were they looking for something specific?
  - How did the characters feel at different times during the story?
  - When did the action take place? Where? Could it happen any other time? Explain.
  - What things do the pictures show that the author doesn't mention?
  - Is the setting a diverse one? Why or why not?

## Activity Two: *Don't Just Look*

### PROCEDURE:

1. Discuss observation methods, such as sitting quietly, listening carefully, looking all around, noticing smells and temperature, feeling for breezes, and making notes on what you see. Ask students to be silent for one minute while observing everything possible. When the time is up, invite them to share the things they noticed.
2. Have each student make observations in places other than the classroom (playground, lunchroom, early in the morning, at home in the evening). Encourage them to journal these observations, either in words or pictures. As each student shares his/her observations with the class, keep an observation chart on the sights, sounds, tastes, and aromas, touches and feelings that make up the students' world. Note unexpected as well as expected sensations. Have the class try to figure out what these



sensations indicate about each observed area. Discuss the diversity shown among the various areas. What makes some areas more diverse than others?

3. Divide the students into small groups and take an observation stroll around the schoolyard or through a natural area. Groups can take the same route, or each group may be assigned a different route. When students return to the classroom, ask each group to choose one item from their observation list and describe it to the class orally or in writing. As groups share, have the rest of the class make inferences about the area being described. Create an observation book for the different areas the class visits during the year.

### Activity Three: *Where Am I?*

#### PROCEDURE:

1. Choose a place from the list below and write it in the center circle of the *Where Am I?* worksheet. Have students use their imagination to fill out the surrounding squares. NOTE: for younger students the teacher might want to use a wall chart, let the children dictate answers, and write their responses to fill out the surrounding squares.
  - Under a rotten log in the forest
  - Sitting on moss beside a fast, cool stream
  - Climbing to the top of a rocky mountain
  - Lying in a meadow full of wildflowers

- Walking across a cedar glade
  - Sitting under a pine tree
  - Perched on a big limb in an oak tree
  - Playing in my back yard
  - Looking out of a hollow cypress tree
  - Standing on a boardwalk overlooking a swamp
  - Crossing the stone bridge above a gully
2. Choose different *Where Am I?* locations and have students guess the place being described from the clues in the squares. Discuss how diversity helps identify the different habitats.

#### Extensions

1. Draw a class mural of the favorite place you visited in this activity. Make half of the mural showing daytime and half of it showing night; or have your mural depict all four seasons of the year. How and why does diversity vary from day to night; from season to season?
2. If the book you read was *Owl Moon*, dissect owl pellets (available from science supply companies such as Carolina Biological, Ward's Biological or NASCO and identify the bones you find. Read *Poppy*, a book about owl pellets, by Avi, .
3. Do *Where Am I?* activities for each of Arkansas's natural divisions.



**Correlation to**  
**National Science Standards**  
Unifying Concepts and Processes  
Life Science

**Correlation to**  
**Arkansas Frameworks**  
Science: K-4: LS1.1, LS1.3  
Language Arts: W.1.1, W.1.5,  
W.1.13, W.2.1, W.2.3, R.1.16, L.S.  
V.1.1, L.S.V.1.6  
Math: D.S.P.1.2

**Touch**

**Smell**

**Hear**

**See**

**Taste**

***Where Am I?***  
**Worksheet**

