

**Theme: Animal Characteristics**

Dear Chaperone,

Please guide your students through the following observations. As you ask them the following questions allow them to think about their answers and encourage them to come up with questions of their own. The purpose of this activity is not for them to get all the “right” answers but rather to allow them to practice questioning and observation skills.

**Explore the Zoo and Find:**

**An animal that is bigger than you.**

- How is this animal like you?
- Besides being bigger, how else is it different from you?

**An animal that is smaller than you.**

- How is this animal like you?
- Besides being smaller, how else is it different from you?

**An animal with fur.**

- What color is the animal's fur?
- How does having fur help the animal to survive?

**An animal with feathers.**

- What kind of animal has feathers?
- What can this animal do that you can't do?

**Two animals that can swim.**

- How are these animals the same?
- How are these animals different from each other?

**An animal exhibit to observe.**

- Is there a special feeding place for the animal?
- Is there water for the animal to drink or swim in?
- Where would the animal go to find shelter?

**Taking care of animals:**

- Name at least one thing that is very important to do when you are taking care of animals.
- **Possible answers:** Make sure they have enough water and the right kind of food. Make sure they have a place to sleep. Make sure they have a place to go to get out of the rain, the hot sun or cold weather.

**After your Zoo visit:**

1. Ask students to name two animals that they saw during their field trip. Have students compare these animals. How are they the same? How are they different?
2. Ask students to name characteristics that they saw such as fur, beaks, paws, webbed feet, fins, wings and claws. Discuss how these characteristics help animals to eat, move, or stay safe.
3. Ask students if there is anything that they wonder about the animals they saw at the Zoo. Encourage students to ask questions and discuss how they might find answers to their questions.

