Welcome to your Wild Lessons Tour! This guide will take you on an educational tour through Utah’s Hogle Zoo, complete with questions to prompt discussions with your students, all while visiting an array of our amazing animals! Enjoy your journey through Utah’s Hogle Zoo!

In this tour, you will explore the world of carnivores, animals that eat meat and hunt other animals to survive. There is a large variety of carnivores in the world, varying in size and hunting method. Today, you will visit some of the carnivores that we have here at the Zoo, and will learn about the different habitats they live in.

Education Standards:

1st Grade:
1.b Analyze the individual similarities and differences within and across larger groups.
2.a Make observations about living things and their environment using the five senses.

2nd Grade:
1.a Compare and contrast the characteristics of living things in different habitats.
2.a Communicate and justify how the physical characteristics of living things help them meet their basic needs.
2.b Observe, record, and compare how the behaviors and reactions of living things help them meet their basic needs.
1. Lion Pride

Start your tour by observing the African Savanna exhibit. In the wild, lions would be living in the same habitat as our giraffes, zebra and ostriches. Then make your way over to look at our lion pride!

- Have students describe the features of the African savanna.
- What animals would lions hunt on the savanna?
- What do lions use to capture their prey?

Lions hunt zebra, antelope, waterbuck, buffalo, young giraffes and even ostriches! Lions use their strong front paws with their sharp claws to take down their prey. The lionesses usually do the hunting, stalking their prey and leaping on them. Hunting usually takes place at dawn or dusk.

Big 6

The African lion is part of our Big 6 conservation program, in partnership with the Niassa Lion Project. Have students read the Niassa Lion Project’s signs at the lion exhibit.

- What threats are there to the African lion’s survival?

Be sure to check out their website at http://www.niassalion.org/ to learn more about threats to African lions and what Niassa is doing to help them!

2. Hunting in Water

Visit the California sea lions and harbor seals down at Rocky Shores. These animals hunt fish and other sea animals in cold water near rocky coastlines.

- Have students describe the features of the Rocky Shores exhibit.
- Have students discuss the differences between seals and sea lions.
- How would hunting in water be different than hunting on land?

Sea lions are larger in size than harbor seals. Sea lions have external ear flaps and can walk upright on their front flippers. Harbor seals have no external ear flaps and are not able to walk on their front flippers; instead, they have to inch their bodies along the ground. Sea lions are able to pull their back flippers forward, while harbor seals cannot.

Hunting in water requires animals to have good swimming skills, a way for their bodies to stay warm, and the ability to hold their breath for long periods of time. Seals and sea lions have webbed flippers to help them swim, blubber to keep them warm, and can hold their breath for three to seven minutes!
3. Legless Hunters

Head over to the Small Animal Building and have students explore the building to find the various species of snakes that live there. Have them look for snakes that are labeled as venomous.

- Did all of the snakes live in the same habitat?
- What is the difference between venomous and poisonous animals?
- How does having venom help some snakes hunt better?

Snakes can be found living on every continent except Antarctica! That means that different species of snakes live in all kinds of different habitats! They may live in jungles, forests, mountains or deserts! Here in Utah, there are seven species of venomous rattlesnakes that live in the desert.

Venomous animals inject their prey with toxins, either through a bite or a sting. Poisonous animals have to be ingested for the toxins to enter the body. A good rule of thumb is that if it bites you, it is venomous, if you bite it, it is poisonous. A snake’s hollow fangs act as a syringe, similar to getting a shot at the doctors. Having venom helps immobilize prey, making them easier to eat.

4. Can You See Me?

Head over to Asian Highlands to visit our Amur tigers, Amur leopards, snow leopards and Siberian lynx.

- Have students describe the patterns of the big cats in Asian Highlands. Which ones have stripes? Spots? None?
- How would these patterns help them be better hunters in their habitats?

Big cats hunt by stalking their prey, getting close enough to pounce on them. In order to get close to their prey, they must not be easily seen. A cat’s fur color and patterns help them become invisible in their habitat, making them better hunters. When an animal blends in with its surroundings, it is camouflaged. How many students are “camouflaged” with their surroundings? Have students try to match their clothes to areas around the Zoo to find where they are most camouflaged.
5. Carnivores of the Sky

Finally, head up the South hill to visit the birds of prey living up there. There is a rough-legged hawk, a barn owl and two turkey vultures. These birds were once wild, but were injured. Birds of prey, such as hawks and owls, spend their time perching in trees and soaring in the air. Therefore, they catch their prey from above.

- What do birds of prey use to catch their prey?
- Why do birds of prey soar over large open landscapes?
- Do you remember seeing any other birds of prey around the zoo?

Birds of prey use their feet to catch their prey. Using their feet to hunt is what classifies a bird as a bird of prey! Their feet are strong and have large sharp talons. Some birds of prey capture their prey in the air; others swoop down and catch them off the ground. They can be found soaring over large open regions because they are scanning the ground for their prey!

At the Zoo, we have two bald eagles in Rocky Shores and burrowing owls in the Small Animals Building!

Hawkwatch International

What should you do if you find a baby bird out of the nest? What if you find an injured raptor? Visit http://www.hawkwatch.org to learn how to help our local birds of prey!