

# AWAKENING TO SPRING

## Mammals in the Spring Puppet Show

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# Lincoln Memorial Garden and Nature Center

## Teacher's Guide

Winter Program: Awakening to Spring

Grade Level: Preschool – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

Program Length: 45 minutes

## INTRODUCTION

As snow and ice melt and the Earth warms, early spring awakens in the woods. Long before green leaves unfurl on the trees, wildflowers seem to spring from the warming ground among the leaf litter and animal activity stirs throughout the woodland. Just when it seems that winter is going to last longer than it should, this puppet show reminds us that the Earth is awakening to spring as it does every year. Migration, hibernation, dormancy, foods and homes of native animals are introduced through discussion and the puppet show.

## OBJECTIVES:

1. To better understand needs of animals in the native Illinois woodland habitat, especially during the very last days of winter and the early first days of spring.
2. To learn about plants and animals ready themselves for springtime in the woods.
3. To encourage an appreciation of nature during all seasons.
4. To gain more knowledge about native Illinois mammals.

## **THIS PROGRAM HAS THE POTENTIAL TO MEET THE FOLLOWING ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS:**

Learning Area	Goal	Standard	Benchmark
Language Arts	4	A	1a, 1b
		B	1b
Mathematics	10	A	1b

Science	11	A	1a, 1b
	12	A	1a, 1b
		B	1a, 1b
		E	1b

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR PRE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES**

1. Guide a discussion to make a list of ways that we prepare for spring. (Clothing changes, food choices of fresh plants, warmer weather outside and less need for heated buildings and vehicles, outdoor activities change from ice skating and skiing to spring walks and eventually swimming).
2. Take a walk around the schoolyard to look for evidence of animal homes and animals awakening to spring. Listen for returning bird calls, look for the building of bird nests, insect activity, young green plants, and animal tracks in the mud, smell warming wet earth, etc.
3. Encourage the children to make a collage or a drawing of the early signs of spring that they observed using their senses while on their spring walk.
4. After the class discussion of human needs and about the changes with the upcoming spring season, lead another discussion of the ways in which animals and plants have basic needs that remain the same (water, food, shelter and space), but these needs are met in different ways with the change of each season.

## **DESCRIPTION OF LINCOLN MEMORIAL GARDEN IN-SCHOOL PROGRAM**

The in-school program begins with a brief introduction of Lincoln Memorial Garden through a discussion of the painted scene of the puppet stage that depicts LMG in the early springtime. Concepts of changes in the seasons and corresponding changes of animal and plant lives due to seasonal changes are introduced and discussed.

The puppet show introduces the children to native Illinois mammals who inhabit the woodlands and tells a story of how each one awakens from the cold and quiet life of winter to ready for springtime. Concepts of hibernation, dormancy, and migration are presented in a humorous, yet factual way. Following the puppet show, animal pelts, bones, and other nature-related objects are shared with the children.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR POST PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

1. Create a puppet stage for the classroom, make or order a few puppets, and give the children the opportunity to reenact the Awakening to Spring puppet show they watched.
2. Reinforce the concepts of mammals and their characteristics by collecting many pictures of mammals from around the world. Encourage the children to observe the similarities, then the differences. Allow them to create through artwork, their favorite mammal.
3. Collect pictures of woodland animal homes, burrows, and nests. Find pictures that show animal babies and how they are raised in their different kinds of animal homes. Lead a discussion of springtime as the season of the year when babies on the natural world are born. Make pictures and/or art projects of different kinds of springtime animal baby homes.
4. Read any of the books included in the Resource List. Act them out or make them into puppet shows for reinforcement of learning.

## RESOURCE LIST FOR AWAKENING TO SPRING: MAMMALS IN THE SPRING PUPPET SHOW

Cornell, Joseph Bharat. *Sharing Nature with Children*. Dawn Publishers. 1979

Croxford, Vera. *Animals in Spring*. Corgi Childrens Books. 1972

Fowler, Allan. *Do You Know It's Spring?* Grolier Publishing, Co.: Childrens' Press, Inc. 1991

Fowler, Allan. *From Seed to Plant*. Grolier Publishing, Co.: Children's Press, Inc. 2001

Glasser, Linda. *It's Spring!* Lerner Publishers Group. 2002

Hubbell, Patricia. *Hurray for Spring!* Northword Books. 2005

Lindberg, Reeve. *North Country Spring*. Houghton Mifflin Books. 1997

- Morrison, Gordon. *Nature in the Neighborhood*. Houghton Mifflin Books. 2004
- Muzur, Kathy. *It's Springtime in My Back Yard*. Spring Ducks Books. 2004
- Newman, Leslea. *Skunk's Spring Surprise*. Harcourt, Inc. 2007
- Peffer, Wendy. *From Tadpole to Frog*. HarperCollins Publishers. 1994
- Rabe, Tish. *Is a Camel a Mammal?* Dr. Seuss Enterprises. 1998
- Raczka, Bob. *Spring Things*. Albert Whitman & Co. 2007
- Rawlinson, Julia. *Fletcher and the Springtime Blossoms*. GreenWillow Books. 2006
- Schnur, Steven. *Spring: An Alphabet Acrostic*. Houghton Mifflin Books. 1999
- Schulman, Janet. *Countdown to Spring! An Animal Counting Book*. RandomHouse. 2002
- Seuling, Barbara. *Spring Song*. Gulliver Books: Harcourt, Inc. 2001
- Showers, Paul. *The Listening Walk*. HarperCollins Publishers. 1961, 1991