

Moonbeams Animal Friends



Overview

Moonbeams learn about animals, their habits and habitats.

Objectives

Provide opportunities and materials for Moonbeams to:

- Observe animals and understand their place in creation.
- Express feelings about animals through art and movement.
- Distinguish the difference between wild and domestic animals.

Assessing the Experience

As you observe the children, note the following:

- New vocabulary words children are using in conversations with one another. Are Moonbeams using adjectives to describe animals and their habitats?
- Questions Moonbeams are asking. Are they seeing the connection between animals and their habitats?

Word Bank

habitat pet wild camouflage

Related Educational Activities

✓ CHECK IT OUT

Growing Up Wild has many activities relating to this activity.

www.projectwild.org/growingupwild/

Developmental Assets Supported by the Activities

Creative Activities; Commitment to Learning

Background for Leaders

Children are born with a sense of wonder toward animals. Watch as they admire a puppy or fuzzy baby chick and you will see them connect with nature and the Creator.

In this activity we will build on that natural attraction to help children understand the similarities and differences between species and learn about God's wonderful plan to care for all living creatures.

If possible, bring in living creatures for children to observe and care for. A goldfish named Fred or caterpillar named Sallie can provide opportunities to teach timeless truths about the animal kingdom.

Group Activities

Choose at least two group activities to do together.

1. FUZZY FEELINGS

It is easy to love a cute little puppy, but not all animals are as likeable. In this activity Moonbeams will express their feelings about various animals.

SUPPLIES:

- Sidewalk chalk or Painters' tape
- Pictures of animals from books or the internet (Include animals that are unusual or that Moonbeams may not like; such as snakes, toads, spiders, etc.)

Before Moonbeams arrive, make three circles on the floor. Each circle should be large enough for several children to stand

in. Inside one circle make a happy face. Inside the other circles make one sad face and one face with a straight line. Ask Moonbeams to name an animal they like. Are there any they do not like? Show children pictures of various animals and ask how that animal makes them feel.

Explain: If this animal makes you feel happy, stand in the circle with the happy face. If it makes you feel unhappy, stand in the circle with the unhappy face. If it makes you feel both or neither, stand in the circle with the straight mouth. Explain there are no right or wrong answers; this is just about how different animals make you feel.

Allow a chance for Moonbeams to discuss why they like or dislike particular animals. After the discussion, allow children to change their minds if they wish.

Home Connection: Moonbeams can ask family members about animals they like. Are there any animals they do not like? Ask why they feel this way.



2. HABITAT SWEET HOME

All animals have something in common. In order to survive they need:

- Food to eat.
- Water to drink.
- Shelter to protect them from predators and the environment.

All of these together make up a habitat. Does a fish need the same habitat as a squirrel? No. A squirrel lives in a tree, but a fish would die if it tried to make its home in a tree. God gave the fish everything it needs to live in the water and the squirrel

just the right habitat it needs to be safe and happy at home in a tree.

SUPPLIES:

- Squares of paper or poker chips in three different colors (enough for each child to have several)

Ask children to form a circle and pretend to be squirrels. Show the markers (three colors of squares or chips) and tell children the colors represent food, water and shelter. Randomly spread the markers in the circle.

On your signal, Moonbeams grab as many markers as possible and then go back to their spot and sit down. Does everyone have each color? What would happen to a squirrel who could not find enough food? Or water? It would not survive.

Repeat the activity, asking Moonbeams to think of ways to insure all of the squirrels will survive.

3. CAMOUFLAGE

God gave animals special ways to stay safe. One way animals are protected is by using camouflage. Camouflage is when animals use color and patterns to blend in with their surroundings. Some of nature's most colorful creatures are designed by God to be able to hide in plain site. Why do you think a tiger or zebra has stripes? It is so it can blend into the background and hide.

Use bean bag animals, plastic bugs or animals to play a game of camouflage hide and seek. Half of the group hides animals while the other half hides their eyes. After all of animals have been tracked down, let children switch places.

4. THAT'S WILD

Complete *That's Wild* Student Worksheet. Ask children if anyone has a pet. What kind of animals do they have? Pets need people to care for them. Who takes care of your pet?

Wild animals do not have people to care for them. Wild animals take care of themselves.

Are there any animals that would not make good pets? Discuss which animals should not be kept as pets (skunks, tigers, etc.) and why they are better in the wild.

✓CHECK IT OUT

National Geographic's Website has a link for children. You can find lots of animal pictures and facts that you will prove interesting and helpful.

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/animals/>

5. I SPY ANIMALS

Visit a zoo, farm, nature preserve or pet store to observe animals.



Crafts

1. IMAGINATION STATION

Allow Moonbeams to use modeling clay, coloring crayons, or finger paints to create an animal and its habitat.

After finishing the creations, children take turns telling about their designs, what

kind of food the animal eats and where it lives.

2. ANIMALS ON PARADE

Print the animal masks from Leader's Resource pages on to cardstock. Allow Moonbeams to cut them out, add strings and have an animal parade.

Songs and Finger Plays

(Tune: *Did You Ever See a Lassie*)

I wish I were a monkey, a monkey, a monkey.

I wish I were a monkey, I know what I'd do.

I'd swing and I'd swing and I'd swing and I'd swing.

Oh, if I were a monkey, now that's what I'd do.

I wish I were a bunny, a bunny, a bunny.

I wish I were a bunny, I know what I'd do. I'd hop and I'd hop and I'd hop and I'd hop.

Oh, if I were a bunny, now that's what I'd do.

I wish I were a lion, a lion, a lion.

I wish I were a lion, I know what I'd do. I'd roar and I'd roar and I'd roar and I'd roar.

Oh, if I were a lion, now that's what I'd do.

I wish I were a bear cub, a bear cub, a bear cub.

I wish I were a bear cub I know what I'd do.

I'd sleep and I'd sleep and I'd sleep and I'd sleep.

Oh, if I were a bear cub now that's what I'd do.

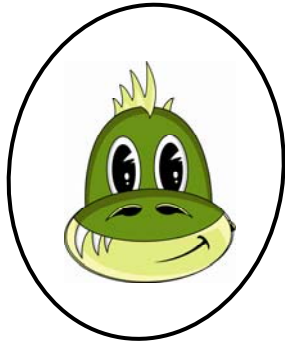
Games

1. FOOD, WATER, SHELTER, HABITAT

Play an animal habitat game. This is basically *Duck, Duck, Goose*; except instead you say, "Food, water, shelter, habitat." Run when "it" tags you and says, "Habitat."

2. ARE YOU MY MOTHER

Using pairs of plastic film canisters or Easter eggs, add pictures of adult and young animals.



Distribute one container to each child. Moonbeams look inside the containers to learn which animal they have and then try to find their partner. NOTE: Children may give hints. Cats may purr, dogs bark, etc.

Snacks

Serve Animal Crackers or Teddy Grahams.
OR

Play with your food! Provide round crackers, cream cheese spread, raisins and veggies. Ask Moonbeams to invent wild animal snacks.

Bible Lesson

GENESIS 1

(Read the creation story – Genesis 1 – from a children’s Bible or Bible storybook, then talk about the plan God had to make what each animal needed before He began creation.)

When God made the world and all living things, He made a plan for animals to have just what they need. Before God made monkeys, He first designed their jungle homes and made bananas for them to eat. Before He made fish, He made their ocean homes. Before God made polar bears, He made an icy place for them to live and fish to eat. God cared about animals enough to make special habitats where each kind would have just what it needs.

God cares for you, too. Before God made people, he made a beautiful earth that has lots of good food to eat, water to drink and air to breathe. Let’s pray and tell God thank you for our wonderful habitat.

Leaders’ Resources

BOOKS

- All Kinds of Animals (It’s Science)*
By Sally Hewitt
- Animals in Camouflage*
By Phyllis Limbacher Tildes
- Animals Should Definitely Not Wear Clothing*
By Judi Barrett
- Can I Keep Him?*
By Steven Kellogg
- I Want a Pet*
By Lauren Child

WEBSITES

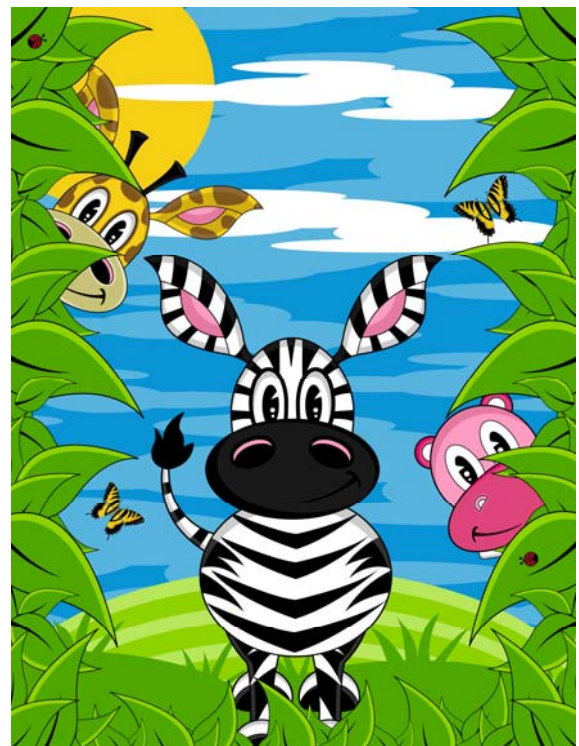
www.busybeekidscrafts.com/Animal-Crafts.html

kidsblogs.nationalgeographic.com/littlekids/

kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/animals/creaturefeature/brown-bear/

VIDEOS

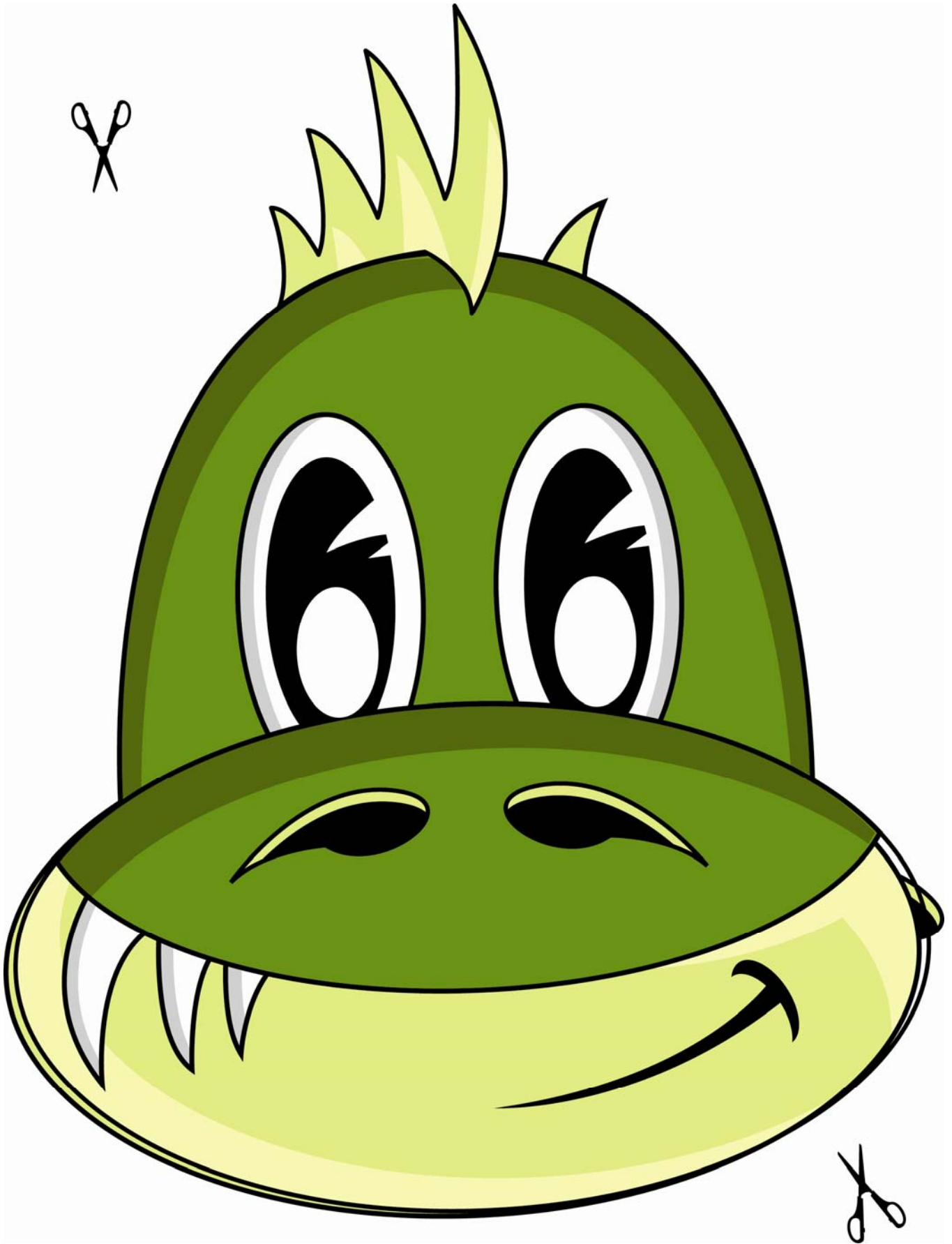
- The Nature of God Wilderness Discoveries,
By Zonderkids
- *Forest, Frogs, and Feisty Critters*
 - *Sand, Snakes, and Screeching Birds*
 - *Bugs, Bogs and Spiky Beasts*

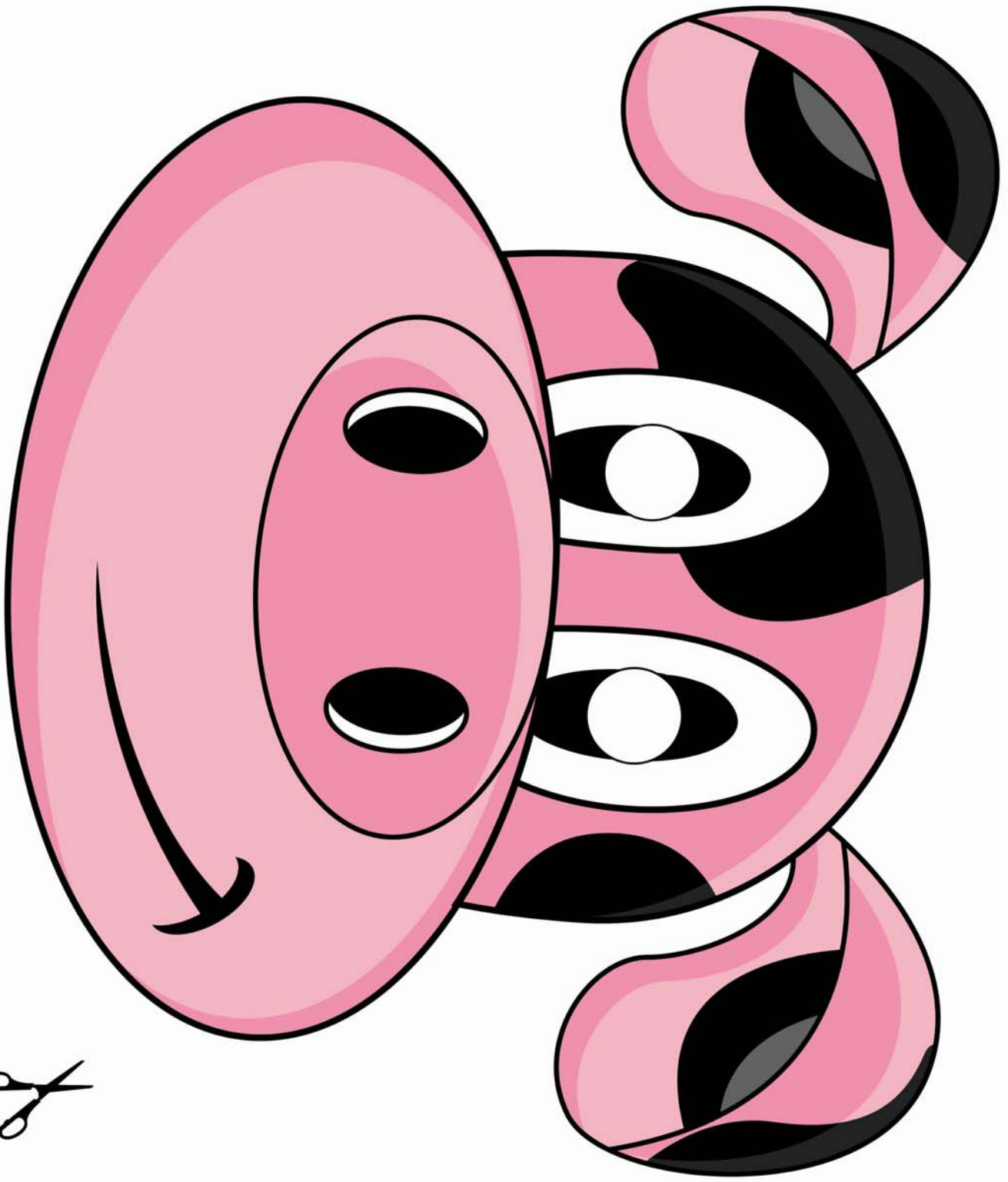


RESOURCE PAGES

ANIMAL MASKS: Print on cardstock. Cut out and add strings. Pretend to be animal friends.

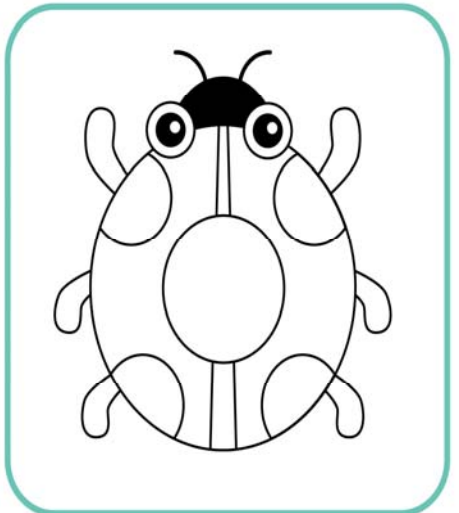
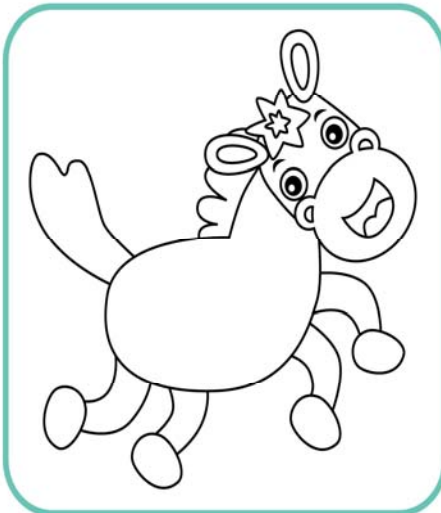
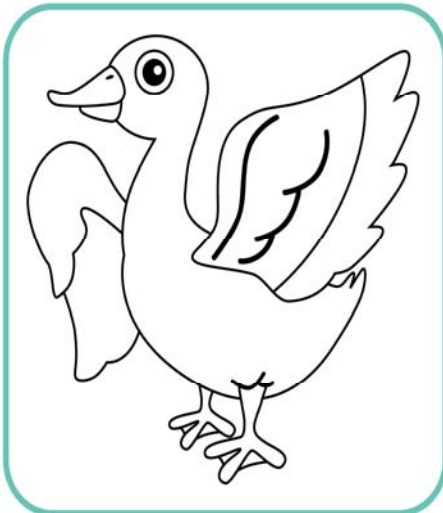
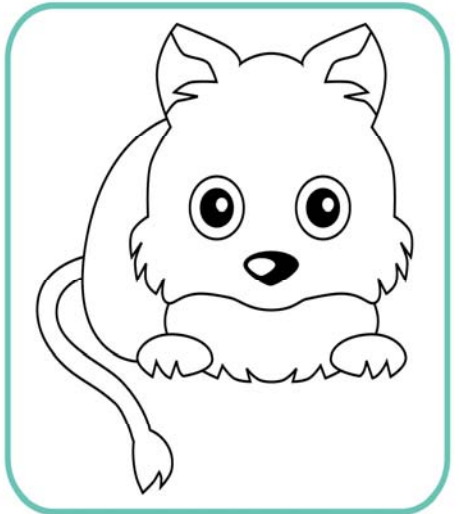
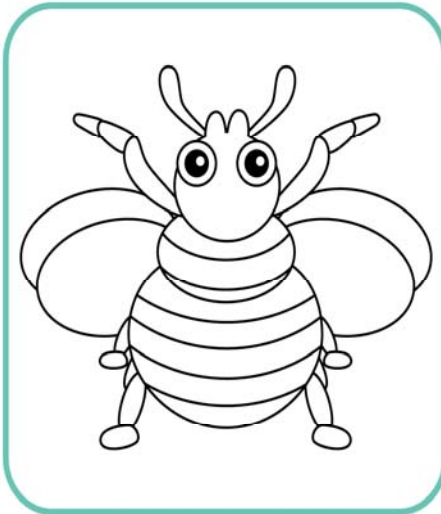
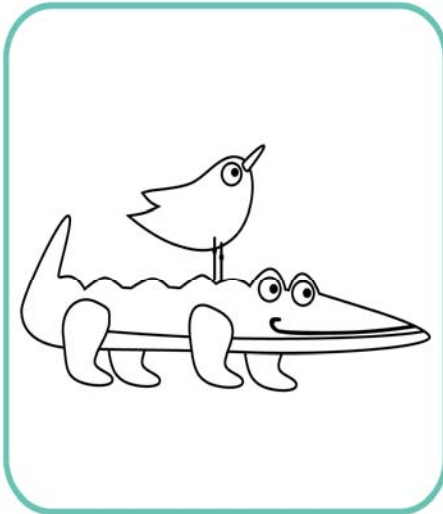


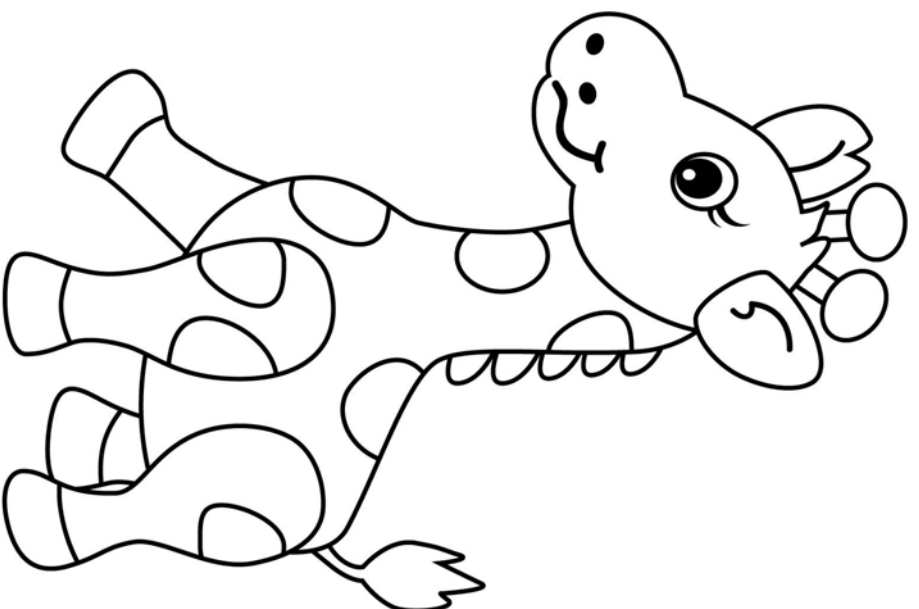
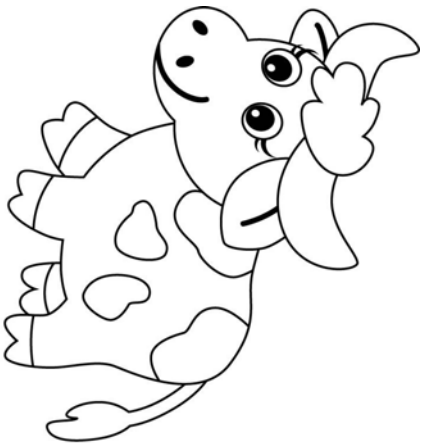
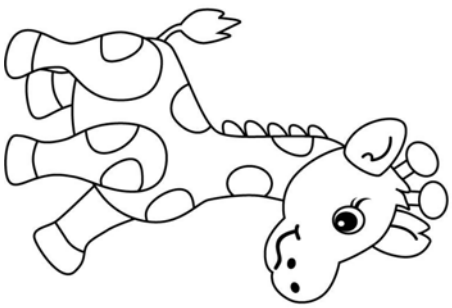




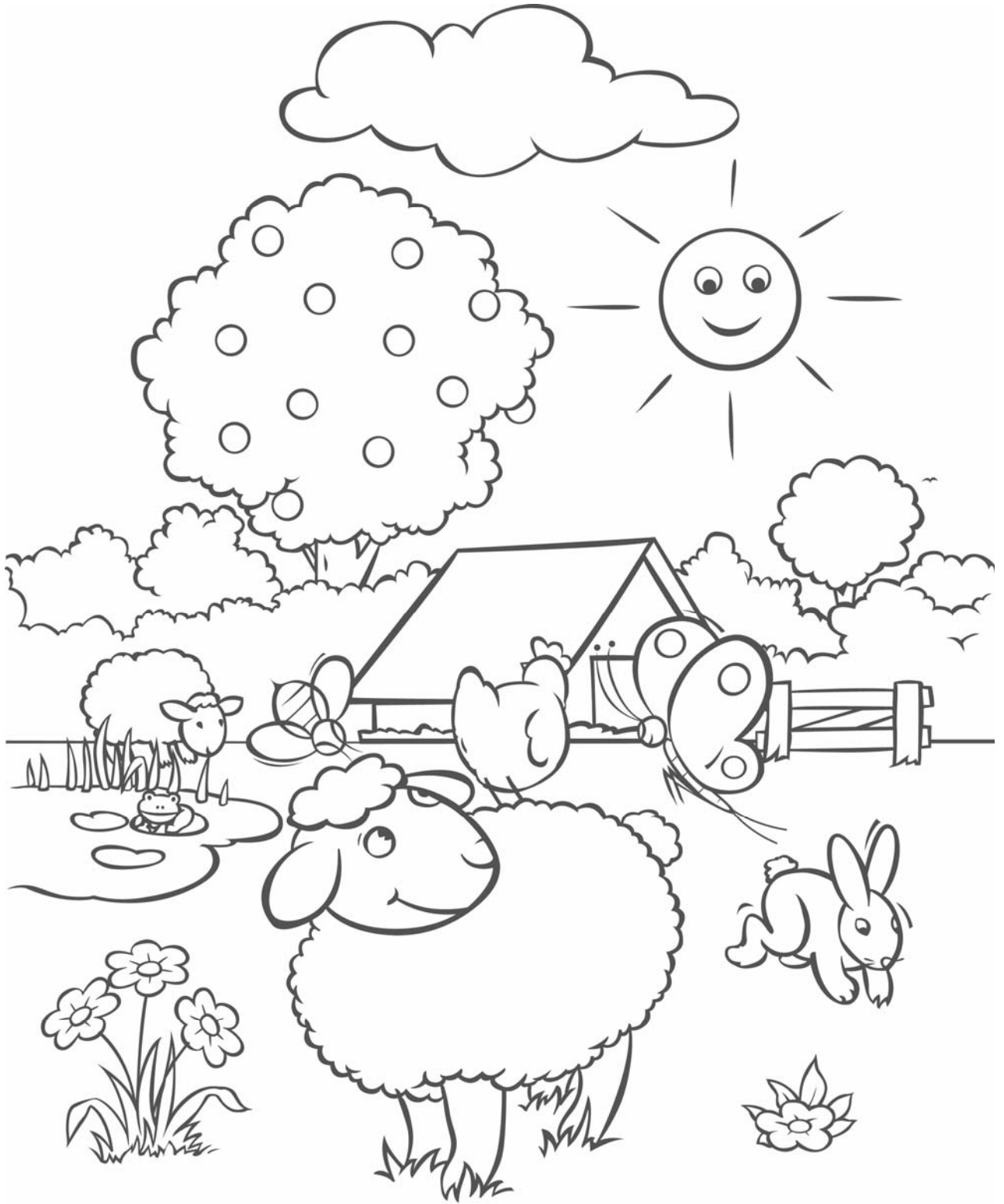
Print these animal cards on cardstock and use for the *Fuzzy Feelings* activity.

OPTIONAL: Print two sets and use to play a game of Memory
OR
Use for *Are You My Mother* activity.

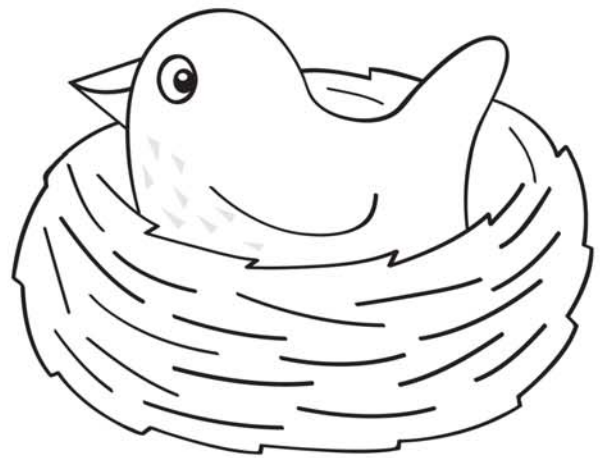
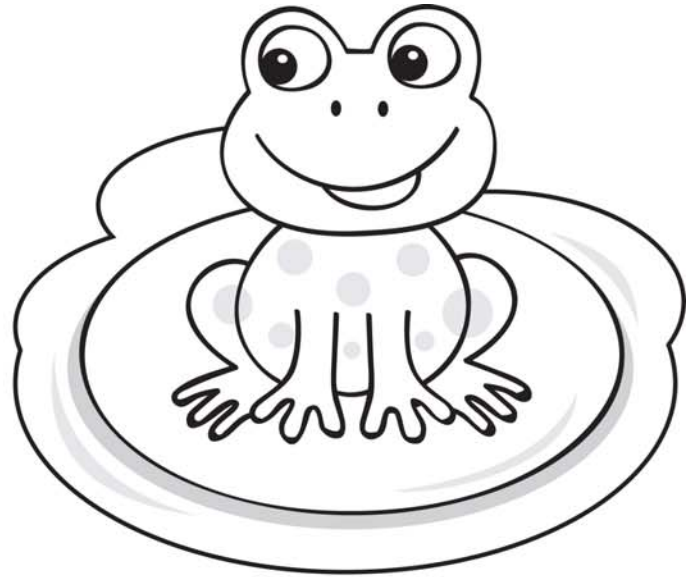
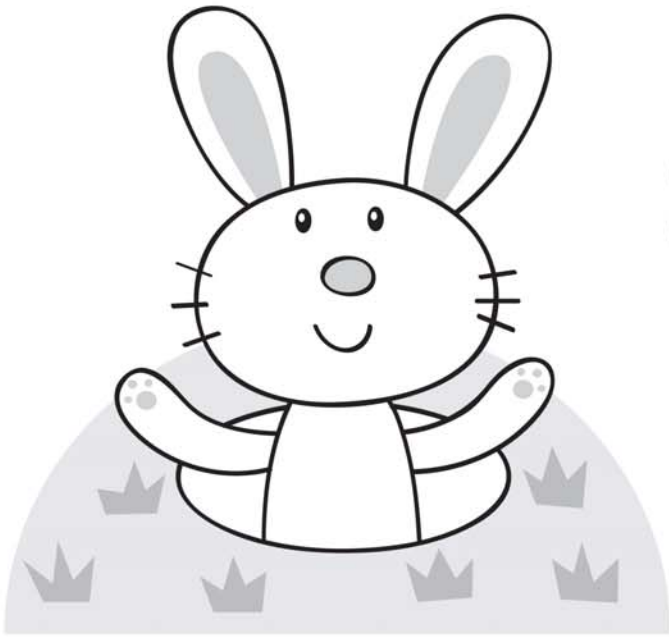




Can you help the Mother
Giraffe find her baby?
Draw a line from the baby to her mother.
Color the pictures.



Count the sheep. What other animals
Can you find in the picture?



Draw circles around
animals that are wild.
Draw lines under animals
that are pets.
Color the pictures.