

Owl Ears



Grade: 1st

Length: 15-20 minutes

Big Ideas: Owl Adaptations

Topic: Hearing in Owls vs. Humans

Summary: Students will explore the adaptations that allow owls to hear and hunt effectively in a fun game.

Standards:

K-2 Standard 4 – Life Science

Students will gain an understanding of Life Science through the study of changes in organisms over time and the nature of living things.

Objective 1: Communicate observations about the similarities and differences between offspring and between populations.

1. *Communicate observations about plants and animals, including humans and how they resemble their parents.*

2. *Analyze the individual similarities and differences within and across larger groups.*

Objective 2: Living things change and depend upon their environment to satisfy their basic needs.

1. *Make observations about living things and their environment using the five senses.*

Essential Questions:

- What adaptations do owls have that allow them to hear so well?
- How are owl ears different from humans?
- What do owls use their hearing to do?

Enduring Understandings:

- Adaptations help an animal survive.
- Different animals have different adaptations.

Objectives:

Students will...

- Students will be able to define nocturnal.
- Students will be able to describe the differences between owl hearing and human hearing.

Materials:

- Blindfold

Background Information:

- Owls are carnivores and raptors, which means that they use their feet and sharp talons to capture their prey.
- Members of the owl family can be found on every continent except Antarctica!
- Owls can turn their head 270 degrees, almost all the way around.
- Owls have a flat facial disk that acts like one big ear.
- Owl's ears are asymmetric, which means that one ear is positioned higher on their head than the other. This allows them to pinpoint sound much more accurately.
- Owls are nocturnal!
- Owls produce pellets, because they can't digest bones or hair from their prey.

Key Vocabulary:

- Adaptation: Is something that helps an animal live in its environment/home
- Nocturnal: An animal that is active at night
- Carnivore: An animal that eats only meat
- Predator: An animal that kills another animal for food
- Prey: An animal that is killed by other animals for food

Procedure:

1. Introduce owls using the cool facts in the Background Information as a reference.
2. Arrange the students in a circle and explain to them that they will be playing a game to see if they can hear as good as an owl.
3. Choose one student to be blindfolded and have them stand in the middle.
4. You will point to one student at a time, and they will clap to see if the blindfolded student in the middle can point to where they heard the sound coming from. The student clapping can choose between clapping low, middle, or high.
5. Play as many rounds as possible.
6. Debrief by asking students if they thought it was easy to figure out where the sound came from. Do they think it would be easier for an owl? Could the students hunt as well as an owl?

Additional Notes:

Try to keep the students as quiet as possible during the game, give time in between pointing at each student for laughter to die down.