Are We the Same Animal?

Investigation Designer:
This investigation is an adaptation of "Are You Me?" taken from Project WILD K-12 Curriculum and Activity Guide, 2004. Adapted by Wade Institute Staff (R. Rak)

Grade level:
Grade 1

Time Required:
Two 20-min periods

Investigation Focus:
This investigation leads students to recognize that living things grow and change over time. It uses pairs of cards that show the adult and a younger life stage for several animals. Children work together to match the adult with its younger stage. They come to see that, for many living things, the early stages of life do not resemble the adult forms.

State Learning Standards:
1-LS3-1: Use information from observations (first-hand and from media) to identify similarities an differences among individual plants or animals of the same kind.

Learning Outcomes:
The students will be able to:
- Differentiate between a drawing of an adult animal and an immature form
- Use evidence to show that living things grow and change during their lives

Materials List:
Photographs of children when they were younger (brought from home in advance of the investigation)

Pairs of animal cards printed on cardstock in sufficient copies such that each child in the room will receive one card (either an adult or a young animal image)

Are You My Mother by PD Eastman

Literacy Connection:
Read aloud with students the book Are You My Mother? by PD Eastman.

Introduction/Engaging Experience:
Well in advance of the investigation, ask the children to bring to school a picture of themselves when they were younger. (Photos may be when they were babies or young toddlers.) Using several children's pictures, ask the class whose picture they think it is. Lead the class in a discussion of how we change as we grow. Tell students that this is also true for other animals and other living things. Explain that for some living things that changes are dramatic! The young may look very different from the adult, or mature, living thing. Ask the children if they know of any living things like this.

Share the book "Are You My Mother" by PD Eastman. Discuss with students how some adult animals look similar and others look different from their parents.
Guiding Question(s):

What are some changes that we can see in an animal as it grows?

Investigation:

- Introduce the activity by telling the students that the class will be investigating how some living things change as they grow during their lives.
- Divide the class into two groups: Group A: Adult animals Group B: Young animals
- Show the class the shuffled cards, and tell them that each child in Group A will receive and adult animal card and all children in Group B will receive a young animal card.
- Distribute the cards.
- Ask the children of Group A to hold their card facing outward and form a line facing the middle of the room.
- Explain that the children in Group B are to find the Group A classmate who is holding the card that he/she believes is the adult stage of his/her young animal.
- When they have paired, ask each pair of students to talk together about why they think they are different stages of the same animal.
- Invite the children to share their reasoning/evidence to support their decision to pair two cards as stages of the same animal. Guide them to use specific evidence such as number of legs when they explain their reasoning.
- Display the correct pairings of the animals, and ask the students to identify similarities between the young and adult stages of the animal.

Present Findings and Draw Conclusions:

At the end of the activity, ask the children to think quietly about what they have learned. Guide them to think about how animals grow and change over time. Invite the children to share their thinking with the class.

Vocabulary:

Adult
Young
Grow
Change

Assessment:

You may wish to repeat the activity after shuffling the cards. Consider reversing the roles of Group A and B. Revisit the discussion of similarities and differences between young and adults to assess students’ understanding of the concept of growth and change among living things.

Resources:


Adaptation to Different Levels of Inquiry:

To make this activity more student-centered, ask the children to find pictures of adult and young animals in magazines in the classroom. Cut out and shuffle these pictures for the class investigation of matching adults and young.