



MINNESOTA ZOO™
Changing how you see the world

Animal Behavior Intraspecies vs. Interspecies Interactions Zoo Visit Activity

MN Graduation Standards supported:

Grades 9-12 Strand I.A
The student will understand the nature of scientific ways of thinking and that scientific knowledge changes and accumulates over time.

Grades 9-12 Strand I.B
The student will design and conduct a scientific investigation.

Vocabulary:

Observation
Data
Ethogram
Interspecies interaction
Intraspecies interaction

Links:

Minnesota Zoo website
www.mnzoo.org

Maryland Zoo website
www.marylandzoo.org

Introduction:

This lesson will allow students to distinguish between interactions that are likely to occur in mixed species exhibits.

Objectives:

At the end of this lesson, students will:

1. Use their observation skills.
2. Recognize that, in order to be valid, scientific data must meet certain criteria.

Procedure:

1. Have the students choose or assign which multi-species exhibit they will observe while at the zoo. Examples include Tamarin/Sloth, the Coral Reef, Lemur Exhibit, Tapir/Bingturong, & the Shark Reef in Discovery Bay.
2. Prior to zoo visit, print out and make copies of the “Intraspecies vs Interspecies” worksheet.
3. Once at the exhibit, students then determine which species they will observe first.
4. Students observe the first type of species for 10 minutes noting any interactions that occur with members of the same species. Record the name of the species and any data in Ethogram 1.
5. Students then observe a member of the second species and record any interactions the first species has with a second species for an additional 10 minutes.
6. Record these interactions in Ethogram 2.

Procedure Continued:

Ethogram 1

Exhibit: _____ Animal Observed _____	Intraspecies Interaction Observed
Intial: 0 minutes	
1 min.	
2 min.	
3 min.	
4 min.	
5 min.	
6 min.	
7 min.	
8 min.	
9 min.	
10 min.	

Ethogram 2

Exhibit: _____ Animal #1 _____ Animal #2 _____	Interspecies Interaction Observed
Intial: 0 minutes	
1 min.	
2 min.	
3 min.	
4 min.	
5 min.	
6 min.	
7 min.	
8 min.	
9 min.	
10 min.	