



SeaWorld/Busch Gardens Raptors

4-8 Classroom Activities

Raptor Stories

OBJECTIVE

The student will define various raptor terminology.

ACTION

1. Explain that students will be writing a story about raptors.
2. Distribute one raptor terminology worksheet to each student and instruct them to define all the terminology. This part of the project may be assigned as homework. The teacher should check the accuracy of the students' definitions (using the teacher's guide) before proceeding to step three.
3. Instruct students to develop a one-page story about a particular raptor species or several raptor species. The story should use all the vocabulary words listed on the raptor terminology worksheet at least once. The following raptors are suggestions:

bald eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

American kestrel *Falco sparverius*

screech owl *Otus asio*

spectacled owl *Pulsatrix perspicillata*

golden eagle *Aquila chrysaetos canadensis*

merlin *Falco columbarius*

burrowing owl *Athene cunicularia*

gyrfalcon *Falco rusticolus*

bateleur eagle *Terathopius ecaudatus*

barn owl *Tyto alba*

barred owl *Strix varia*

saw-whet owl *Aegolius acadicus*

red-tailed hawk *Buteo jamaicensis*

great horned owl *Bubo virginianus*

osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

California condor *Gymnogyps californianus*

peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus*

Northern goshawk *Accipiter gentiles*

Northern harrier *Circus cyaneus*

Steller's sea eagle *Haliaeetus pelagicus*

snowy owl *Nyctea scandiaca*

sharp-shinned hawk *Accipiter striatus*

Northern pygmy owl *Glaucidium californicum*

red-shouldered hawk *Buteo lineatus*

4. Instruct students to share their stories with the class.

MATERIALS

- Raptor Terminology Funsheet (one per student)
- Raptor Terminology Answer Guide
- Library and/or Internet access

Raptor Terminology Funsheet

1. raptor: _____

2. spicule: _____

3. talon: _____

4. predator: _____

5. prey: _____

6. hooked beak: _____

7. nictitating membrane: _____

8. wingspan: _____

9. preening: _____

10. incubate: _____

11. carnivore: _____

12. brood: _____

Raptor Terminology Answer Guide

1. raptor: A bird of prey, a carnivorous bird. Raptors have curved beaks, sharp talons, strong legs and feet, and excellent eyesight.
2. carnivore: A meat-eating animal.
3. spicule: A pointed modified scale on the feet of various raptors to help grip prey.
4. talon: The sharp and powerful claw of a raptor. It is perfectly designed to catch, hold, and carry prey.
5. predator: An animal that catches and eats other animals.
6. prey: Any animal caught by another for food.
7. hooked beak: A beak that is curved at the tip. The beak curvature and its sharp cutting edges allow a raptor to grip prey.
8. nictitating membrane: A transparent (clear) eyelid that closes laterally (from left to right) and is used to protect the eye during flight and when feeding themselves or their young.
9. wingspan: The distance between the tips of the fully extended wings of a bird, insect, or bat. Raptors generally have very large and impressive wingspans.
10. preening: To groom feathers with the beak.
11. incubate: For birds, sitting on eggs to transfer body heat to them for development.
12. brood: To cover young birds with the wings for warmth and protection.