

Animals in Winter

For young children of all ages:

Objectives

- Children will play with animals.
- Place animals in various places based on what they do in winter.
- If able, they will describe what animals do in winter and name their favorite animal.
- Move like animals.
- Explore centers and listen to a story.

Materials

Mascot (a puppet or stuffed animal of your choice) with a bag of other animals (bluebird, Monarch butterfly, turtle, frog, cardinal, deer), container of mud, paper bag cave, homemade cinnamon playdough, animal cookie cutters, rolling pins, pieces of white foam, paper, pieces of woodland/animal wrapping paper, animal pictures and stickers, glue sticks, pretend woodland environment (see photos for ideas)

Ahead of time, make playdough. (I used a gingerbread playdough recipe.) Cut out animal pictures and pieces of wrapping paper. Feel free to put more woodland animals in your bag. Make sure you have at least one animal per child. The pretend woodland environment should be located in a different place than where you teach your lesson. You will also need a place that is south of the woodland environment. (Mine is on our second floor and the bathroom is in the southern part of our space.)

Introduction

- Sing the [Welcome Song](#).
- **Hold up** the mascot with the bag of animals.
- **Say:** (Mascot) has a lot of animals in this bag. I wonder what they are going to do

Lesson

Main Point: Animals do different things in winter.

- **Pull** out each animal, one at a time.
- **Name** each animal as you pull them out.
- **Hand** each child at least one animal.
- **Escort** the children to the area where your woodland environment is.
- **Show** the container of mud to the children.
- **Say:** The turtle and frog hibernate, or sleep very deeply, in the mud in the winter.
- **Show** the cave to the children.
- **Say:** The bear doesn't hibernate, but it does sleep in the cave in the winter.
- **Put** the bear in the cave and then put it up on a shelf.
- **Say:** The deer and cardinal (and any other animals you are using) just stay in the woods.
- **Escort** the children to the southern part of your space with the bluebird and butterfly.
- **Say:** The bluebird and Monarch butterfly stay in a place that is far away from the woods, a place in the south that is warm.

Closure/Music and Movement

- **Escort** the children back to the woodland environment.
- **Say:** We are going to leave those animals that are asleep or are south in those places until spring.
- **Ask:** Can you tell me something you learned today about animals in winter? Can you tell me which of these animals we learned about was your favorite? (Appropriate for children three and above.)
- **Say:** Let's move like animals!
- **Invite** the children to move like a: bear, turtle, frog, bird, butterfly, any other animal you used.

Center Time

Children may play in the woodland environment. If you have a larger group, half can engage in art activities while the other half is in the environment. Then they can switch.

Art and Writing Center:

1. Children can use the collage materials and glue sticks to make woodland scenes.
2. Children can make animal shapes out of the playdough and place on the pieces of foam to make scenes.

Book Time

Read “The Snowy Nap” by Jan Brett to the children.

Say: Hedgehogs hibernate or sleep all winter too.

Photos





