

Materials Needed:

- Drawing Paper or Sketchbook
- Pencils
- Crayons, Colored Pencils, or Markers
- Optional: Books about animals or access to kid-safe websites with animal pictures (like National Geographic Kids)

Welcome, Animal Explorer!

Today, we're going on an amazing adventure into the Animal Kingdom, and your sketchbook is our guide! We'll learn about all sorts of fascinating creatures, big and small, and use our drawing skills to capture what makes them special.

Activity 1: Animal Group Sketch

Animals can be sorted into groups based on things they have in common. Let's explore some big groups:

- **Mammals:** Usually have hair or fur, are warm-blooded, and feed milk to their babies (Examples: dogs, cats, monkeys, whales).
- **Birds:** Have feathers, wings, beaks, lay eggs, and are warm-blooded (Examples: eagles, penguins, hummingbirds).
- **Reptiles:** Have scales, are cold-blooded, and usually lay eggs (Examples: snakes, lizards, turtles, crocodiles).
- **Amphibians:** Have moist skin, live part of their life in water and part on land, are cold-blooded (Examples: frogs, salamanders).
- **Fish:** Live in water, have gills to breathe, fins to swim, and most have scales (Examples: goldfish, sharks, tuna).
- **Insects:** Have six legs, three body parts (head, thorax, abdomen), and often have wings (Examples: butterflies, ants, beetles).

Your Mission: Choose one animal group. Pick an animal from that group (you can think of one, look in a book, or find one online). Draw the animal! As you draw, try to include the special features of its group (like fur for a mammal, feathers for a bird, scales for a reptile).

Activity 2: Habitat Hats!

Where an animal lives is called its habitat. Habitats provide food, water, and shelter. Some habitats are hot deserts, leafy forests, vast oceans, or icy polar regions.

Your Mission: Pick one animal you drew (or draw a new one!). Think about where it lives. Now, draw a fun 'habitat' on top of its head or around it! If you drew a fish, maybe draw watery waves and seaweed. If you drew a camel, draw desert sands and a hot sun. Get creative!

Activity 3: Create-a-Creature!

Now that you're an expert animal artist and scientist, let's invent a totally new creature!

Your Mission: Mix and match features from different animals you learned about. Does your creature have the wings of a bird, the scales of a reptile, and live underwater like a fish? Draw your unique creation! Give it a name. Can you describe its features and imagine what kind of habitat it would need?

Wrap-up: Explorer's Show and Tell

Let's look at all your amazing drawings! Tell me about the animals you drew. What group do they belong to? What are their special features? Where do they live? What did you like best about being an Animal Explorer today?